



Saint Gabriel Catholic Church  
Poway, California  
1973 – 2023



# Foreword

## *Fun Fact:*

Poway was not a city until 1980.

Twin Peaks Road did not exist between Community Road & Pomerado Road.

A review of history of a parish can open up ideas and give inspiration for the future. The point of this book is to tell the story of taking a “spin-off” from a neighboring parish and establishing a new parish with its own identity and culture. St. Gabriel in Poway, California is such a parish. After 50 years, St. Gabriel is still developing its culture and re-inventing itself. As parishioners come and go, it is the faith that stays strong. Where two or more are gathered, God hears our prayers.

In research for this book, I found Father Dollen a very dynamic character. Before there was a building, the parish existed. The leadership of Father Dollen is inspirational. I found posthumous notes of how he wanted to be remembered. It said to remember him in the Celebration of the Mass. The fact that his life was centered around the celebration of the Mass explains how he could have accomplished so much.

We have had two pastors since who faced challenges and accomplished goals. Father Jay Brady guided us for 3 years and was followed by Father Michael Froidurot who has led this parish for the past 24 years. There are more stories than can fit in a book, but with much input from our team, we have tried to capture the highlights. Enjoy!

*Melinda Casteloes*



# Roman Catholic Church and the Diocese of San Diego

Since St. Gabriel was established in 1973, there have been many leaders in the church. The influence of these leaders has determined in many instances, what could and couldn't be taught, built, and ministries formed without their approval. To appreciate this tiny part of history of the church, let's review the leaders since St. Gabriel began...

## POPES for the Past 50 Years

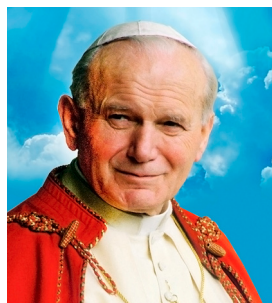
In 1973, Pope Paul the VI was the leader of the Catholic Church.



Pope Paul VI  
1963-1978  
(Canonized in 2018)



Pope John Paul I  
1978  
(33 days)



Pope John Paul II  
1978-2005  
(Canonized in 2014)



Pope Benedict XVI  
2005-2013



Pope Francis  
2013-Present

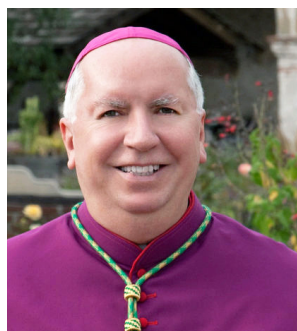
## SAN DIEGO BISHOPS for the Past 50 Years



Bishop  
Leo Thomas Maher  
Bishop of San Diego  
1969-1990



Bishop  
Robert Henry Brom  
(1990-2013, Coadjutor  
Bishop 1989-1990)



Bishop  
Cirilo Flores  
(2013-2014, Coadjutor  
Bishop 2012-2013)

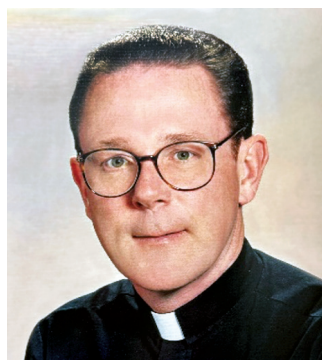


Cardinal  
Robert W. McElroy  
(2015-present)

## SAINT GABRIEL PASTORS for the Past 50 Years



Monsignor  
Charles J. Dollen  
1973-1996



Reverend  
Joseph "Jay" Brady  
1996-1999



Very Reverend  
Michael Froidurot  
1999 to Present

# In the Beginning...

Daily times-Advocate  
Escondido, CA  
Friday, June 22, 1973

## Poway parish formed

Rev. Leo T. Maher, bishop of the San Diego Catholic diocese, has announced the formation of a new parish of more than 300 Catholic families in Poway. The new church will be named after St. Gabriel.

The first masses will be celebrated Sunday at 8:30 and 10 a.m. in the auditorium of Twin Peaks Elementary School in Poway.

The founding pastor of the new parish is Rev. Charles Dollen, librarian at the University of San Diego and book reviewer for the Southern Cross, the weekly newspaper of the San Diego diocese.

Dollen formerly was pastor of St. Louise de Marillac Church in El Cajon. He has been USD librarian since 1968.

St. Gabriel's, the 165th parish in the diocese, was carved out of the southern portion of St. Michael's parish in Poway and part of the northeastern tip of the parish of Church of Good Shepherd.

### THE YEAR-END REPORT SHOWED THE FOLLOWING:

Income in 1973 was \$48,787.87  
(including \$30,000 from St. Michael's)

Expenses were \$47,643.30  
(Including purchasing the land)

Father Dollen's salary was \$2,125  
Supply priests \$430  
and other salaries \$1,360.50

St. Gabriel paid the school district  
\$854 rent so they could have  
Mass on the weekends.

In 1973, there was an announcement to the congregation of St. Michael's Parish in Poway that Most Reverend Leo T. Maher, bishop of San Diego Catholic diocese has designated the formation of a new parish of more than 300 Catholic families in Poway. The new church will be named after St. Gabriel.

Reverend Charles Dollen was named the new pastor.

The first Mass took place in the auditorium at Twin Peaks Middle School on the feast of Corpus Christi on June 24, 1973.

