



The Catholic  
Archdiocese  
of Edmonton

*Joy in Christ*  
**100** Jubilee  
1912-2012

## Jubilee 100 Biography Project

### **Biography of Monsignor Joseph M. Malone**

Rector, St. Joseph's Cathedral Parish, Edmonton

Submitted by St. Joseph's Basilica

In a quiet corner of St. Joseph's Basilica, a bronze memorial is dedicated to Monsignor Joseph M. Malone, who served as rector of St. Joseph's Cathedral from 1949 to 1965. The memorial reads: "During his tenure as Rector and under his astute leadership, this beautiful edifice became a reality."

Although Monsignor Malone may be best known for spearheading the completion of the Cathedral Church of the Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton, he is also honoured for his life and legacy of generous service to the Church, his community and his country.

Born on March 9, 1906, Monsignor Malone was the first native born Edmontonian to be ordained a diocesan priest. After attending local schools at St. Anthony's and St. Mary's, he began his formation for the priesthood at St. Augustine's Seminary, Toronto. On June 9, 1929, at age 23 years, he was ordained a priest in St. Anthony's Roman Catholic Church, Edmonton. He served for a year in St. Martin of Tours Parish in Vegreville, Alberta, before studying Philosophy and Theology in Rome.

Upon his return from Rome, Monsignor was assigned as assistant at St. Joseph's Cathedral parish from 1931 to 1939. In 1939, at 33 years of age, he joined the Loyal Edmonton Regiment and served his country overseas as a Canadian Army Corps chaplain. He was stationed in southern England before going to Normandy on D-Day as senior Catholic chaplain of Canadian Invasion Forces. In 1946 he was discharged with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Following discharge, Monsignor Malone returned to Edmonton. He was appointed as pastor to St. John the Evangelist Parish from 1946 until 1949.

In 1949, as Father Malone, he was appointed as rector of St. Joseph's Cathedral parish. The Cathedral was a crypt church built in 1925 and dedicated to St. Joseph the Worker by Archbishop Henry Joseph O'Leary. Although the new cathedral was a basement foundation, it was the largest church in Edmonton and had a debt to match. The onset of the Depression and the Second World War postponed the building of the upper edifice, and for more than 30 years parishioners worshipped in the cathedral crypt.

In 1956, Archbishop John Hugh MacDonald appointed a building committee to consider the feasibility of constructing, financing, and furnishing the upper edifice of the cathedral.

By 1957, Archbishop MacDonald had signed a contract for plans to be drawn up for the new cathedral superstructure. In the interim, St. Joseph's chapel was built on the grounds of St. Joseph's High School to accommodate a growing parish and to foster the faith life of the high school's students.

In the spring of 1960, it had been decided to proceed with the cathedral building program. Before proceeding, cracking and deterioration in the crypt foundation needed to be assessed. The cathedral authorities and parishioners were not confident that the crypt could support the planned superstructure. After much consultation, the foundation was underpinned and reinforced to support the new edifice at a cost of \$113,000.

The second major challenge was the financing of the project. Monsignor Malone helped parishioners to understand their role in God's plan. He paid particular tribute to the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, whose selfless work and sacrifices eventually resulted in the establishment of the Diocese of St. Albert and subsequently, the Archdiocese of Edmonton.

Monsignor emphasized the connection between those who laid down the roots of the parish and those who were to carry out the next steps in God's plan for the parish and archdiocese. He dedicated the *Building fund campaign booklet* to "the Catholic pioneers and the missionaries who established this parish and bequeathed to us the fine faith, culture and heritage of which we are all so proud, and to our present parishioners who, by their courage, generosity and zeal, will have answered the call of the parish in this time of great need." In the end, Monsignor Malone described the parishioners' financial support as "beyond generous; it was sacrificial."

With the foundation problems solved, the financial pledges in place, and construction underway, planning began to focus on the furnishings and art work. Monsignor traveled to Europe, visiting different countries to seek out the items needed to complete the building. Visitors to the cathedral church will find a brochure highlighting the history and building features which enrich our liturgical services.



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Monsignor's passion for the faith life of the parish is evident in his "*St. Joseph's Cathedral – History of a Parish*", published in the *Western Catholic Reporter's* May 1, 1963, edition on the occasion of the dedication of the new cathedral. In the parish history, Monsignor acknowledged the roles and contributions of his

predecessors, highlighting each one's place in the history of the parish. He wrote of the archbishops and rectors and praised the support and dedication of the curates, or associate pastors as we know them today. The parish history is an important part of his legacy. It connects the present with the past and with the future.

Monsignor Malone described his decision to leave St. Joseph's Cathedral after 16 years, as, "one of the most painful decisions I have made." In 1965, he was appointed to Assumption parish where he spent 13 years. He was named Edmonton's first pastor emeritus. In 1978, Monsignor moved to Providence Centre as chaplain. He passed away on May 14, 1991, and his burial mass was celebrated in St. Joseph's Cathedral.

Monsignor Malone's leadership and commitment to service beyond the parish paralleled his leadership and commitment within it. In 1946, he joined Edmonton Rotary Club and networked with other community leaders to contribute to a better society. In 1981, the Rotary Club recognized his outstanding contributions by naming him a Paul Harris Fellow and making a substantial gift in Monsignor's name to the International Rotary Scholarship Fund.

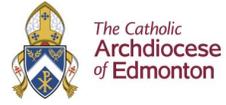
Monsignor fostered the value of diversity, difference and inclusion while serving as a member and President of the Edmonton branch of the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews. He worked hard to foster ecumenical and interfaith relations.

The University of Alberta Senate also benefited from Monsignor's leadership. Appointed to the Senate, he contributed to its collective wisdom to provide an objective conscience for the University and a strong link to the community.

Monsignor's distinguished service was recognized by both the Church and the community. In 1956 Pope Pius XII raised Father Malone to the rank of Domestic Prelate and bestowed on him the title of monsignor. In 1986, the University of Alberta conferred on him an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws.

In this Jubilee Year, we honour Monsignor Malone's life and legacy. One of his most enduring legacies is the initiation of perpetual adoration in 1951 in the crypt church. St. Joseph's Cathedral was the first parish in Canada to establish this practice and Monsignor was delighted to announce that the doors would never be locked, with the exception of Good Friday night. While current day circumstances have required some adaptation to this policy, the practice of adoration of the Blessed Sacrament continues today, more than 60 years later.

To honour Monsignor Malone is to honour, in a symbolic way, all rectors of the cathedral church. One way to show that honour is to visit the mother church of the Archdiocese, St. Joseph's Cathedral or the Basilica, as it is referred to today.



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Take a few moments to visit that quiet corner near St. Joseph's Chapel and to remember with gratitude the priest who embraced his place in the parish history so that all may celebrate and grow in their relationship with God.