



OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL
HELP PARISH

JUNE 23, 2019
FEAST DAY MASS
& NOVENA PRAYER

A Brief History of the Parish

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish was established by the Redemptorists in 1923. The boundaries as drawn up by the Archdiocese of Vancouver are Balaclava Street to the east, Blanca Street to the west; English Bay to the north and West 25th Avenue to the south which was adjusted to West 20th Avenue in 1966.

The first church was a modest shoebox structure located at 3425 West Broadway on what were the abandoned premises of a store. The interior was simple - an altar, sanctuary and sacristy, a confessional, organ and kitchen chairs for seats. Heating was supplied by two portable oil stoves.

The present site at Crown and West 10th was secured in 1924 from Crown Lands at a public auction. It was not a pretty site! Burnt-out tree stumps and brushwood made up most of it. Within a few months, the site was cleared and plans were drawn up for a church.

It was surely by the grace of God through the intercession of Our Blessed Mother that the church building was complete in just one year. Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church opened for Divine Services on 15 November 1925. The simple and elegant new building was designed to accommodate 250 people and was expanded in 1953.

OLPH School opened its doors to Grades 1 through 8 in 1927 and has also undergone its share of transformations. The first building, which still stands at the centre of the present complex, was built through the generosity of an early parishioner, Mrs. Lily Lefebvre, and the vision of the first pastor, Father Fred Coghlan. Since the building of that first structure, the parishioners of Our Lady's parish and parents of Our Lady's school have built three additions to the original building.

Our Lady's Parish is home to over 630 registered families.

Mission Statement

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish is a liturgical Catholic community of disciples of all ages, learning together the Gospel of Christ that we might serve those beyond ourselves through spiritual development, education, justice formation and prayer.

Inspired and guided by our Redemptorist pastors and in the embrace of Mary, we welcome all. We thank God for our gifts and promise to use them well to follow in Christ's footsteps in all aspects of our life."

Pastor's Message



Dear Parishioners,
Happy Feast Day! For those unaware, the actual feast of Our Lady of Perpetual Help falls on Thursday, June 27 so please continue your prayers of praise and invocation in the days to come.

Anyone visiting our church would be struck by the beauty of the icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. The depth and beauty of the symbols and artistry of this miraculous icon is a story that must be told again and again.

In keeping with the mandate of the Redemptorists by Pope Pius IX to “make her known” to all the world we will continue our efforts to tell the story of redemption with the aid of the Mother of God in every way we can.

In the last few years, we have made the presence of our Blessed Mother and her Son visible, not just in the church, but outside as well. We did this when we marked the 150th anniversary of the Icon of Love four years ago by building the Jubilee Grotto in the north-facing lawn. It offers a beautiful space to sit and be present with Our Lady or to say the rosary. We also refurbished a bronze figure of Our Lady of Perpetual Help which was gifted to us. This was enshrined beside the Parish Office, the perfect spot for a prayer of gratitude on your way to the office or when you get off the bus. Speaking of gratitude, we were blessed this year with a wonderful collection of crucifixes which we installed in the choir loft. This too provides us with another space for prayer and meditation.

Prayer must be a constant in our lives. Our Mother of Perpetual Help tugs at our hearts constantly, inviting us to entrust our troubles to her. Let us not forget, by the grace of God she is indeed our dearest miracle worker. She just needs our faith in her Son to make good things happen in our lives. Dear friends, the blessings have indeed been abundant. Let us never forget to offer our praise and thanksgiving to God for everything. Our Lady of Perpetual Help, pray for us.

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Babu Mathew, CSsR



Vision 2025 and Beyond

Much has been done by the Redemptorists Fathers to nurture and provide for the spiritual needs of this community over the last 95 years. Through Masses, novenas, our top-rated academic school, RCIA and music and youth programs, our parish has established a strong presence that extends beyond its physical environs.

However, there is more to be done. Our vision for this community is one that not only extends into the next 2-3 generations but beyond. We have laid down strong roots in this community of families and wish to continue to be a presence not for just these parishioners but also for the new families entering our parish boundaries.