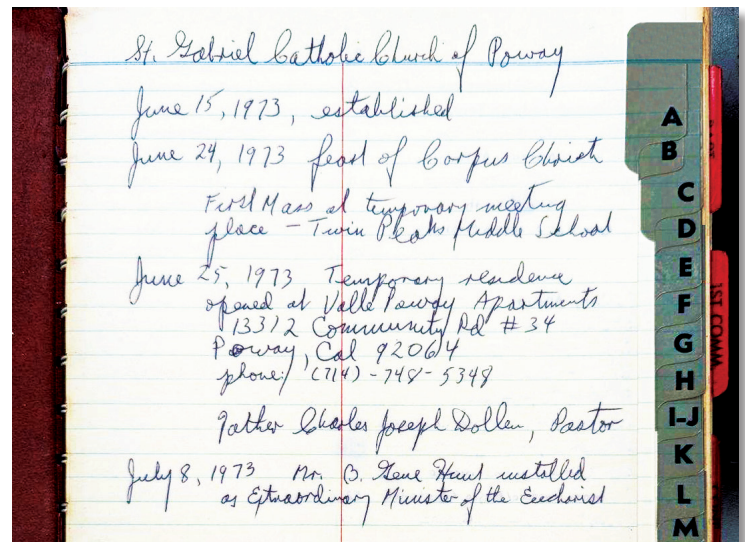
During the Mass, they passed a guest book around the congregation and everyone wrote down their family information including phone numbers and addresses. The newly formed women's group took this information and under Father Dollen's guidance, split the city up into 7 areas. Then teams of two visited neighborhoods, knocked on doors and spread the word that there is a new Catholic community in town and

invite people to come. Father Dollen and the group came up with questions and answers to help the teams answer questions such as how to do an annulment, what the plan will be for CCD/Youth and where they can come for

spiritual guidance. During the first

few years, the main Sunday Mass was at Twin Peaks either in the auditorium or outside in the cafeteria/courtyard area. In addition, Saturday and daily Masses were held at people's homes usually in the backyard, weather permitting. Friday morning mass was held at the Poway-Bernardo Mortuary Chapel which still exists today. Confession was before Mass by asking Father. Later, when Father had help, he would do confession during Mass while another priest said Mass.

The parishioners of St. Michael's gave St. Gabriel \$30,000 to purchase land which was purchased in 1973. The Women's and Men's ministries were started and were an important part of the church growing. In July, the first Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist, Gene Hunt, was appointed by Bishop Maher to help distribute Communion.



Father Dollen's "Official Record" of starting St. Gabriel.

# Monsignor Charles Joseph Dollen

Monsignor Dollen loved being a priest. Whenever he drove his car, he announced his delight to the world with a bumper sticker that read: HAPPINESS IS BEING CELIBATE.

His older brother, Father Bernard Dollen and his mother Cecelia Kelly, aware of his deep devotion to the Infant of Prague, always speculated he would someday be ordained.



Fr. Dollen with his mother

They were guests of honor for the celebration of the 25th Anniversary of his Ordination in May 1979.

He was born in Rochester, New York, the son of Charles and Cecelia Dollen in 1926. He completed Seminary at the Immaculate Heart Seminary, El Cajon. He earned a Master of Divinity degree from The University of Southern California, Los Angeles. He was ordained a priest on May 5, 1954.

Father Dollen founded and became the first Director for the Library at the University of San Diego. He held the position for 10 years. From there he became the Pastor of St. Louise de Marillac in Crest, California. There he wrote a book and biography about this parish patron saint. He

returned after several years to USD library and there congruently served as reserve chaplain in the U.S. Navy at the U.S. Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego.

As founding pastor of St. Gabriel's Parish in June, 1973, he said Mass for a small community starting in the Auditorium at Twin Peaks Middle School and daily Mass in people's homes.

A plot of land on Budwin Lane, in the heart of Poway, was purchased as a dream spot for a beautiful church. On September 18, 1977, ground was broken for construction of temporary quarters, consisting of a multipurpose chapel and church hall.



Ordination May 5, 1954



U.S. Navy Reserve Chaplain



# Monsignor Charles Joseph Dollen

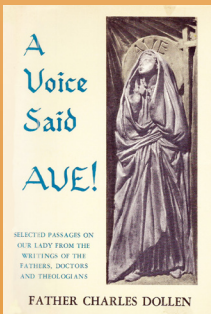


On July 30, 1978, the first Mass was celebrated on a stage that, over the years, became a holy and beautiful altar for each of the 4 Masses celebrated on Saturday vigil and Sunday morning. Approximately 400 members of the congregation sat in chairs for Sunday services. The chairs were easily stored when the space was used for Sunday Bingo. It was intended to be a temporary arrangement.

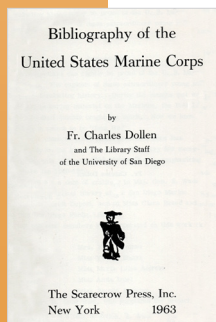
It was about this time that Father Dollen proclaimed the parish motto, "No one is ever late at St. Gabriel's, just welcome." Father Dollen recruited his good friend from USD, Father Paul Donovan, to assist in the celebration of Sunday Mass. Father Paul was a gifted musician and pianist who loved to play Ragtime music.

Writing beautiful stories was one of Fr. Dollen's passions. He was a prolific writer having authored more than 30 books as well as a 14-volume set of Catholic encyclopedias called THE CATHOLIC TRADITION. He also wrote articles for newspapers and magazines.

