

## Faithful Memories

The building is still standing though it has been years since I have passed through its double doors. I can still recall the memories of my youth as I think of it. Seeing Father John Stewart standing in his robes, back turned, arms outstretched, invoking the “Holy Spirit” upon the gifts of our labour and the bounty of God’s love is a classic moment etched in the recesses of my mind. My childhood church; it was a place that was in part responsible for my graced life as a priest in the church of God.

Though I didn’t understand a lot about the church, or even the faith that it professed, it was a place where a different reality of life was offered and lived. No doubt there was the ever present class structure as well as those who were “holier than thou” and still more that came because it was the proper thing to do. Yet, I believe that there was a deeper longing for something more. I know that in those hallowed halls lives were touched, individuals transformed and “shalom” experienced.

The Parish of St. Columba was a place of mystery, a place where something was alive and beckoning. Simply, it was a place where I first saw the “light”. It was, as one song writer penned, a place to “Talk about love, talk about grace, to meet my Saviour face to face”. For me it was a starting point of a magnificent story that has since captivated, molded, transformed, nurtured and prodded me into Christ’s loving embrace. It was there that I discovered that the God who is everywhere is particularly somewhere – in the hearts of you and me. Happy Easter!

NJP