

THE SPIRIT

Volume 2, Issue 2

Spring/Summer 2002

SACRED HEART CHURCH

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Sacramento, CA

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Reflections of Change and Stability

In this issue of "The Spirit", we have tried to capture some of the dynamic changes that are occurring in our parish. The loss of our beloved Father O'Hara left many of us bewildered and saddened by his death from cancer. At the same time, the arrival of Father Walton has provided us with a new leadership anchored in the finest traditions of the Catholic church. These changes along with the introduction of the Disciples in Mission program have challenged us to be more introspective in our faith.

In addition to looking at the dynamic changes in the parish, we will continue sharing news about our parishioners and our ministries. Consistent with our past issues, we will discuss our "Windows of the Past" theme and try to provide some insights and understandings of the extraordinary stained glassed windows that inspire us to reflect on God's word.

Windows of the Past...

The Gospel: The Foundations of Our Faith

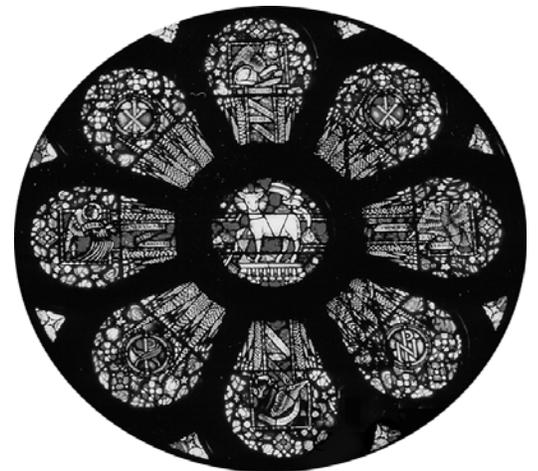
The large Rose Window on the westside of Sacred Heart Church illuminates the divine providence of God through the depiction of winged icons that represent the four Gospels. Moving clockwise around the window, the lion at the top symbolizes Saint Mark. The eagle represents Saint John, the ox, Saint Luke, and the man Saint Matthew. All of the symbols come from a vision of the prophet Ezekiel 1:10. The Lamb of God is represented in the center of the window.

The Gospel of Saint Mark is considered to be the oldest and most simply written of the four Gospels. The lion came to symbolize Saint Mark because his Gospel begins with the story of Saint John the Baptist in the desert, and the lion was considered to be the beast of the desert.

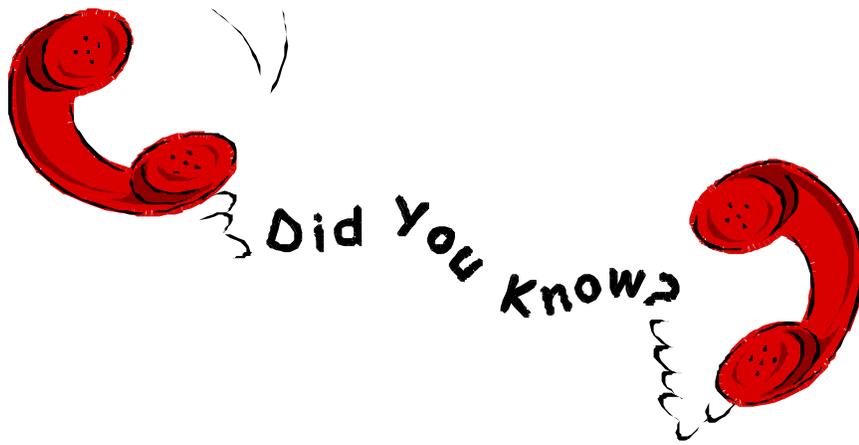
Throughout Saint Luke's Gospel, stress is laid on the mercy of God and Christ's compassion for sinners. Saint Luke also shows a special love for the poor and emphasizes Christ's charity and social justice. Saint Luke's Gospel begins with the story of priest Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist. Because the ox was the chief sacrificial animal in the temple of Jerusalem, the ox is associated with Saint Luke.

Saint John is considered to be Christ's most beloved disciple. The eagle in its soaring flight symbolizes Saint John's sublime thoughts in the Gospel.

The Gospel according to Saint Matthew is the first in the New Testament, not because of its time of composition, but because of the high esteem of his work and its importance in the early days of Christianity.