The 100-year anniversary of the Redemptorists in Vancouver in 2025 will be marked by two milestone development projects at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish with three objectives:

- Create a sustainable presence for the Redemptorists in the property we own and occupy
- Provide families with a means to continue to stay within and keep their ties with this parish
- Provide a means to attract high quality teachers to stay and teach at OLPH school

The two projects are:

A) AFFORDABLE HOUSING which will:

- Provide new, safe accommodation for the Redemptorist Fathers
- Provide a financially viable living arrangement for the Redemptorists in the wake of the proposed School Tax.
- Provide 1/2/3 bed-room units for parish families including teachers, seniors and young families
- Provide a multi-purpose room which the parish can use
-

B) A NEW CHURCH BUILDING which will:

- Accommodate 400 people for Mass/liturgical gathering
- Reposition the tabernacle within the sanctuary
- Have a Confessional which meets Archdiocesan recommendations
- Provide a larger sacristy which meets safe environment needs for altar servers
- Provide easier facilities access to seniors and disabled
- Give us an Adoration Chapel
- Provide additional meeting rooms
- Have a large foyer for gathering
- Have a soundproof crying room
- Provide adequate underground parking
- Meet the required seismic safety standards

Centennial Prayer

Heavenly Father, † we come to you at this time of our parish renewal † to ask you to open our eyes to see the beautiful plan you have in mind for us. † We acknowledge that everything we have comes from you † and we give thanks for these blessings.

Thank you for blessing us with the land on which we gather, † our beautiful parish and its people, † the Redemptorists who guide our community, † and their mission to spread the Word of God to those in need.

Thank you for providing us with our shared mission to make Our Lady of Perpetual Help known, † so that all may see the love and passion she has for us. † Thank you for all the beauty and joy you have placed in our lives, † and for your never-ending generosity and unconditional love.

Father, † we humbly ask You to guide this parish to a new dawn of unity in spirit † that will connect us with God and one another in a more profound way. Enable us to see with clarity † the vision You have for us in this endeavor.

Grant us a spirit of trust and openness † as we come together to reimagine † how best we may reach out in service to the community. † Bless the work of our hands, † that we may touch the lives of others. †

We know that You are wise, gracious and all-knowing. Give us counsel in our time of decisions, † so that we may move toward a future that fulfills Your will, † and leads us along the glorious path You have laid down for us. † Amen.

St Alphonsus: Pray for us.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help: Prayer for us.

*Composed by Grade 7 students,
OLPH School, 2019.*

The Icon

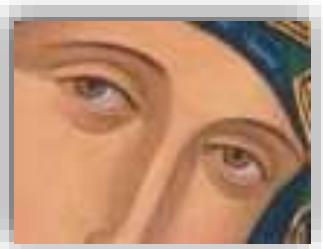


This beloved picture may look strange to modern Western eyes. It doesn't portray Mary as a delicate maiden with downcast eyes. Her direct gaze and strong features command our attention. We are struck by the unrealistic qualities of the figures. Jesus is the size of a toddler but his features are those of an older child. Mary and Jesus aren't set in a scene but float against a background of gold.

The icon is rendered in the Byzantine style of the Eastern Church. The purpose of this style of art is not to show a beautiful scene or person but to convey a beautiful spiritual message. Because the artist is trying to communicate something more glorious than anything in this world, the picture isn't a realistic portrayal. A Byzantine painting is like a door. It is an invitation to open it and go beyond. Our Lady's blue Garment is the color worn by mothers in Palestine, symbolic that Mary is both Virgin and Mother. Her red tunic underneath is the color worn by Virgins during the time of Jesus. Both Mary and Jesus' Clothing are colors of royalty.



What are some of the major symbols in the icon? First of all, Mary, dominates the picture and because she looks straight at you -- not at Jesus, not at heaven, not at the angels above her head. She looks at you as if to tell you something very important. Her eyes seem serious, even sad, but they command attention. They are always turned toward us to let us know that she sees our troubles. They also tenderly plead for us to avoid sin and remain faithful to and love her son, Jesus. Mary's mouth is tiny and silent for prayer, meditation and recollection.



The eight-point star on her forehead was probably added by a later artist to represent the Eastern idea that Mary is the star that leads us to Jesus. To reinforce the symbolism, there is an ornamental four-point cross to the left of the star on her headdress.



Mary's gaze is fixed on us but her arms hold Jesus. In Byzantine icons, Mary is never shown without Jesus because Christ is central to the faith. Jesus too is wearing the clothes of royalty. Only an Emperor could wear the green tunic, red sash, and gold brocade portrayed in the picture. The Greek initials to the right of the child and his halo decorated with a cross proclaim that he is "Jesus Christ."

Jesus isn't looking at us or at Mary or at the angels. Jesus' hands are turned downward, a symbol of His placing the Graces of Redemption in her hands. These Graces are available to any and to all who implore her for them through prayer.



Though he clings to his mother, he's looking away, at something we can't see -- something that made him run so fast to his mother that one of his sandals has almost fallen off, something that makes him cling to her for protection and love. The loose sandal also represents Christ's divine nature, untied from the bounds of earth. The sandal that remains secure is symbolic of His human nature.



What would frighten a little boy, even the Son of God, so much? The figures that hover on either side of Jesus and Mary -- the Greek letters above them identify them as Archangels Gabriel and Michael -- provide us with the answer. Rather than carrying harps or trumpets of praise, they bear the instruments of Christ's Passion.

