

SCM

Full parish funds, builds 2nd church

By Patrick Roberts
The Arizona Republic

SUN CITY WEST — The parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes stand out for their unusual answer to an overcrowded church.

To give worshipers breathing room, the parishioners are building the largest church in the four-county diocese with nearly \$5 million raised by their parish — without help from the diocese.

"During the winter months, when the church is stuffed to capacity, I will be glad to know that a new one is under construction," said Theresa Malik, a parishioner for 17 years.

More than 5,000 people typically attend the five services each weekend at Our Lady of Lourdes, R.H. Johnson Boulevard and 128th Avenue. An additional 1,000 attend during the winter months.

The new Prince of Peace church, just four miles away, will seat almost 1,600 at each service, the Rev. Michael Minogue said.

Just because a new church is being built doesn't mean a new parish is being created. When Prince of Peace is

— Please see CROWDED, Page 3

Crowded west-side parish funds, builds 2nd church

— CROWDED, from Page 1

completed a year from now near 151st Avenue and Deer Valley Road, Sun City West and Surprise residents will have one parish with two churches, the only such Catholic parish in the state.

"I don't know why more parishes don't go with two churches," Minogue said. "Maybe they have always done it the traditional way and feel like they can't change."

Clergy and choirs will alternate between the two churches every Sunday. Parishioners may even decide to do the same.

"I will go to both because I am in the choir," Malik said, "but anyone can switch back and forth. It will help maintain community."

Someday, Prince of Peace might become its own parish, but for now, retirees and families mix

in the parish because it serves Surprise as well as the Sun Cities, Minogue said.

The Catholic population has grown at nearly the same rate as the Valley population since 1970. The number of Catholics who are church members has doubled to 386,000, while the population of the four counties that make up the diocese has done the same, to almost 3 million. Maricopa, Yavapai, Mohave counties and much of Coconino County make up the diocese.

With such steady growth, Catholics must innovate to maintain quality growth, just like the rest of the Valley.

"There is not any parish who will leave a legacy like this, a church built out of the parishioners' pockets without any debt," Minogue said. "One day, their grandchildren will be old enough to live here."

Prince of Peace Catholic

Church dedicated

1,200 worshipers attend Prince of Peace service

By MONICA ALONZO-DUNSMOOR
DAILY NEWS-SUN

William Phelan and his sister Marion Land walk toward the Prince of Peace Catholic Church, excited and eager to get inside for the dedication ceremony about to begin.

Before they make it to the center courtyard, Land stops to get her picture taken in front of the \$6 million church.

"I find this very exciting, almost fun," Phelan said. "We have waited five years for this."

Planning for Prince of Peace began when Bishop Thomas J. O'Brien of the Diocese of Phoenix decided that Our Lady of Lourdes parish, the first Catholic church in Sun City West, needed more facilities to handle the growth and the number of people who were moving into the area. And while the Sun City West residents waited for Prince of Peace, at 14888 W. Deer Valley Drive, they met for Mass at Palm Ridge Recreation Center.

Zita Legner Duffy of Sun City West was among the residents who met at the recreation center because Our Lady of Lourdes was too small.

"We couldn't get into the church," she said, adding she worshipped at the center for

'The service turned out exactly how we expected. It's like a dream come true for us.'

**The Rev. Michael Minogue
Prince of Peace pastor**

about four years.

The new church, designed in a Spanish mission style, is part of an overall complex that contains offices, a parish hall, a gift shop and a small chapel. Construction on the interior of the hall will be completed in about two months.

Prince of Peace has a 25,000-square-foot sanctuary with 52-foot high ceilings. It seats about 1,550 people.

The campus measures 69,000 square feet. It took about 14 months to build, said Brian Cassidy, the president of CCBG Architects Inc., which designed the structure.

Bishop O'Brien and the Rev. Michael Minogue, pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes parish, led the dedication Mass.

"The service turned out exactly how we expected," Minogue said. "It's like a dream come true for us."

The 7 a.m. Sunday Mass filled the church about 70 percent and the 9 a.m. Mass brought about 1,200 people.



Lisa Goettsche/Daily News-Sun

A procession starts the ceremony at the dedication of Prince of Peace Catholic Church in Sun City West on Sunday.

"In less than a year, we may have to add additional Masses," Minogue said.

Jo-Anne Jones, a spokeswoman for the church, said they expect about 1,300 people on a regular basis.

After the ceremony, everyone gathered in the courtyard and enjoyed refreshments.

