

**Homily for March 19th 2016 Marking
the Occasion of the the Feast of St. Joseph, Our Parish Patron,
and the 120th Anniversary of the Death of Father Richard Maloney**

The Life of Fr. Richard Maloney

Today we also mark the Solemnity of St. Joseph, the patron of this Church, as well as the 120th anniversary of the death of Fr. Richard Maloney, whose remains are buried beneath St. Joseph's Church.

The details of the life of Fr. Maloney are limited. I've included on the front of the bulletin a write up on his life that was given to me.

I've read this over many times and reflected on the life of this priest. What we know from history is that Father Maloney was moved to our area at the age of 23. When he came here, he built the Churches in Markdale, Glenelg, and Dundalk. He himself served as priest in three of our communities: Markdale, Glenelg and Durham. At the age of 29, himself sick, he went out to administer the sacraments to a sick parishioner and on the way back he died.

For some time now, I have wondered, who was this priest? What kind of person was he? What type of spirit did he have? When I read his history and reflect upon it, as a priest myself, there are clues that I believe reveal the character of an amazing priest. Based on my own reflection, I would like to offer three outstanding traits that I see in Father Maloney:

1. **He was a man with VISION.** When a priest is moved to a new parish, it's very easy to just settle into what's already there. There is a routine that the people are used to and as a general rule, if you carry on with that, the people will be happy. For a good pastor, he's constantly discerning the question, "This is where we are today, but where is God calling us to be tomorrow?" For Father Maloney after observing parish life he came to the conclusion that major changes were needed to serve the Catholic community effectively. He envisioned building not only one but shockingly three new churches! Only a man with wide vision would set such a lofty goal.

1. **He was a man with ENERGY.** For a priest to be asked to build a church today, it's a great honour and privilege. At the same time, priests hesitate to say 'yes' because of what this will mean to them personally... it will demand everything from them, time, effort, tough decisions, and then there is also the human side of getting parishioners on board, helping them to work together, and a whole lot of patience. I doubt that the pressures of building a new church have changed that much over the years, even though the particular challenges may be different. Father Maloney's youthfulness helped him, with his energy, dedication, and handwork. If he could dream it, with God's help, he could make it happen! And indeed, he accomplished his dream.

1. **He was a PRIEST.** In the story of Father Maloney, it's easy to get caught up in the work that he did. But let's not forget, that his greatest work was done each day offering the Holy Mass, praying the Divine Office, and serving his parishioners spiritual needs. Father Maloney's death, I believe, gives us a deeper insight into his spirit. While he himself was very sick, he got word of a parishioner near death, and went. He could have stayed home and we would have understood. But he went. And after administering the sacraments to that parishioner, which only a priest can do, on his return home he himself died of pneumonia. Truly, this is a remarkable witness to the priesthood and to care of souls. The greatest blessing that someone could bestow upon a priest, or anyone really, is to say, "you helped me get to Heaven." Father Maloney did this, with the love a priestly heart, as his last act.

Father Richard Maloney, we thank you for your service. May God reward you for your labour and your faithfulness. May you rest in peace. Amen.