On the left, Michael holds an urn filled with the gall that the soldiers offered to Jesus on the cross, the lance that pierced his side, and the reed with the sponge. To the right, Gabriel carries the cross and four nails.



Jesus has seen part of his destiny -- the suffering and death he will undergo. Though he is God, he is human as well and afraid of this terrifying future. He has run to his mother, who holds him close in this moment of panic, the same way she will be close by his side through his life and death. While she can't spare him his suffering, she can love and comfort him.

So why is Mary looking so intently at us instead of her child in need? Her gaze brings us into the story, makes us part of the painting and the pain. Her gaze tells us that just as Jesus ran to his mother and found refuge, so too may we run to Mary.



Her hand does not clasp the hands of her frightened son in a protective grip, but remains open, inviting us to put our hands in hers and join with Jesus.

Mary knows there are many things in our lives that are dangerous and terrifying, and that we need someone to turn to in times of suffering and dread. She offers us the same comfort and love she gave to Jesus. She tells us to run to her as fast as Jesus did because she is there for us.

Recessional Hymn

HAIL HOLY QUEEN ENTHRONED ABOVE

1. Hail, Holy Queen enthroned above, O Maria!
Hail, Mother of mercy and of love, O Maria!

Refrain:

Triumph all ye cherubim!
Sing with us ye seraphim!
Heaven and earth resound the hymn!
Salve, salve, salve, Regina!

2. Our life, our sweetness here below, O Maria!
Our hope in sorrow and in woe, O Maria!

Refrain

3. As exiles all to you we cry, O Maria!
Come soothe with hope our misery, O Maria!

Refrain

4. Turn then most gracious advocate, O Maria!
Toward us your eyes compassionate, O Maria!

Refrain

5. O gentle, loving, holy one, O Maria!
Make us each day more like your Son, O Maria!

Refrain

6. And when from death to life we've passed, O Maria!
Show us your Son, our Lord, at last, O Maria!

Refrain

Novena Prayer

Mother of Perpetual Help, your very name inspires confidence. We come before your holy picture in praise and thanksgiving to God seeking your intercession with Jesus, your son for all the needs of our lives today. We celebrate your holy motherhood as we proclaim Jesus Christ our Lord and Redeemer.

You answered when called to be mother of our Lord. Obtain for us the grace to be alive to our baptismal call and especially to embrace the gospel of life and to respect all life on earth.

You wondered as your Son grew in wisdom, knowledge and grace. Intercede for us so that we may welcome the Word of God in our lives and be bearers of the good news to everyone.

You delighted as your Son healed the sick. Intercede for our sick that they may receive good health and that they in their turn may be healers to others.

You enjoyed peace as your Son comforted the afflicted. Intercede for all who suffer so that they may know that we carry their burdens with them and in this way we keep the law of Christ.

You rejoiced as your Son forgave sins. Obtain for us the forgiveness of our sins and lead us to unbind others and set them free.

You suffered at the wounds your Son endured for our salvation. Help us to bind up the broken hearted and to give hope to the down trodden.

You exulted in your Son's resurrection. Obtain for us the grace to persevere in His way all the days of our life and be granted a place in heaven.

You are the first of all the disciples and saints. We trust in your motherly love and care. Obtain for us all the graces we need to fulfill God's plan each day in our lives. Amen.

Memorare

Remember O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known, that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help, or sought your intercession, was left unaided.

Inspired with this confidence, we fly unto you, O Virgin of virgins, our Mother. To you we come, before you we stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word incarnate, despise not our petitions, but in your mercy hear and answer us. Amen.

Final Blessing

Presider:

May the Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of Mary of Perpetual Help, be with you to defend you, within you to sustain you, before you to lead you, behind you to protect you and above you to bless you all the days of your life. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

HAIL QUEEN OF HEAV'N, THE OCEAN STAR

Hail, Queen of heaven, the ocean star,
Guide of the wand'rer here below,
Thrown on life's surge, we claim thy care,
Save us from peril and from woe.
Mother of Christ, Star of the sea
Pray for the wand'rer, pray for me.

All praise to God who reigns above,
Creator, Word and Spirit one,
The source of life, of grace, of love,
Who guides the waves as earth and sun
Mother of all, Star of the sea,
Pray for God's people, pray for me.

OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP 12:00 NOON MARIAN MASS, NOVENA & SOUP

Every 1st Thursday of the month starting September 6, 2019



OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP PARISH

Come and join us for Mass on the first Thursday of each Month, starting September 6, 2019 for a beautiful Mass and Novena at noon followed by fellowship in the parish hall over soup.

Bring your prayers and special intentions to our Lady of Perpetual Help, best known for her miraculous intervention in times of need.

All are welcome!

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