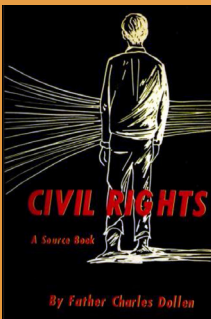
## Books written by Msgr. Charles Dollen



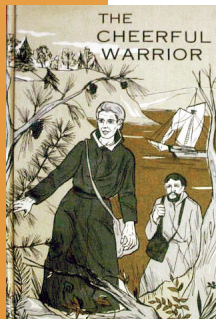
1963



1963



1964

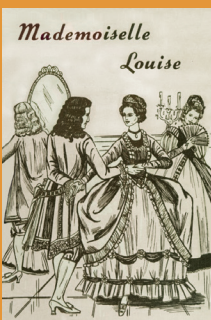


1967

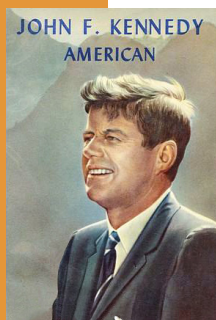


**POWAY PROGRESS**—The parish of St. Gabriel, Poway, joined Bishop Leo T. Maher in the dedication of their church center on Twin Peaks Road, Sept. 16. The multi-purpose complex includes the residence for the pastor, Father

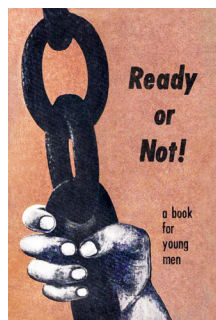
Charles Dollen, right of bishop, whose mother is on right of picture. She came from Rochester N.Y., with his brother Bernard, who is also a priest, for the occasion. Deacon Gordon Shockley is to the left of the bishop.—SC photo



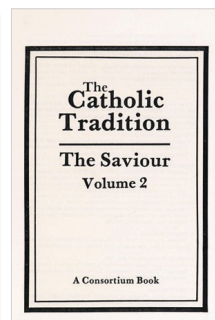
1967



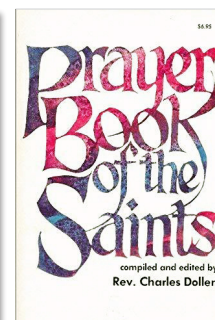
1969



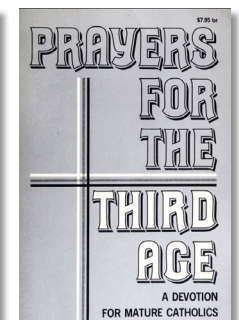
1969



1979



1984



1985

# Monsignor Charles Joseph Dollen

Looking through some of the articles Father Dollen wrote, this one tells one story of history in our Catholic church. He lived through Vatican II and saw firsthand the difference it made. The CYO in the article refers to the "Catholic Youth Organization".

Article published 1975



First Baptism in the new font

## Pastor's point of view

# The Folk Mass

This column space provides pastors and associates an opportunity to write on a subject of their choice and in their own style. As often as we receive suitable contributions, we will print them here. This article is written by Father Charles Dollen, pastor of St. Gabriel's parish, Poway, who also reviews books for SC's "A look at books" column.

By Father Charles Dollen

In the early 1960s we heard of many experiments with liturgical music and some experiments with the liturgy. They all seemed so remote, even when the bishops at the Second Vatican Council assembled for a eucharistic celebration with African music.

In 1966, the CYO at St. Louise de Marillac church in Crest approached me for a one-time "Folk Mass." They showed me some hymns that looked "far out," songs such as "They will know we are Christian by our love" and "Altogether". With great fear and trepidation I agreed to celebrate the Mass.

IT WAS A very pleasant experience, warm with love and alive with joy. But I figured that a one-time activity was probably exceptional. However, when I told them I liked it, they asked if they could repeat it the following Sunday. I really hesitated—for about two weeks.

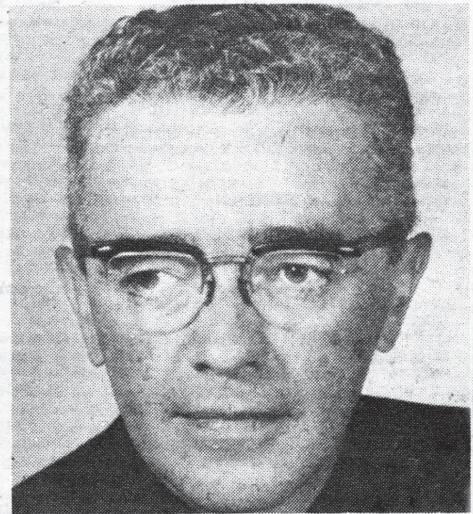
We tried it, and most of the adults were pleased. The senior citizens, grandparents, were especially intrigued because they saw the attention and devotion of the young singers and guitar players. There were some middle-aged grumbles, but surprisingly few.

The CYO came at me again, after the Mass. Could they have one Mass each Sunday, they asked, especially for teenagers. How could I refuse, when pastors everywhere were bemoaning the lack of teenagers at Sunday Mass.

And so, St. Louise probably has the right to claim to be the first parish church on the West Coast to have incorporated the Folk Mass into its regular Sunday program.

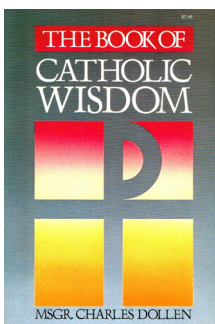
AND HOW it grew! It was a pleasant pastoral experience to see the church bulging at the seams, Sunday after Sunday. I used to marvel and wonder when the novelty would wear off.

Soon other parishes were asking us to come and start the Folk Mass in their parishes. Christ the King and St. Jude's were among the next to go along. Then the Mexican-American parishes began what we

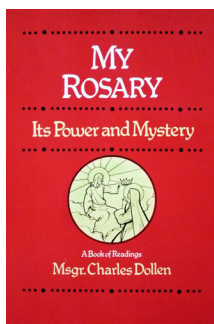


called "Mariachi Masses," with their own traditional music. Folk Masses are just exactly that—Masses sung by the "folk" of the parish, much the way Gregorian and Ambrosian chant began. They have joined the mainstream of the historical growth of the Liturgy.

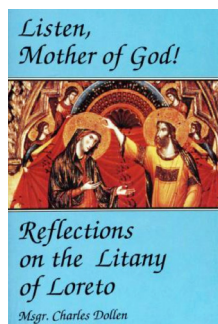
I hardly expected that, back in the 1960s.