Collectively, our beloved Apostles have provided us with an eternal truth of God that carries us through the ages. In one of Father Walton's early homilies at Sacred Heart, he reminded us of the tradition of crossing ourselves before we listen to the Gospel. We make a small cross on our forehead, our mouth, and our hearts. This is to remind us to think, speak, and act from the heart as we make the Gospel relevant to ourselves and to others. The West Rose Window and its symbols are a reminder to us that it is the sacredness of the Gospel that guides our faith.



- Sister Mary O’Meara celebrated her Golden Jubilee at a special Mass and reception on Saturday, May 11, 2002. Thank you, Sister, for your 50 years of dedicated service and the time you’ve spent at Sacred Heart educating our youngsters.
- The Sacred Heart Parish Hall was rededicated on March 17, 2002 and is now known as Fr. Michael O’Hara Hall, a lasting tribute to his 17 years as pastor of our parish.
- Recognized for her special accomplishments, **Lorelei Olin** was selected Sacramento Deanery Woman of the Year 2002, representing the Sacred Heart Altar Society. Congratulations, Lorelei!!
- **Bella** (Fr. O’Hara’s black German Shepherd) has moved from the Sacred Heart rectory and has taken up residence on 45th Street with **Jane and George Cook**. After serving as Father’s ever-faithful companion and friend before his death, she has made a good adjustment to her new home and has even learned to ride in a car.
- The Diocesan Speech Contest was won by Sacred Heart School’s own **Abby Johnson**, an eighth grader. Abby also won first place for the Diocesan Cheerleading Speech Contest. Congratulations, Abby, for a job well done!!
- **Stephanie Coward** (fourth grade) recently won a prize in the Elks Club Essay Contest. **Sophie Tornatore** and **David Tracy**, both sixth graders, also received honorable mentions. Way to go!!
- Consistently from 1950 through 1983, **George and Jane Cook** had at least one of their eleven children attending Sacred Heart School during that 33 year period. Alyssa Cook, a grandchild, is presently enrolled in the school as a second grader.
- **Schola Cantorum**, under the direction of **Don Kendrick**, is celebrating its tenth anniversary here at Sacred Heart. Thanks to Don and all of the group’s members for their hard work in providing beautiful and inspiring music to enhance our liturgies. We are so proud to have you in our parish.
- The new RCIA group for 2002-03 has already attracted ten members. They have been meeting once each month since January to learn a little bit about the Catholic faith before making the commitment to begin classes in the Fall.
- The 21 Disciples in Mission faith-sharing groups that met throughout Lent were led by a team of remarkable facilitators, under the able direction of Small Groups

Coordinator **Marti Geiger**. Our thanks to Marti and her group leaders **Tom Slakey, Tony Caselli, Terri Barbeau, Tila Madrigal, Jim and Cindi Collins, Andrew and Collette Demitis, Don Richards, Kathy Takai, Jim and Kim Paquette, Erin Saenz, Cathy and Dean Dana, Frank Werry, Jean Winchell, Kathryn McGuire, Mike and Cathy Davis, Teresa Harris, Ginger Barr, Maureen Allen, Rita Spillane, Laurlynn Jones, and Margo Brown.**

■ **Elsie Weisel** and **Ann Sertich** spend countless hours throughout the year crocheting warm caps for the Loaves and Fishes facility—two more in Sacred Heart’s list of unsung heroes!

A special thanks goes to **Anne Sertich** for 15 years of service as Treasurer of the Altar Society.

■ This is the tenth year that **Dan Dillon** has faithfully shown up to help in assembling and dismantling the Christmas crib scene and the Lenten sanctuary cross used to decorate the church environment. Thanks, Dan, for your dedication and service.

So long for now...

THE SPIRIT

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PARISH WELCOMES FATHER WALTON

Sacred Heart Parish is pleased to welcome Father Robert Walton as pastor, after the passing of Father Michael O'Hara. Father Walton brings to Sacred Heart Parish extensive experience in parish activities and a valuable connection with the Diocese office.

Father Walton grew up in the Sacramento area and attended Sacramento State College. He then transferred to St. Patrick's seminary in Menlo Park and was ordained in 1974 in Sacramento. Father Walton's first assignment was as an assistant pastor at St. Basil's Parish in Vallejo, where he remained for 5 years. In September 1979, he was transferred to Sacred Heart Parish where he served as assistant pastor until December 1980.