"It was the most exquisite dedication I ever attended," said Pearl Bixvy, a local resident.

A community open house is scheduled from 2 to 5 p.m. Friday and 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday.

Traffic woes accompany huge church

By MONICA ALONZO-DUNSMOOR
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Not everyone is pleased with what the new church on the block is bringing to the neighborhood: cars. Cars mean traffic.

Genny Fletcher has been living in her Sun City West home, which is west of Prince of Peace Catholic Church, for three years. But now, she lives across the street from a \$6 million, 44,000-square-foot church that seats about 1,550 people.

"I don't like the traffic," she said. "I resent that they didn't make enough parking spaces. They should've known. It's a beautiful church, but they should have enough parking."

Fletcher said there were cars parked along 151st Avenue, north of Deer Valley Road during Sunday's service.

Church spokeswoman Jo-Anne Jones said, "This land was set aside by the church five years ago. There was also a sign, 'Future site of Prince of Peace' for about three and a half years. A lot of these homes weren't even built."

She said one reason Prince of Peace is so big is because of a shortage of Catholic priests, forcing more people to attend Mass.

SCW

Monday, April 19, 1999 Daily News-Sun, Sun City, Ariz.



Lisa Goettsche/Daily News-Sun

Bishop Thomas O'Brien, spiritual leader of the Phoenix Diocese, blesses Prince of Peace Catholic Church in Sun City West during a dedication ceremony Sunday.

Diocese plans parish expansion

New Catholic church may ease overcrowding

By BRUCE ELLISON
Staff writer

The Roman Catholic Bishop of Phoenix, the Most Rev. Thomas J. O'Brien, will be in Sun City West Sunday afternoon for the ground-breaking of a new Catholic church, Prince of Peace.

The church will be the second structure in the parish of Our Lady of Lourdes in Sun City West. When completed, it will relieve the pressure and overcrowding in the church, parish hall and parking lot at Our Lady of Lourdes.

But the new church building is just that — a sacred and special building, but only a building — said Jo-Anne Jones, a spokeswoman for the parish.

"We will be one parish with two houses of worship," she said. "This is not the creation of a new parish with its own priest and its own members."

Indeed, that concept, being tried for the first time in Sun City West, may be the wave of the future as Catholics try to cope with a growing membership and an increasing shortage of priests to serve them.

The problem of too many members for the existing structure has been compounded in Sun City West by two things — a number of Catholics that's slightly above the national average — and a large number of winter visitors, not all of whom "belong" to Our Lady of Lourdes, but who do want to attend Mass there.

To accommodate the crowds, the parish has also been celebrating Mass in the Palm Ridge Recreation Center — and still has Mass there twice each Sunday, in addition to five weekend Masses at Our Lady of Lourdes.

West parish, but just one church, while the older Sun City, with about a 30 percent bigger population, has three churches and three parishes.

Increasing development near Sun City West, such as in Coyote Lakes in Surprise, and at Sun City Grand, has just added to the number of Catholics needing a place to celebrate Mass.

To accommodate them in the future, the diocese has bought land at Bell Road and Cotton Lane in Surprise — but has no immediate plans for a structure there.

Land for Prince of Peace, at 151st Avenue and Deer Valley Drive, was bought about four years ago — and was added to soon thereafter, when officials decided the initial six-acre tract wouldn't have enough parking for the expanding congregation.

The parish already has raised about half the funds needed for the \$5 million project, either in cash or pledges; its loan for the land has been repaid.

Cash will be borrowed from the diocese to complete the building, said Bob Jones, Jo-Anne's husband and the chairman of the parish building committee.

Design of the church took place under strict guidelines from the diocese, Bob

Jones said. There's even a book, "Procedures and Guidelines for Building a New Church," that makes sure the structure meets the desired architectural criteria. Sister Anthony, a nun, supervises the interior details to be sure the building can serve its liturgical functions correctly.

No longer, though, is a Catholic church necessarily cruciform: Prince of Peace will be auditorium style, with curving seats facing the altar.

"We were very fortunate to have so many people with experience from all walks of life in the parish," Jo-Anne Jones said.

"One of the benefits of living in a senior community," she added, "is that so many people are free enough with their time that they can spend it working on the new church."

A lot of those volunteers, she said, "have spent far more time getting this church building off the ground than they may have expected."

One of the bigger problems at Prince of Peace is what to do with the Baptismal font.

The Joneses concede that the font is not likely to be used in a retirement community as often as it is in a parish where there are lots of young families.