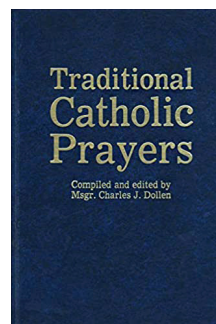
1986



1988



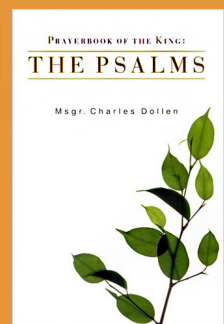
1989



1990



1996



1998

# Monsignor Charles Joseph Dollen

## MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTOR

Our parish is a community of the faithful joined together through the Holy Spirit by the strong bonds of Christian charity. We hope to grow to full maturity in Christ, to the praise and glory of God the Father.

Love, however, presupposes knowledge, and this little Directory has the mission of helping us get to know one another better. If it fulfills this purpose even to some small extent, it will bring a blessing with it.

  
Father Charles Dollen



Diocesan Office  
for Apostolic Ministry / Alcalá Park  
February 23, 1982

Dear Father Dollen and Parishioners  
of St. Gabriel's Church:

Congratulations on the completion of your parish debt! This full payment of your indebtedness speaks volumes to me of your generosity and sacrificial love for the Church and for one another.

Such accomplishment could only come about through a united and loving community working together as one in Christ. Vatican II's favorite image of the Church is not so much a pyramid as a people, the people of God. This people is a community, a community of persons who accept and confess God's revelation in Jesus as Lord, a community united to the Father and to one another through Christ in the Spirit. This community is more than a casual encounter of freewheeling, like-minded individuals: it is a visible society and so it has structure of authority in the pastor, who is the personal representative of the bishop and has a common mission. This common mission demands that the bond of charity unite us in all our efforts.

You have, indeed, been such a community and the results of your efforts have borne fruit that serves the entire community. Today when we witness around us in the world such tensions and divisions, one can only marvel at the "vinculum caritatis," the chain of charity that binds you together.

May your parish continue to undertake the next phase of your parish development with the same united spirit of love.

With renewed thanks and gratitude, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Leo T. Maher  
Bishop of San Diego



In the first edition of the Parish Directory in 1977, his Pastoral Message was written like a musical Mission Statement.

That same year, 1977, Father Dollen made history as the first California diocesan priest to be elected to public office. He served for 4 years on the Poway School Board.

His homilies and sermons were notable for their brevity and inspiration, and always relevant to what was read during the Liturgy of the Word. He always had a profound point to make in never more than ten minutes.

He was well respected for the affable tending of his flock. His jovial sense of humor always prevailed in conversations after Mass. He would light up a cigarette and share good old boy jokes with the regulars.

Truth be told, Father Charles Dollen had an aversion to taking on debt and expanding the church campus. His focus was on maintaining what he already had and keeping his flock of sheep comfortable. In February 1982 the parish council received a congratulatory letter from the bishop for paying off the building debt.

During the 1980s Father Dollen would say Mass on Channel 39 Television. He appeared regularly to review books on Channel 39.

In 1985 he was recognized for his skills, abilities, and faithfulness and awarded the honorary title of Monsignor, by Bishop Leo T. Maher.

In May 1986, St. Gabriel's finance committee approved the expansion of the campus and commenced building a Catechetical Center. During Monsignor Dollen's tenure, and under his direction, the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) was established for the education of children at St. Gabriel's and the use of the Catechetical Center became critical to the instruction of the flock.

In 1996, after twenty-three years of Masses, baptisms and marriages at St. Gabriel's, Monsignor Dollen announced his retirement. The years had passed very quickly for the parish, due to the comfort that his direction and guidance provided. Many cried as the announcement was made and the parishioners felt a tremendous loss.

Monsignor Dollen became ill and went peacefully into the arms of Our Lord on June 5, 1998. He will always be remembered for his extraordinary intellect, his inspired sermons, and his rich sense of humor.



# Reverend Joseph Brady (Father Jay)



Father Jay was the pastor at St. Gabriel from 1996 to 1999. He was appointed by Bishop Brom when Monsignor Dollen retired. Even though Father Jay was only with the parish for three years, he was able to pay off the mortgage (from the classrooms/office building addition). The parish celebrated with a picnic at Old Poway Park on Midland Road.

Father Jay made hard decisions which were not always popular. He closed the pre-school and tightened the budget. As Father Michael says "Thanks a million" to Father Jay because when he left in 1999, there was a million dollars in the building fund, which allowed the parish

to begin moving forward with building a new worship space.

Father Jay talked many times about becoming a priest. He was studying law at USD and kept hearing the call to the priesthood while he was there.

His homilies were memorable and along with his props, brought a fresh perspective and understanding of the Gospel readings.

While he was pastor, Father Jay helped with a basic catechist course where many of our catechists learned about the writing of the bible and many other theological topics. He enjoyed visiting the 1st grade classroom to watch the nativity play each year. While at St. Gabriel, he lived in the parish-owned house on Woodhollow Lane. In 1999, he was transferred to St. Katherine Labouré in San Diego. We are grateful for the time Father Jay shared with us.

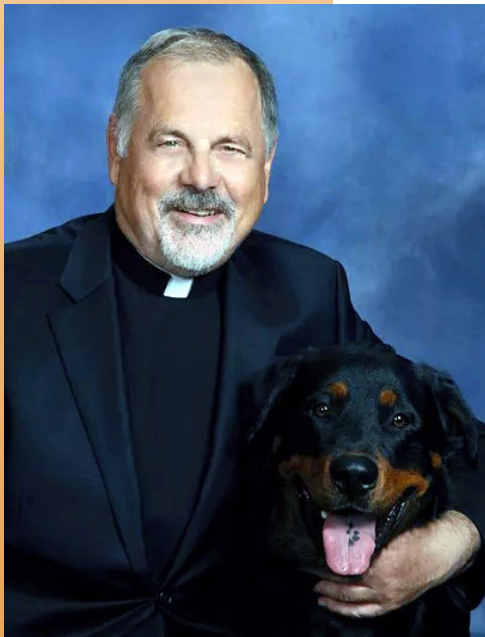


## *Fun Fact:*

Father Jay would fill-in for the vacation of Pastor of Maria Lanakila Church in Lahaina, Maui each July.

