

Celebration of the Life of **Fr. Robert John (Jack) Sproule**

*Bethlehem Retreat Centre,
Saturday, April 23, 2016 at noon*

Master of Ceremonies - Jock McKeen

Musicians - Ching Blas-Muego,
Mary Edwardson (Downtown Hope, street ministry,
Nanaimo), and Dale Brown

ORDER OF SERVICE

Prelude - *Jesu joy of man's desiring*

Welcome - Jock McKeen

Opening hymn - *City of God*

Readings:

*Jack's reflection "Conceptions of God" -
Leanne McIntosh*

John 21:15-18 - Frank Mariscak

Hymn - *Love One Another*

Eulogy - Jock McKeen

Remembrances - Jock McKeen

Homily - *Remi De Roo, Emeritus Bishop of
Victoria*

Closing songs:

My Way

On the Sunny Side of the Street

Liturgy of the Eucharist

*Our celebration will continue in the View Room
with a Reception in memory of Fr. Jack.*

*On April 8th there was a liturgical celebration of
Jack's life at St. Elizabeth's parish in Sidney. It
was joyful, deeply felt, and presence filled.
Because Jack did not limit story telling and eating
with his friends to any particular place, you are
invited now to do as Jesus did, and as Jack did so
many times in his life, you are invited to continue
our celebration in the View Room where the table
is set, to eat and drink, to remember Jack, and
with our memories be Eucharist for each other.*



Robert John (Jack) Sproule

Died peacefully in his sleep at the Dwelling Place, in Nanaimo, B.C on February 18th 2016 after some years of declining health. Requiescat in pace.

Remembered most as a man who loved people and enjoyed their company, Fr. Jack put his sharp mind and warm heart at the service of friends, parishioners, colleagues, First Nations and those of no religious affiliation. Kind, generous and hospitable his company was always enjoyable and his infectious laugh fondly remembered. He embraced life and gave and received much love. He is also remembered for his love of dogs, especially golden retrievers.

Fr. Jack was a remarkable phenomenon. He had a unique view and practice of priesthood. His sense of humour drew many to him. He had faith in community and treasured his many friends. He was a passionate champion for the marginalized and loved to challenge those in authority. His fearless people-centred humanity was characteristic and unforgettable.

Fr. Jack believed that there was a much bigger role for women in the Church. He worked to ensure that women were involved in as many aspects of parish ministry as possible. Never reticent to provoke discussion he displayed a bumper sticker in his home 'Ordain Catholic women. Or stop baptizing them.'

He was a scholar, studying in a range of areas, especially in humanistic psychology, liberation theology, creation-centred spirituality, and social justice. With this array of talents and interests, he was welcomed as a senior faculty member at the Haven Institute, Gabriola Island, B.C. working alongside the founders Bennet Wong and Jock McKeen to develop programs for lay people and clergy; with them, he co-developed the "Religion Revisited" program to investigate spirituality in contemporary life.

Robert John Sproule was born on January 14, 1934 in Winnipeg, Manitoba, the only child to William Harold and Mary Sproule. He attended high school in Fort William, Ontario. He completed undergraduate and graduate degrees at Concordia University and University of Toronto, completing a Master's Degree in Theology in 1961. Subsequently he finished all the work for his doctorate. He was ordained on June 1, 1961 at North Bay, Ontario. He served at the pro-cathedral in North Bay as an assistant priest and member of the Marriage Tribunal from 1961 to 1963. His first parish was in Sudbury.

From 1963 to 1973 he had an illustrious career teaching in seminaries in Hearst, Seattle, Baltimore, Washington, DC, San Francisco and Philadelphia. From 1973 to 1980 he served in a parish in Montreal.

Inspired by the social justice philosophy of Bishop Remi De Roo, he came to the Diocese of Victoria in 1980. He served first as administrator at St. Peter's parish in Nanaimo, BC, from 1980 to 1985. In 1986, he was appointed pastor of the Saanich Peninsula parish remaining in this role until his retirement in January 2004.

He served on the Priest's Council of the Diocese of Victoria, and its Administrative Board bringing his intelligence, common sense, and knowledge of theology to bear on its inner councils.

He was always at the cutting edge of implementing the reforms of the Second Vatican Council in all the parishes in which he served.

He carried on a lively correspondence with leading theologians of all Faiths. He was active in the inter-Faith endeavours of a variety of Faith communities on Vancouver Island.

After his retirement in 2004 he carried on an apostolate at Alexander's coffee shop in the center of Sidney, BC: a lively hangout where his gregariousness was welcomed by its varied clientele after his daily early morning walks.

Profound thanks, and gratitude, to Aurel Muego and Ching Blas-Muego, and their staff, Pinky, Rita, Sabia, Richard, Lianne and Lavon at the Dwelling Place, Nanaimo where Fr. Jack made his home and was cared for so lovingly and competently for the past 5 years.

An inter-faith celebration of Fr. Jack's life will be held on Saturday, April 23rd at noon at Bethlehem Retreat Centre, 2371, Arbot Road, Nanaimo, B.C., V9R 6S9.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Fr. Jack's charity of choice, Our Lady's Missionaries, 2 Leander Court, Toronto, Ontario, M4B 2W1 <http://ourladysmissionaries.com/>

Online condolences may be made at www.telfordsburialandcremationcentre.com.

Telford's Burial & Cremation Centre,
595, Townsite Road, Nanaimo, B.C. V9S 1K9

Father Jack Sproule



Jan. 14, 1934 - Feb. 18, 2016