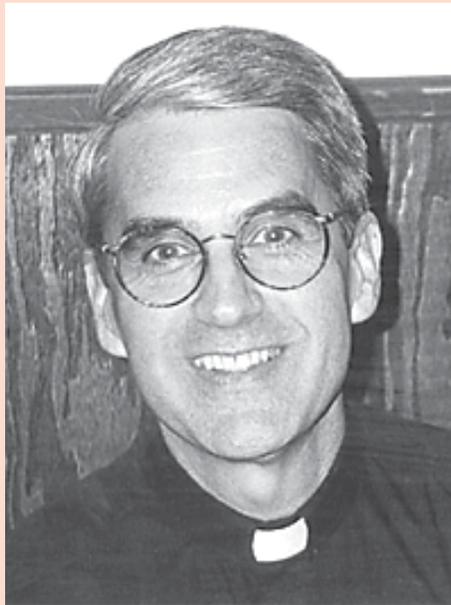
At the beginning of 1981, Father Walton was appointed to the Bishop's staff for the Diocese of Sacramento. For seven years, he was secretary to Bishop Quinn and then served as Vicar General of the Sacramento Diocese until Bishop Quinn's retirement in 1993. Upon Bishop Weigand's appointment, Father Walton remained as Vicar General of the Sacramento Diocese and was given the additional title of "Moderator of the Curia".

In February 2002, Father Walton was appointed pastor of Sacred Heart parish and at present also continues to serve as Vicar General of the Sacramento Diocese on a part time basis. In his capacity as Vicar General, he oversees the diocese's administrative staff, but fortunately for all of us at Sacred Heart, his parish activities remain his primary duty.

Father Walton wants every parishioner to know that he feels very welcome and is grateful to those who have offered their talents to assist him since his arrival. He expresses a special thanks to Father Sylvester and Sister Martin who have given him such wonderful support in his new pastoral role.

During his first few months, Father Walton was particularly impressed with the number of parishioners enrolled in Disciples in Mission, calling it a testament to the faith-filled participation of the parish in this worthy project. Now Father is paying particular attention to the diocesan capital campaign and making Sacred Heart's participation in this new project a success.

What is in store for the future? Father Walton is quick to point out that he is still in the process of observing and listening, familiarizing himself with the parish structure and programs, and paying particular attention to parish activities. He believes that Sacred Heart represents a wonderful tradition of the faith and is appreciative of the historical "bones" of the parish. His goals for the future: "How can I be a part of the Sacred Heart Parish tradition and in what way can I contribute?"



Preserving Our Past...

Building Our Future

It has been over 40 years since Sacred Heart Parish last participated in a Diocesan Capital Campaign. In the late 1960's, Sacred Heart parishioners stepped forward and led the Diocese in support of its then 5-year campaign. As we enter a new century and millennium, Sacred Heart is being asked again to participate in a campaign to help meet the needs of the Church in Northern California in the immediate future.

In this campaign, our parish has the opportunity to not only help causes outside of our parish boundary, but also to raise funds for our own parish needs. Of the total funds raised, our parish retains 25 percent of all funds pledged up to our Diocesan goal and 50 percent of all funds over the goal. Our parish challenge is \$1,000,000. Parish needs include needed improvements to the interior and exterior of our church, additional tuition assistance for families of our parish school, and improvements and repairs to our school plant.

With the generous support of our many parish volunteers and the "well known" generosity of our parishioners, 69 families pledged over \$550,000 within the first weeks of the campaign.

As General Chairman of the Campaign, I want to personally thank our parish volunteers who are visiting all of our parish households, explaining both the Diocesan and Parish campaign case statements, and to all of our parishioners who have donated so generously to the campaign.

--Bob Granucci

And our appreciation to Bob who has so generously given of his time and energy to make this effort such a success!

“Go and Make Disciples...”



Group Leader Margo Brown prepares for a faith-sharing session in her home..

Have you wondered what all the “buzz” was about in our parish at the beginning of the year? There’s a new air of excitement with the introduction of the Disciples in Mission program and the faith-sharing groups that met during Lent throughout the parish.

“One of the goals of the Disciples in Mission program” says Kathy Pooler, Parish Leadership Team Coordinator, “is to live our faith more fully, to become more enthusiastic about it so that we will want to share it with others. The faith sharing groups were designed to make that happen. The underlying idea is that, within each of us, we really do have the capability of transforming the world for Christ if we can just get comfortable with sharing the Good News of the Gospel with others.”



