

OUR LADY OF FATIMA PARISH OVER THE YEARS...

Before the present Acacia Ridge church was built, parishioners celebrated Mass in an old Army Hut (blue hall) brought from Archerfield Airport relocated at the corner of Beaudesert and Mortimer Roads. It was placed on a 5-acre land bought in 1949 by Fr Flanagan, then parish priest of Moorooka. The new use of the building was a far cry from being an accommodation hut sometimes a prison for army soldiers to what was described as “a handsome little church erected on high blocks with porch and sanctuary”.



The original “church” still stands and is now Heritage listed and used as the parish hall and office. It was for many years also used as a primary school until the present school was built beside the church. Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School celebrated 60 years on 16th May 2014 including the years in the Army hut.



On Sunday, March 26, 1950, Archbishop James Duhig blessed the ex-the Army Hut as the original OLOF Church in the presence of about 150 people. Mass was celebrated here every Sunday at 7am presided by priests from Moorooka, as Acacia Ridge was still part of Moorooka Parish. Two more Army huts were added as the number of parishioners grew and a 5:30pm Sunday mass was added.

On 25 January 1954, the enlarged church opened as Our Lady of Fatima with 78 pupils taught by two Sisters of St Joseph. Over the years there was an increasing strain on the facilities as the building doubled both school and church. The new brick church was built at the cost of \$56,000 under the direction of Fr B McLaughlin, parish priest of Moorooka. It was then blessed and opened by Arch. Patrick Mary O’Donnell on 5 June 1966. It became a

parish church on 10 December 1967 with Fr Terry Ganzer was appointed as the first Parish Priest.

Fr Ganzer pushed for a new building which was opened in 1971 with 260 pupils. The old army hut became the parish hall building which is heritage listed together with the green house which was the old presbytery.

Fr Brendan Dooley became parish priest from 1 January 1975. He built the new presbytery in 1977 and faithfully served the parish until 2004. In retirement, Fr Dooley chose to stay at OLOF as parish priest emeritus, and OLOF was entrusted to the administrative care of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Sunnybank.



The impetus for the revival of OLOF was provided by Archbishop Mark Coleridge when he appointed Fr Terry Nueva as administrator in January 2015 which reignited the parishioners' passion for their church and community. Since then, they have built a memorial garden which was opened on 1 November 2015, a prayer, one of the features is the bare wooden cross mounted on a base of pavers and surrounded by turf made by parishioners; purchased a new wooden image of Our Lady of Fatima, whose beauty adorns the sanctuary of this church named in her honour. Among others, the big fans we have in the ceiling, new carpet, padded kneelers, altar parquet, new candle votive and interior renovation at the presbytery are of great improvements and innovations. He also restored Saturday evening Masses and Novena masses every Wednesday and Fridays at 6:30pm and introduced the fellowship after Mass that helped our faith community. The golden jubilee of Our Lady of Fatima Parish was celebrated in 2016 with a big bang.

After Fr Terry's term ended, Fr Lam Vu was appointed as new administrator on January 2021 and served the parish until March 2022. Fr Lam Vu with his gift of preaching and creativity in his pastoral care had brought a new life into this parish. He served the parish faithfully until March 2023.

Fr Dang Nguyen was then appointed by Archbishop Mark Coleridge from July 2023 until now.