

January 17, 2016

OBLATES in My Life

It must have been providential that I was born in North Battleford Saskatchewan.
A special place for the Oblates. A place where now Fr. Richard is living and writing.

One of my earliest memories was when at age 3 I wanted the "dzwonki" at St. Stan's. I cried so loud that my mother, Rozalia, had to take me out of the church. I cried all the way home. My desire was satisfied when I became an Altar Boy. Many fond memories come back and remind me of how prominent the Oblates were in the life of the parish
Fr. Richard, Dr. Joseph Bielawski and me were the dearest of friends way back when Fr. Puchniak was pastor of St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish. Fr. Mazur and the late Fr. Swiatek were not yet priests but prominent in the life of the parish as leading altar servers. Fr. Smith, Fr. Klita, Fr. Kwiatkowski, Fr. Engel, Fr. Ferdynus, Fr. Misiag and many others came along and influenced my life.

Being an Altar Boy was an honour and a privilege.

Trips to Port Dalhousie on the S.S. Cayuga were one of the wonderful perks of being an Altar Boy at St. Stan's.

Then came the C.Y.O. almost every Friday. A place where many permanent friendships developed. Many marriages occurred as a result of these friendships including mine to Stasia Michniewicz. We are still married, (58 years this year) and have seven children and 16 grandchildren. The late Fr. Swiatek married us at St. Stan's.

The Michniewicz family was always devoted to the life of St. Stanislaus Parish. My Father-in-law Frank and my Mother-in-law Stanisława were exemplary in the way they supported parish life and promoted religious vocations. The Oblates and the Felicians were a significant part of their daily life. Sister Colette can certainly attest to that.

Camp Polonia, where I was fortunate to act as a counselor, thanks to Fr. Engel, was a formative experience in my life. And there were many others, like the Oblate House of Studies at 99 Avenue Rd. There Fr. Sajewicz taught Polish. It was a good place to go after attending University of St. Michael's College during the day.

And then there was the Oblate House of Studies next to Michael Power High School (Run by the Basilian Fathers). The Oblate fathers taught at Michael Power. Frequent visits to this place to meet with Frs. Puchniak, Calinski, Wolak, Mazur, Nowakowski with my growing family remain as fond memories.

The late Fr. Michael Smith invited me to become a founding member of Copernicus Lodge. It was an honour and is a privilege to still be involved with this unique establishment that serves the needs of our aging Polish and diverse community.

Oblates continue to be part of the Rzadki life.

Stella and I attend Holy Angels, serviced by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, currently by Fr. Peter Gioppato, Pastor and Fr. Mariusz Wilk, Associate Pastor.

Thank you, Oblates of Mary Immaculate for the Service you have given to us.

May God continue to Bless the Oblates in their Mission on this 200th year anniversary.

Altar Servers of St. Stanislaus Memories from the past



Edward Rzadki
Walter Wolak
Richard Wolak
Ted Klich