Small group participants Beth Spencer, Sharon Valenzuela, Mary Brothers and Ann Tracy reflect on faith-sharing experience..



Above, Adriana and Frank Paoletti chat with Marilyn Tornatore after a group session.

The Disciples in Mission program was adopted by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and is being implemented in dioceses and parishes throughout the country. For Sacred Heart parish, a leadership team was formed in the summer of 2001 at the behest of our beloved deceased pastor Fr. O’Hara. Training throughout the Fall 2001, the leadership team introduced Disciples in Mission at all Masses on the weekend of January 6, 2002.

The Disciples in Mission program runs for a three year period and centers around the formation and activities of small prayer groups. These groups meet once a week, primarily during the Lenten season, and are guided by published materials that foster personal reflection and faith sharing within the group. Materials are centered around the Lectionary readings for the six Sundays of Lent and include special booklets for families and teen groups. Each group has a leader who functions as a facilitator for group discussion as outlined in the materials.

This year’s enrollment was almost overwhelming for the first year of a new program. Twenty parishioners

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Disciples in Mission Parish Leadership Team gather for a planning session at the Mercy Center Auburn. From left to right (standing) are Jim Paquette, Chuck Zanetti, Joan Dillon, Joyce Flynn, Laurlynn Jones, Tony Caselli and Sr. Mary Martin. Seated are Marti Geiger, Small Groups Coordinator, and Kathy Pooler, Parish Coordinator.

“Evangelization is ‘Having Jesus in my heart and sharing it with others’”. —Mother Teresa



(continued from page 4)

stepped forward to participate in the special group leader training and then went on to facilitate Lenten faith sharing sessions for approximately 180 total participants.

The task of assigning participants to a group fell to the Disciples in Mission Small Group Coordinator, Marti Geiger. Somewhat like a giant jigsaw puzzle, Marti spread Sign-up cards on her living room floor and judiciously sorted and resorted them to balance out the groups and to meet each participant’s preferred time schedule.

“Obviously, the program has touched a nerve with parishioners because enrollment was twice what we had expected,” Marti confided. “Clearly this is a program whose time has come.”

After the feast of Easter, a new phase of the Disciples in Mission program began. On April 14, a Parish Reflection Day was held to discuss the impact of the program and to identify the parish activities that will continue to foster the evangelization process.

“It was an opportunity for program participants and non-participants alike to come together as a community and to prepare for next year’s program,” says Kathy. “What a wonderful way to share our faith and to respond to Christ’s call to ‘Go and make disciples’.”



Catechumens, candidates and sponsors gather together in the church hall before final steps to the Rite of Christian Initiation.

Twenty Received into Parish Community

Every Tuesday evening for eight months, Father O’Hara Hall was filled with an electric energy generated from the enthusiasm of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). These dedicated catechumens and candidates met regularly to orient, query, and prepare themselves for the rite of acceptance into the Catholic Church. Each week they participated in an active learning environment where a team of local parishioners, led by Sr. Mary Martin, dialogued with them about scripture and topics related to Catholicism. Through role-playing, reading, interpreting the scripture, and sharing their love and faith with each other, the RCIA candidates learned to scrutinize and reflect on the conversion process.

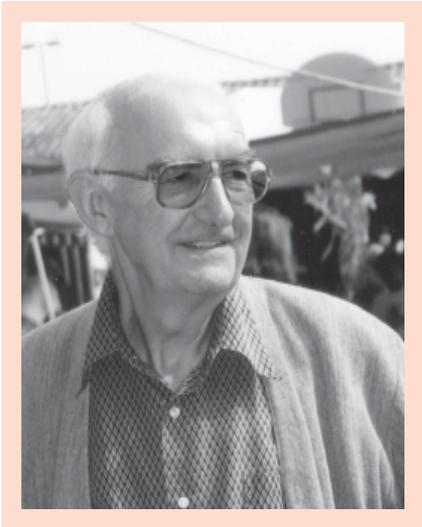
This year, the following RCIA Catechumens were baptized, confirmed and received Holy Communion at the Easter Vigil service: Herb Edmon, Cindy Junta, Lynette Kleinfall, Heather Spencer, Timothy Talbert, Jennifer Tillman, Joe Tillman, and Bridget Willie. In addition, Candidates receiving the sacraments of Confirmation and Holy Eucharist the same evening were: Katherine Benbrook, Bradley Benbrook, Chris Brocchini, Pamela Burmester, Cindi Colbert, Derek Doll, Shane Flautt, Mark Hales, Diane Stevenson, Edna Wright, and Dave Zian.