"My hope is to enjoy the aloha spirit and warm waters of the Pacific."

# Very Reverend Michael Froidurot



Father Michael was appointed to St. Gabriel as Pastor on July 1, 1999 and continues to serve our parish in 2023.

Father Michael Froidurot was born and raised in France. In 1961, at 11 years of age, he entered the minor seminary in Flavigny. After completing his baccalaureate in philosophy, he entered the major seminary in Dijon, France. Following the accidental death of his mother when he was 19, he was sent to the American College of Louvain, Belgium to complete his studies in English earning both a BA and MA in theology.

He received a (STB Sacrae Theologiae Baccalaureus) and a STL (Sacrae Theologiae Licentiatus), both canonical and pontifical degrees, at the KUL

(Katholieke Universiteit Leuven) and UCL (Universite Catholique de Louvain). Father Michael was ordained a deacon along with 25 of his classmates in the church of St. Damian of Molokai (Louvain)

in June 1976 by Cardinal

Sugnens, Archbishop of Brussels and Mechelen. He was ordained a priest by Cardinal DeCourtay, Archbishop of Dijon, Reims, and Lyon, on May 13, 1978. Young Father Michael was then assigned to a parish in Nuits St. Georges, and in 1981 as a Priest Principal in a Catholic High School in Dijon, France.

In 1986, he arrived in San Diego where he served as associate pastor in various parishes (St. Mary's in Escondido, Our Mother of Confidence, Our Lady of Mount Carmel). He was appointed pastor of St. Charles Borromeo in Point Loma in 1994. He has also served on the Priests' Personnel Board and was Dean of the Escondido Deanery.

In 2004, St. Gabriel's acquired 6 acres of land north of our campus for the construction of the new church. The rectory house on Woodhollow was sold and the residence on Budwin Lane was purchased to gain road access to the 6 acre lot. Fundraising for the new worship space started in 2006. A year later the bankruptcy of the diocese and the collapse of the stock market brought the



# Very Reverend Michael Froidurot



project to a halt. Logic and reason would have suggested abandoning what would obviously become a failure, Father Michael turned to prayer and looked to the Blessed Mother in Lourdes, France, for help. It was the Blessed Mother who asked Bernadette to go and tell the parish priest of Lourdes to build a Church so people would come and pray. When he heard the request the parish priest said to Bernadette, “Does your Lady have money?” It was through the power of prayer that her intercession brought forth the transformation of Lourdes. And so, it was at St. Gabriel. It was through the miracle of prayers that the hearts of people of goodwill were changed. As a result, we have a beautiful

worship space where the presence of our Lord is evident through sacraments, prayer services, and moments of quiet contemplation.

The design of the church was inspired by the California Mission style with a European influence. When visiting Lourdes, Father Michael saw the artistic work of Sister Mercedes at the papal altar and the baptistry of the parish church. He convinced her to create the statues that ornate the base of our altar. His childhood friend, a sculptor, was commissioned to carve from one block of marble the statue of the risen Christ. Our bells were cast at a French foundry and the retablo behind the altar is from Arte Granda, a company in Spain, established by a priest whose mission in life was to save religious art from destruction. Father’s annual trips home to Europe included researching and talking with people who could help bring his vision of St. Gabriel Church to fruition.

Father is part of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. In 2015, he was elevated to the rank of commander. According to the Vatican Website: The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem is the only lay institution of

the Vatican State charged with the task of providing for the needs of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem and of all the activities and initiatives to support the Christian presence in the Holy Land. Our collection on Good Friday is



# Very Reverend Michael Froidurot



donated to this worthy cause. Also, occasionally, you will see items from Jerusalem sold in our courtyard to help support Christians in the Holy Land.

Father Michael encouraged many men and women to enter the religious and consecrated life. Three men were ordained deacon for the service of our parish. We look forward to the ordination of parishioner, Sean Embry, who is in formation at St. Francis Seminary.



Father Michael believes that traveling is a necessary part of the learning process and when a Vatican display came to the Reagan Presidential Library, he took a group of parishioners on a bus trip to visit the exhibit. In 2022, he led a pilgrimage to Europe to see the Oberammergau Passion Play in Germany. He will be taking another group in 2023 on a Lourdes and Italy Pilgrimage.

On the 40th anniversary of his ordination, Father Michael's family and priest friends came to St. Gabriel's to celebrate this special occasion at an exquisite banquet prepared by Michel Malecot from The French Gourmet.



The time of the mandatory retirement for Father Michael as a pastor is approaching (2025). He plans to go to France and enjoy his family for a few years. A new pastor will be appointed by the personnel board and the Bishop. In 2028, Father Michael will celebrate the 50th anniversary of his Ordination. He plans to come back to St. Gabriel to celebrate this joyful occasion. As Monsignor Dollen did many years before him, he will settle in Poway. He will call Poway home, adding more years to the 25 beautiful years of his life spent here as Pastor; an inspiring way to prepare for Eternity.



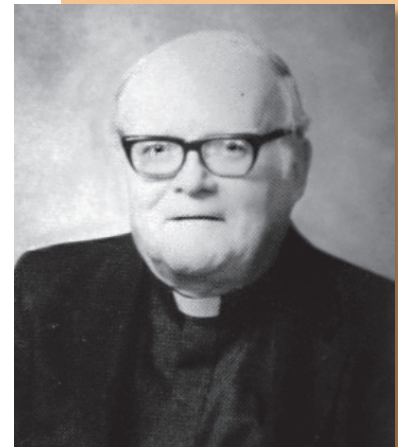
# Associate / Assistant Priests

## Reverend John H. Cloonan

Born: July 14, 1916, Entered Eternity: May 16, 1996

Ordained: February 7, 1948

Father John Cloonan was the first priest listed in the directories as a "Sunday Assistant" for Father Dollen in the 1978 and 1982 directories.



