



Jubilee 100 Biography Project

Biography of Zyg Slinko

Submitted by Holy Trinity Parish, Stony Plain



In the summer of 1986, Zyg Slinko, his wife Helen and their year-old son Andrew moved into the community of Stony Plain, Alberta, and became members of the Catholic parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. This was before OLPH amalgamated with St. Joseph's parish in Spruce Grove to become Holy Trinity Parish. When Mr. Slinko talks about the first experience of walking into Our Lady of Perpetual Help, he is still moved by the welcome he received: "As soon as we walked through the doors it was like we heard 'Welcome Home!'" This is still something Mr. Slinko hears about the faith community in Stony Plain. In 2002 the two parishes came together with the building of a new church. The larger faith community still maintains that country, community feel. "People say the same thing about Holy Trinity as they used to about OLPH," says Mr. Slinko, "the atmosphere has been a great experience."

The Slinko family has been active in the parish community since their arrival over 25 years ago. Mr. Slinko, who had been a proclaimer of the Word in his previous parish and in his home parish as a boy, continued that ministry when he came to Stony Plain. While still serving as a Lector, Mr. Slinko also became a member of the Maintenance Committee of the church and served a term and a half on Parish Council. When the plans began to develop for a new, larger church to be built for the communities of Stony Plain and Spruce Grove, Mr. Slinko volunteered and chaired the Building Committee. Mr. Slinko looks back at this time of planning and the joining of the two communities as a challenging yet rewarding time. His son Andrew decided to study architecture because of the experience he had following his dad around during this time. Mr. Slinko mentions the committee's effort to involve parishioners in the planning as much as possible so that they would feel that this place was their own. Now, as a result, Mr. Slinko comments "they are just in love with this place."

Aside from the above mentioned ministries and committees, Zyg and his wife Helen have also been involved in RCIA for a number of years. They first began their work in this ministry when friends who had just moved into their subdivision decided to become Catholic and were in need of sponsors. Mr. Slinko describes his first year as a sponsor as "a very moving experience." Both he and his wife have been involved in RCIA every year since then, whether as sponsors or as the hospitality. Commenting on why they serve in this ministry, Mr. Slinko says "People journeying into *my* faith – you have to do what you have to do to make their journey as pleasant as possible."

Mr. Slinko's great example of good stewardship service does not end there. Aside from still being a proclaimer of the Word, and still being involved with the RCIA program, Mr. Slinko serves as a greeter (alongside his wife Helen), with security, with the maintenance committee and has recently joined the parish staff as the Facilities Manager. Asked why he loves it here, Mr. Slinko explains, "With the programs and activities here, no one wants to leave. This is what a Catholic community should be. God is smiling on us here."