We congratulate and welcome you to Sacred Heart Parish.

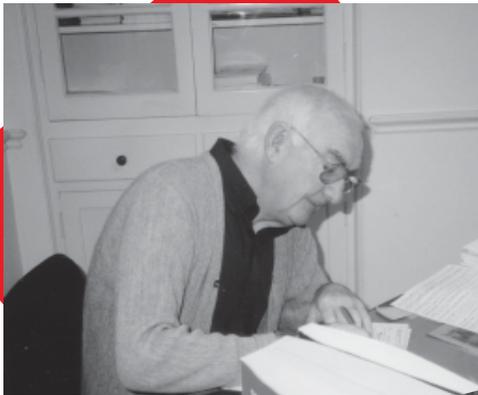
***“You were once
darkness,
but now
you are light
in the Lord.
Live as
children of light,
for light
produces
every kind of
goodness
and
righteousness
and
truth.”***
--Ephesians 5:8-9

In Loving Memory....

Fr. Michael O'Hara 1941-2001



Above, Fr. Mike enjoys a few moments at the Fall Festival 2000. Below, Father is seen busy at work in the rectory, but always found time to spend a playful session with his ever-faithful companion Bella.



It happened so quickly! Fr. Mike had returned from his vacation in Ireland. This was his annual “retreat” where, relaxing with his family, he was always able to rekindle his faith and renew his commitment to his priestly vocation. It was quality time spent with his brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews. This trip, however, was somewhat poignant, as just a few short months previously his younger sister had died. He himself was feeling some physical discomfort, but it was nothing serious; he would have it checked out when he returned to Sacramento. He arrived back, full of enthusiasm, looking forward to working with the new principal of the school and preparing for the huge Diocesan financial campaign. So much to be done! Then came the initial medical diagnosis on September 12, 2001 and on December 19 he was gone. So fast!

Fr. Mike first came to Sacred Heart Church as an associate Pastor in 1974. In 1979 he was transferred to St. Patrick’s Church in Grass Valley and returned to Sacred Heart as Pastor in 1984. He enjoyed 22 years of priestly ministry here among us and in turn was revered and enjoyed by his parish family. He was our pastor but also to many, a true friend, a confidant and a golfing buddy. He truly touched the lives of many—young and old alike.

Fr. Mike’s fondness for and rapport with the children of the parish is legendary. He thoroughly enjoyed being around them, and they saw him not as an authority figure but as their friend. Whether walking through the schoolyard bantering and exchanging high fives or discussing tuition and the budget at a School Board meeting, he always was always comfortable there. He visited the school everyday and had a keen understanding of the importance of catholic education. At the same time, he realized that was merely the beginning, as year after year at Back to School Night, he chided parents by reminding them that enrolling their children in catholic school was meaningless if they did not take them to church on Sundays.

In addition to his relationship with children, he gained the respect and confidence of the adult parish community. Whether it was in one-on-one counseling, or in a group discussion, he was able to convey a deep sense of caring and understanding. Many people have fond and appreciative memories of his quiet encouragement or his genuine concern in time of need or crisis. When he heard of an illness or a tragedy, he was quick to visit, and his mere presence was a source of consolation and strength. Those who knew him well understood that his sometimes gruff and stern manner had no guile in it. He had no hidden agenda but was motivated simply by his love and caring for the parish and its parishioners.

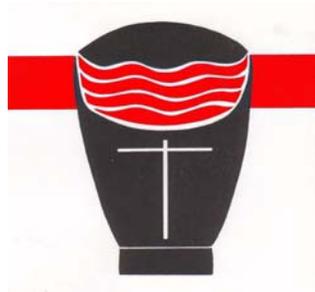
Over the 17 years, Fr. Mike had become so much of a “presence” at Sacred Heart that for many it is difficult to imagine that he is gone. For many of the younger generation he was the only priest they knew, and the void is so much greater. They grew up with him. He baptized them, gave them First Communion, was present for their Confirmation, and they fully expected that one day he would officiate at their wedding. Oh, so fast, how things change!