## Reverend Joseph McDonnell

Born: September 16, 1919, Entered Eternity: March 9, 1998

Ordained: June 25, 1950

Born in Portland, Oregon, but grew up in Olympia, Washington.

Taught at University of San Diego and was part of St. Gabriel's March 1982 into the 1990s celebrating the 8 am Mass.



## Reverend Paul A. Donovan, S.J. (Society of Jesus)

Born: January 5, 1927, Entered Eternity: September 9, 2016

Ordained: June 17, 1956

Father Donovan, a good friend of Monsignor Dollen, helped celebrate Mass on the weekends. He celebrated his Golden Jubilee at St. Gabriel's in 1993.

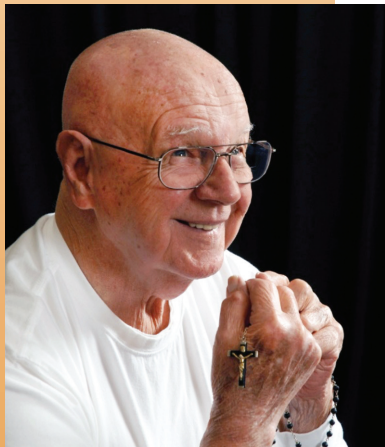
He played "Cocktail Piano" at the bingo dinner on Sunday afternoons. His hobbies were Piano, Bird Study, History of Military, History of Films.

In an interview with Joan Friesenhahn, a founding parishioner, she noted:

*"Father Donovan would give a fire and brimstone sermon and then would be a completely joyful person after Mass. He was always the life of a party and an amazing musician. He would play wonderful songs on the piano at our choir get togethers at Frank Borman's house."*



# Associate / Assistant Priests



## Reverend Harold "Hal" Tindall

Ordained: June 1978

Born: June 27, 1931, Entered Eternity: July 29, 2022

Father Hal came to St. Gabriel in 2000. He was retired, but very active. He celebrated daily and weekend Masses until 2019. Father Hal and Father Michael collaborated on a few projects including teaching about the Mass.



*Father Hal Prayer*  
Our Heavenly Father let us not forget our military personnel. For those who have died, may they be welcomed into the Father's Eternal Kingdom. For those who have been wounded, may they be healed mentally, physically and spiritually. And for those still standing, may they know of God's love through our prayers. Amen.

Father Hal had a special devotion to the Virgin Mary. It was Mary's voice in a vision that led him to the priesthood at the age of 47. During his time at St. Gabriel's, he introduced Intercessory Prayer and many groups were formed under his guidance. He was also instrumental in bringing healing Masses to St. Gabriel's.

Father Hal's Military prayer is posted in the chapel at Falcon's Landing retirement home in Virginia. This is a home for honored military retirees. St. Gabriel parishioners appreciated his simple sayings such as "Stop the Hate, Build the Love" and "Take care of each other, that's what God demands of us."

Father Hal loved to chant, but he also liked to quiet the congregation. Sometimes during Mass, he would have us put our feet flat on the ground, close our eyes and just listen to God.

During the pandemic and in his last couple of years, when he was housebound, he made phone calls to those on the prayer list. He truly cared for us.



# Associate/Assistant Priests

## **Reverend Patrick Murphy**

Ordained: June 6, 1997, San Diego

Father Pat serves as Senior Associate at St. Gabriel. He was accepted into the program for priestly formation for the Diocese of San Diego in 1991.

He completed his undergraduate degree in religious studies at USD and went on to complete his graduate studies at St. Patrick Seminary in Menlo

Park earning a Master in Divinity and a Bachelors in Sacred Theology. His first assignment was Associate Pastor at St. Patrick in Carlsbad in 1997.

In March of 1998, he was appointed as vocation director for the diocese at St. Francis seminary and served as a spiritual director to the seminarians.

He then became the coordinator of spiritual directors for the Permanent Diaconate Formation program and served in that position for 18 years.

Father Pat served as pastor at Immaculate Heart of Mary in Ramona, Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Peñasquitos, and Immaculate Conception in Old Town. In 2016, he received his Graduate Degree in Spiritual Direction and Directed Retreats from Creighton University. Father Pat's primary ministry since coming to St. Gabriel in 2015 is a spiritual director to deacons and the laity. Father Pat enjoys spending time with his dog, Murphy.

*"God's will be done, in all things, without condition."*



## **Reverend Chuck Fuld**

Ordained: July 12, 1986, San Diego

Father Chuck Fuld started celebrating mass at St Gabriel in the late 2010s. A widowed father of 2 daughters and a son, Father Chuck entered St. Francis Seminary in 1981 after his children had reached adulthood.

He was ordained to the priesthood on July 12, 1986, at the age of 52.

His first assignments were Associate Pastor of Sacred Heart Church and St. Mark's followed by Administrator of St. Rose of Lima Church. Father

Chuck later served as Pastor of Resurrection church and then Ascension Church. He was the managing editor of our Diocesan newspaper, The

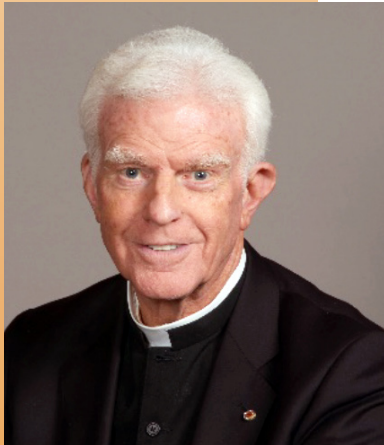
Southern Cross from 2008-2020 He served the Boy Scouts of America as

Escondido District Chairman and the Knights of Columbus as State Chaplain. Father Chuck's experience as a Naval Commander, Scout

Leader, Chaplain for the Knights of Columbus, father and grandfather give him a unique perspective when preaching to our congregation.



