

## **Our History - Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus**

### **Early Memoirs**

Very little is recorded of the history of the Church, its beginning and growth. Of the little that is known, we get a glimpse that in the early fifties, Peel Road and Kampung Pandan residents formed a nucleus of Catholics attending Sunday Mass at the existing Peel Road Convent Hall. Resident priests from St. John's and St. Anthony's came to serve the community as the "Servants of the Lord". In due course as the numbers increased and the attendance at these services improved it was deemed necessary to build a church in the locality to serve the spiritual needs of the Catholic Community.

### **Sacred Heart Church Building Committee**

As Peel Road and Kg. Pandan areas came under the jurisdiction of St. John's parish, the late Rev. Fr. Limat who was the parish priest then took the initiative and responsibility to form a church building committee. It is sad to note that no records were kept of the early pioneers of this project; however from memory we recall that the building committee members who served and whose names we can remember were the late Mr. W R Daniel, Mr. Baptist, Mr. H H Peterson, Mr. J D Nevisraj, Jothi, Mr. Anthony Raj and Mr. M Vincent. Together with Fr. Limat they went from house to house seeking "their flock" and inviting them to make personal contributions towards the building of their Church, month after month. 1958 and 1959 the land was purchased and the plans were drawn up by an architect, the late Mr. R B Periera. By early 1960, the Church was erected and completed with a seating capacity for about a thousand people.

### **The Building**

The building project consisted of the main church building with "wings" on both side and a parochial house adjacent to it. It is modern in design, very airy, spacious and free of the numerous pillars which are evident in most old churches. In the background of the main altar is a stained glass panel with mosaic design of the Sacred Heart of Jesus which is an important feature of the church building. We inherited the Main Altar from the old St. John's Church.

The Sacred Heart Church as it came to be named was officially blessed and declared open by His Grace, Tan Sri Archbishop Dominic Vendargon on 27 th of March 1960. Rev. Fr. Louis Guittat was its first Parish Priest. He was very zealous and ardent worker and promoter of the Faith. Under his leadership, several other priest served as assistants. Our records show the following.

Parish Priest	Post	Commenced	End of duty
Fr. Louis Guittat	Parish Priest	March 1960	Feb 1974
Fr. Paul Wan	Parish Priest	July 1960	June 1963
Fr. Joseph Tsai	Asst Priest	June 1963	Mar 1964
Fr. Peter Ly	Asst Priest	March 1964	
Fr. Anthony Chan On Dong	Asst Priest	Feb 1965	Feb 1966
Fr. Peter Bretaudeau	Parish Priest	July 1966	
Fr. Michael Perbert	Asst Priest	July 1966	
Fr. Peter Ly	Asst Priest	August 1967	Sept 1967
Fr. Daniel Lim Cheng Sai	Asst Priest	Sept 1967	Nov 1967
Fr. John HsiongPao Pin	Asst Priest	Nov 1967	July 1971
Fr. Simon Tang Yuen Min	Parish Priest	July 1971	Feb 1974

Fr. J.M. Couchouron	Asst Priest	Feb 1974	1980
Fr. Simon Tang Yuen Min	Parish Priest	Feb 1974	1983
Fr. John Wang Sung Yu	Parish Priest	Feb 1974	1985
Fr. Gilbert Alexis Griffon	Parish Priest	March 1985	Dec 1985
Fr. John Gnanpiragasam	Parish Priest	Dec 1993	Dec 1994
Fr. Martin Lam Peng Khuan	Asst Priest	Dec 1994	July 1998
Fr. Anthony Thomas	Parish Priest	July 1998	Aug 1991
Fr. Christopher W. Soosaipillai	Parish Priest	Aug 1991	May 2015
Fr. Surain Dorai Raj	Asst Priest		Dec 2008
Fr. Edwin Paul	Parish Priest	June 2015	Current

### **The Hall**

Sacred Heart Church then had only 2 buildings – the Church and the Parochial House together with a football field. In 1965, Fr. Guittat decided that a community hall was necessary for the Parish as the parish was growing and the need to have a hall became a necessity.

During Fr. Guittat’s leave in 1966, Fr. Peter Bretaudeau took over as acting Parish Priest and implemented the single storey hall with a stage and 3 partitions. The hall also included a kitchen.

It was during the early seventies that the youth of the parish “The Sacred Heart Youth Movement” made the best of the hall with its Sunday Coffee Corner called “The House of Tang” named after the Parish Priest Fr. Simon Tang.

The Sunday morning corner was an instant hit among parishioners as it gave us a chance to network and mix around; elderly, youth and kids.

Now as we look back to the past, our parish has grown tremendously in size and its needs have changed. As Francois de la Rochefoucauld once said, “The Only thing constant in life is Change.”.

And so my dear sisters and brothers, our parish has lived up to the constant change around us to suit and benefit all of us as we continue to head towards our future.

### **The Community Centre**

In 1991, the then Parish Priest Rev. Fr. G Griffon in consultation with the Parish Council decided that there was an urgent need for a Community Centre for the various activities of the Church, especially the Faith Education Classes.

A building committee was formed to raise funds and to construct the proposed 3 storey Community Centre on the land adjacent to the existing Kindergarten Building.

Funds were raised from parishioners from various fund raising projects of the 2 centres of the Parish namely the Church of the Sacred Heart and the Chapel of Our Lady of Good Health.

In September 1992, a 3 storey building was completed adjacent to the existing kindergarten building. The certificate of fitness was issued on the 23 rd of April 1993.

This is a new Community Centre for use by parishioners for the various meetings and gatherings and for Faith Education classes, computer classes and music classes.

### **Our New Building**

It was some seven years ago, that a group of members of the present Building Committee went to see Rev. Fr. Anthony Thomas and presented him with their idea of putting up a new building to annex the existing community centre. This was of course to take down the single storey hall and reconstruct a new 3 storey building. It was all well accepted by Rev. Fr. Thomas as he also had the same vision for Sacred Heart Church.

Not with standing this vision of Rev. Fr. Thomas, a committee was set up and endorsed by the Bishop's office to carry out this project. A notice ran out seeking volunteers to join this committee and as time was of essence several enthusiasts were roped in to join the committee. And thus the project "A Mission Possible" was launched.

The task to raise RM3million was indeed a tall order for all of us and with various activities, from second collections to breakfast sales, from old newspapers / cans to dinners, from individual collections and pledges to donations; we did it all to reach our target. And all this because we care for the future of our children and their children towards their basic Christian knowledge. Today after six years of fund raising, we give you the "Bangunan Dominic Vendargon."



Blessing: Archbishop Datuk Murphy Pakiam, Rev Father Anthony Thomas (next to him) officially opened the new community centre

*Taken from the booklet "A Mission Possible" June 2007*