

**Reverend Monsignor Alexander (Al) C. George<sup>1</sup>**  
**1930 - 2017**

Fr. Alexander George came to Christ the King as Associate Pastor in 1977. He had previously been Associate Pastor at St. Agnes Parish and prior to that at Mary Star of the Sea in San Pedro. He had formed such bonds with parishioners at his former parish that some of them came to see Fr. George with their problems even after he moved to Christ the King.

When the pastor of a parish dies on the job or terminates his pastorate for health reasons, an administrator is frequently appointed on an interim basis before a new pastor is selected. However, when Msgr. Alker died, no administrator was appointed at Christ the King. On November 1, 1979, Cardinal Timothy Manning appointed Fr. George pastor of the parish, a position he held for the next 20 years. Fr. George continued with what Msgr. Alker had created at Christ the King – a parish of community and spirituality, a parish to which people wanted to belong. He always had a meaningful message in his homilies. He counseled people with all kinds of problems. He fed homeless people who knocked at the Rectory door. He helped parishioners in need to find housing, legal aid, and financial assistance. He provided help and guidance to several newly ordained priests who were appointed to Christ the King for their first assignments.

While Fr. George was Pastor, he received assistance from the parish's first Deacon, Arthur Carr. Art Carr was loved by the people of the parish, many of whom remember his heartfelt homilies about devotion and God's mercy. They also remember his long struggle with cancer that finally took his life.

Teresa Casaus, known to the parish as "Terry," also provided invaluable assistance. She began her work for the parish by directing the Religious Education Program. She then became the Wedding Coordinator. Subsequently, her responsibilities were expanded to include managing the parish office and records. Terry had the title of Business Manger, but her duties were broader than that. She

scheduled Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers and organized liturgical events, among many other things. After 25 years at Christ the King, during which time she also maintained a full-time position as an advertising executive, she retired as Business Manager on 31 March 2000. The parish community as a whole expressed their gratitude for her many years of service in a moving liturgy celebrated on the Sunday preceding her retirement.

Among the memorable celebrations that took place while Fr. George was pastor was the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the parish in 1986. It was celebrated with the first of many outdoor liturgies. Bishop John Ward presided at this mass and priests from neighboring parishes concelebrated. In May 1990, a special liturgy in honor of Fr. George's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Ordination to the Priesthood was held in the schoolyard. Bishop Ward presided. Concelebrants were Fr. George's younger brother, Fr. Joseph George, former associates and priests from neighboring parishes. Among those who participated was Antonio Cacciapuoti who served as transitional deacon (his ordination to the priesthood would not take place for another year.)

Fr. George was delighted to have his mother and father, his five brothers, his sister, and many out-of-town relatives and friends join the festivities. A reception was held for everyone in attendance and school children performed special skits for Fr. George and his special guests.

In 1999, Fr. George announced to a stunned congregation that he was going to retire due to his health. To many of us, it would be hard to imagine Christ the King without Fr. George. To the regret of many, his pastorate came to an end on 1 July 1999. Fr. George celebrated his last mass as a pastor in a moving ceremony, with many tributes from laity and fellow priests. This mass was followed by a reception where parishioners stood in a long and slow-moving line to say their farewells to Fr. George.

Fr. George's retirement was not the final chapter in his long association with the parish. He returned once again to Christ the King Church to participate in another special liturgy. The Holy Father John Paul II

bestowed the title of Prelate of Honor (Monsignor) on Fr. George in April 2000. On 24 September, Fr. George's investiture ceremony was held during a Sunday 10:30 A.M. liturgy. Msgr. Lloyd Torgerson, Episcopal Vicar, Our Lady of Angeles Region, presided and the Most Reverend Bishop Gerald Wilkerson, Regional Bishop of the San Fernando area, read the papal proclamation bestowing this honor. Msgr. Torgerson, Msgr. George and Bishop Wilkerson were all classmates at St. John's Seminary in Camarillo, and all were ordained to the priesthood on 1 May 1965 by Cardinal McIntyre at St. Vibiana's Cathedral.

<sup>1</sup> Christ the King Church 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, yearbook, Editor: Elizabeth N. Nguyen, pp 30-31.