# Associate/Assistant Priests



## **Reverend Jim Rafferty**

Ordained: June 10, 1972, San Diego

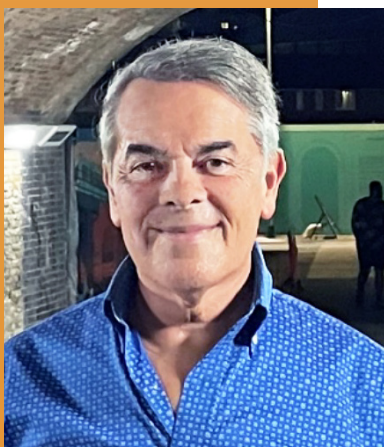
Father Jim Rafferty served as Associate Pastor at St Agnes, Holy Rosary (San Bernardino), Our Lady of Grace, Mission San Diego de Alcalá and Our Lady of Mount Carmel from 1971-1985. Father Jim was the founding pastor of St. Timothy in Escondido (1985-2006). He was then assigned St. Pius X before becoming the pastor at Mary, Star of the Sea from 2008 until his retirement in 2019. Father Jim was involved in Worldwide Marriage Encounter for 19 years, Catholic Engaged Encounter for 20+ years and was a Cursillo Team priest. He is trilingual, having learned the Charismatic Renewal Languages of Portuguese and Spanish. In retirement, Father Jim offers Mass regularly at St. Gabriel and St. Gregory the Great. He also is the Naval Consolidated Brig MCAS Miramar Chaplain. Father Jim enjoys playing Bridge and jogging.



## **Reverend Christopher Merris, CAPT, CHC, USN (Ret.)**

Ordained: July 9, 1982, San Diego

Father Chris was ordained for the diocese of San Diego on July 9, 1982. He served at All Hallows, St. Therese's, Our Lady of Mt Carmel, and Our Lady of Refuge parishes before becoming a US Navy Chaplain during which he deployed in five combat tours to Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as aboard the hospital ship USNS Mercy. He was also a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist before retiring. Father Chris began celebrating Sunday evening masses at St. Gabriel in the Summer of 2020. He enjoys language studies, gardening, and all kinds of music. His favorite author is Victor Hugo.



## **Father José Pimentel**

Ordination: Father José joined the Dominicans in 1984 and was ordained on June 1, 1990

Father José began celebrating Sunday evening masses at St. Gabriel in the Fall of 2020. Father José served many years in campus ministry at University of San Diego and the Universities of Oregon, Washington and Utah. He joined the Navy as a chaplain in 2001 and served with the Marines, Navy and Coast Guard. He deployed with the marines to Kuwait and Iraq and then with the USCG to New Orleans during the Katrina hurricane recovery. After retiring from active duty, he served as the contract priest at Naval Base Coronado and the Amphibious base. He is now retired and enjoying his dog, Percy, reading, gardening and long walks in Balboa Park. He loves to travel to Latin America and Europe and considers cooking for his friends a true pleasure and sharing wine and coffee with friends, or even strangers, a spiritual experience and blessing.

Two more priests have been close to our hearts. **Father Jose Larrañaga** and **Father Andrés Rivero** are highlighted in our Hispanic section.



## Deacon Gordon Shockley

Ordained: June 11, 1977, San Diego

Deacon Gordon Eugene Shockley was the first Deacon at St. Gabriel. He served St. Michael's and St. Gabriel's from 1977 to 1979. In 1979 his work took him to Saudi Arabia. He corresponded with the Diocese of San Diego, but did not return to live here. He risked his life serving an underground Church in the Middle East. In 2019 he passed away at the age of 85 in Texas. According to newspaper articles, he was one of many candidates in the school board race when Father Dollen won the election.



## Shockley To Be Ordained June 11

The Reverend Gordon Shockley of St. Gabriel's parish will be ordained to the permanent diaconate on June 11 at 10:30 a.m. The ordination will take place at the Immaculate at the University of San Diego.

It has taken three years of instruction and study for Shockley to achieve this important ministerial post. He was trained at the University of San Diego by the same priests who train young men who are entering the seminary. Gordon's wife, Ann, has also taken special

classes to help her fully understand and participate in her husband's ministry.

Before coming to Poway, Shockley served 21 years as an officer in the Marine Corps. He is currently employed as an insurance underwriter.

During the past year he has served as a Eucharistic Minister at St. Gabriel's as well as being involved in local civic matters. Ann keeps busy as a school aid and is active in Cub Scouts. She has helped and encouraged her husband in his efforts to reach his goal.

Deacon Shockley will be assigned to work in St. Gabriel's parish. He will be empowered to perform baptisms, weddings, preach and do various liturgical and pastoral functions.



*Fun Fact:*  
The School Board Election that Father Dollen won in 1977 included both Deacon Shockley and Bob Gusky in the same race.



St. Gabriel dedication with Father Dollen, Bishop Leo Maher and Deacon Gordon Shockley.

# Deacons



## Deacon Bob Troy

Ordained: June 8, 2007

Born July 19, 1954, Entered Eternity: August 1, 2016

Deacon Bob joined St. Gabriel's parish in April of 1987, when he and his family moved to Poway. Prior to his ordination, Deacon Bob joined the Knights of Columbus and served the parish as a Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion at Mass and to the homebound.

Deacon Bob experienced a powerful calling to the diaconate after his brain tumor diagnosis in December 2000. Although his prognosis was very poor, by the grace of God, his cancer went into remission for almost 8 years.