(continued on page 7)

Baptisms 2001

Alencia Monique Camargo
Payton Rianda
Julio Miken Lewis
Jenner Timothy Chapman
Garrison Michael Gates
Cole Joseph Gengos
Christina Marie Vail
Ashley Howard
Shay Christine Mellor
Justine Ashley Talag Mar
Michaelle Natalie Warne
Luis A. Yanez
Sophia Rayvon Garcia
Poisin Lee McMullen
Joseph Robert Macke
Vivian Milne
Julia Kuzmich
Jack Thomas Klosinski
Nichola S. Sapunor
Matthew A. Sapunor
Reed Gene Moore
Angus Joseph Moore
Domenika Simone
Bagatelos

Brendan Seamus Higgins
Isabelle Winger
Samantha Vicochea
Logan Marcsisin
Margaret Wilton Swanson
Collin Thomas Lee



Diego Silva
Christopher Geraty
Lilly Anne McLoughlin
Brittie Rianda
Anna Craig
Taryn Elise Kilmer
Makenna Claire Chapman
Annette Marie Masterson
Peter Timothy Sexton
McAleese

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Fr. Mike enjoyed life. He was a good priest and was fully aware of his own limitations, as we know from his comment to Bishop Weigand before his death: "I've had my ups and downs." He was a wonderful friend and a generous, hospitable shepherd. He had a wonderful sense of humor and thoroughly enjoyed a good joke. He was a man of his word and expected no less from all of us. He has left his imprint on Sacred Heart Parish, and his influence, particularly on the youth of the parish, may well be felt for many years to come.

Fr. Mike's life and priesthood were groomed, nurtured and enriched by his family in Ireland, then by the communities who were privileged to have him serve—St. John the Baptist Parish, Folsom; St. Patrick Parish, Placerville; St. Patrick Parish, Grass Valley; and finally, in a special way, at our own Sacred Heart. He was very fortunate to have the time to prepare for his next journey. He died surrounded by family and friends. So fast, yet so blessed! He is missed!

Ar dheis De go raimh a anam.
May he be at the right hand of God.

--Article by Niall Meagher

RCIA 2001

Emil Masterson
Natalie Rincon
Miranda Herrera
Megan Breanne Caballero
Ahmari Chantelle Gilchrist
Veronica Spencer
Ella Marie Lagomarsino
Lane Miller Lagomarsino
Henry Stewart Bauer
Alec Tyler Clark
Ryan Walker McCey
Mercedes Kristine Ayala
Emily Anne O'Connor
Patrick Walter York
Dean Xavier Kupp
Matthew Alexander Schaber
Veileree-Ezreigh B. Ponio
Sara Elizabeth de la Torre
David O'Dea Cook
Natalie A. Storm
Joseph Clark Sison
Emily Marie Mistica
Kathryn T. Benson
David I. Jensen

Greg Bauer
Sara Brown
Bill Bullock
Regina Camacho
Serena Collins
Christina Crowe
Susan DeNardo
Janis Franklin
Alana Glen
Allan Harlow
Kerri McConaha
Melissa Meuser
Chris Rincon
Brandy Spencer
Pamella Dawn Herrera
Johann Marisa Rubia
Tracy Bieberly
Matthew Brozek
Orestes Caballero
Hal Coburn
Rebecca Covington
Sally DeNardo
Brooke Fahey
James Gilchrist
Deborah Gonzales
Drew Johnson
Chris Maier
Lori Rianda
Sallianne Rodriguez
Richard Woonacott
Gilbert Ronald Herrera



Marriages 2001



Francesca J. Negri & John R. McIntyre
Maureen L. Byrne & Mark C. Richardson
Edna Navarro & Orel Denson
Alivia Bernans & Gerard Gasca
Renelle L. Cunanan & Christian B. Maier
Lisa D. Howell & Daniel C. Overholt
Elizabeth F. Wegge & Jason A. Bennett
Hoeuy S. Pho & Carlos R. Reyes
Rebecca Finn & Daniel C. Tretola
Jennifer J. Mendonca & Andrew B. Richards
Maria C. Garcia & Patrick M. Rossier
Katherina Lee Cvitanov & Ryan James Tinney
Amy Catherine Smith & Michael John Kuzmich
Tracy K. Plog & Robert W. Sharp, Jr.
Susan DeNardo & Norman Gonzales