Deacon Bob entered the diaconate training program in September of 2003. He loved learning more about the teachings of the Catholic Church in his classes and enjoyed fellowship opportunities in the monthly days of reflection and annual retreats with other deacon candidates.

He was very enthusiastic about the outreach service activities that the formation program provided. Deacon Bob was involved in prison ministry, leading Bible studies at the Metropolitan Correctional Institute in downtown San Diego. He also served at an AIDS hospice in Escondido, was a counselor in legal matters at the Brother Benno Foundation in Oceanside and was a minister to the sick at Scripps Memorial Hospital in Encinitas.



After his ordination, a day of great joy, Deacon Bob served at St. Gabriel as the deacon at Masses, gave homilies, performed Baptisms, conducted Eucharistic Adoration services, officiated at funerals and Rites of Committal, and prepared annulment documents. He was also involved with the pro-life and homebound Holy Communion ministries. In addition, Deacon Bob served as the spiritual advisor to the North County Chapter of Magnificat, a ministry to Catholic women which focuses on faith testimonials.

Deacon Bob's legacy is humble and compassionate service to our parish for the honor and glory of God. Two of his favorite sayings were "Every day is a holiday, because it is a holy day," and "God bless us all." May his soul rest in peace in the heavenly kingdom.

# Deacons

## Deacon Mike Fish

Ordained: May 28, 2010, San Diego

Deacon Mike Fish went through RCIA at St. Gabriel and entered the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil in 2001. At Father Michael's invitation, he began formation for the permanent diaconate in 2005 and was ordained in 2010. He served as a deacon at St. Gabriel from 2010 to 2020, ending just as Covid-19 shut down began. In June 2020, he was reassigned to San Rafael parish in Rancho Bernardo. In 2023, re located to Indiana to live near his son who is a monk at Saint Meinrad Archabbey.

While serving at St. Gabriel he did hundreds of baptisms, many weddings and funeral vigil services, as well as taught adult faith formation classes, visited the sick and homebound, and provided spiritual direction.

In 2011, he led the Women's Retreat at the San Luis Rey Mission with Father Hal. His wife Joy helped in many ways at the parish including teaching religious education and assisting Deacon Mike with his presentations. She also worked in the parish office.



# Deacons



## Deacon Ricardo Elizondo

Ordained: May 25, 2012

Deacon Ricardo was appointed to St. Gabriel. Currently he is coordinator of the Extraordinary Ministers of Communion at the parish. He also trains ministers from across the Diocese. He serves as a spiritual guide for our youth, and as a speaker and advisor for Religious Education. He frequently speaks and helps with retreats. Deacon Ricardo teaches the Baptism preparation class and has baptized many children. He assists our priests at several Sunday Masses each week. His skill of communicating in both English and Spanish has been an asset to the parish. We are blessed to have him. We asked for his bio and true to his articulate talent, he gave us a personal perspective:

### How Deacon Ricardo Became a Deacon *by Deacon Ricardo Elizondo*



I was born in 1964 in Ciudad Obregon, which is a city in the state of Sonora in the northwestern part of Mexico. I am the seventh of eight children. I was always the shy, studious type (your typical nerd) always careful to take care of all my duties. We lived a block away from the local Cathedral and I remember that when I was a preteen, I would get up early on Sundays to go to 7am Mass to make sure I checked that box early.

When I was 25 and was working in Mexico as a computer programmer, I won a scholarship and the opportunity to get a masters in the U.S. It was in graduate school in Phoenix Arizona where I met my wife, Cynthia. After we got married, we lived for 3 years in Mexico and then moved back to the U.S. After living for 5 years in the San Francisco Bay Area, we moved to San Diego in the year 2000.

During all this time I had been what I call a “satellite Catholic”. That means that I was comfortably “in orbit” around Church: not too far to be flung out to outer space but not too close for a crash landing. I kept a close but safe distance.

All that changed around 2002, when I was 38, during a casual conversation with one of my brothers talking about acquaintances that went through tragic events which led them to God. This got me to think whether I was waiting for a tragedy to move closer to God myself. Being the analytical type, I embarked in a long investigation to discover whether I truly believed in God or not, so that I could live my life accordingly.



Two years and many books later the jury was still out, but then I got my hands on *Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis. There was something in that very simple and yet very deep little book that just floored me. When I put the book down I knew that God had me in a corner like saying “it is now your time to decide, are you in or are you out?”. With the trepidation of knowing that my life would forever change, I told him “I am in”. This was around 2004.

From that moment on my life started changing rapidly. One of the first things I did was to make an appointment with Father

# Deacons

Michael. Even though we had already been parishioners at St. Gabriel for 4 years, I did not really know him yet. When we met, I told him that I had just made the decision to take God seriously and wanted his advice on books and prayers. He listened to me in silence and then he asked “have you thought of being a deacon?”. I was so surprised by his sudden question that my answer came out of my mouth before I could stop it, “I am sorry, but I don’t kiss on the first date!” I started getting more and more involved in the Church (I started going to all 5 weekend Masses!), became a Lector and Minister of Communion, and a little over 3 years later, I went back to Father Michael to tell him “I think I am ready now”.

The four and a half years of diaconate preparation were a wonderful whirlwind. It was great to be with like-minded, like-hearted people busy learning about our common Love. I was ordained deacon on May 25, 2012 and it is one of the brightest highlights of my life.

The diaconate has provided me and my family irreplaceable graces. I can honestly say that there is no waking hour when I do not think of God, and I cherish my moments with Him. The life of a deacon is much more demanding than many imagine but I love every second of it. Of what I do, my greatest loves are the Holy Mass, the youth, and preaching. I cannot get enough of any of the three!

A popular career advice says, “do what you love and you will never work a single day”. I would change it to this, “follow God’s calling and you will always keep your joy”. I love God with all my heart, and I love being His deacon. His calling for me is a constant source of joy.



As of May 2023, Deacon Ricardo has welcomed over 300 baptized in the church.