But still, as the area builds up, more young families will be moving into parts of Surprise, which now lacks a Catholic church.

There are some older people who also want to be baptized.

The new structure includes a chapel, seating for about 100, that can be used for smaller services such as funerals and perhaps the weddings of some retirees.

In addition, the church has been specially designed with the needs of an aging population in mind — with more handicap parking spaces than usual, for instance, and with more room for golf cars than might otherwise be the case.

There also will be wheelchair seating inside the structure in several places.

Bob Jones, the building committee chair, said Prince of Peace "will be the largest church in size in the diocese — at least I believe that to be true."

There will also be a parish hall, across a courtyard from the sanctuary. It will seat about 500, and has a kitchen. Offices are nearby.

Because the parish isn't being split — only using two structures a few miles apart — church organizations will meet

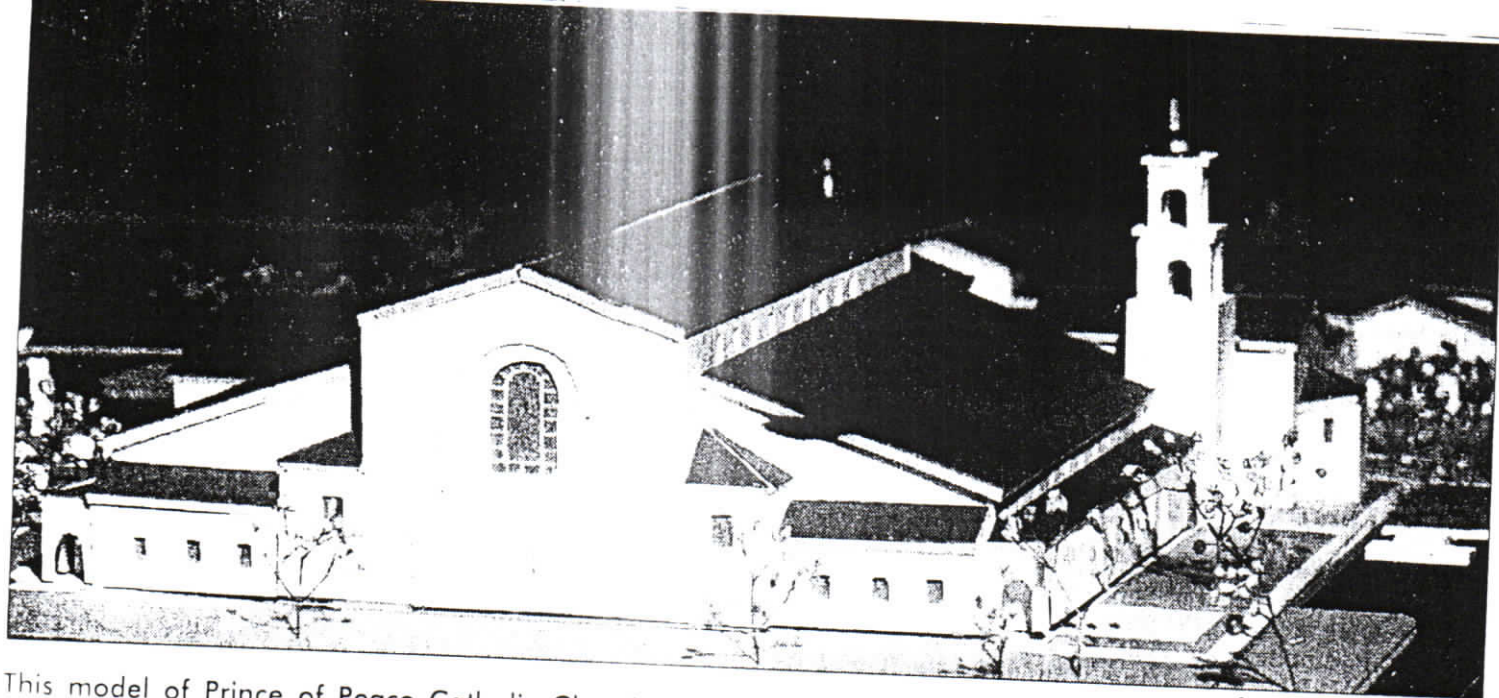
► See Parish, B2

The new Prince of Peace church will be bigger than that in Our Lady of Lourdes. It will seat, at a minimum, 1,205 people to a legally allowed maximum of 1,580.

Prince of Peace also will have considerably more parking than is available at Our Lady of Lourdes, where Sunday parking now is at a premium, and cars string out along neighborhood streets.

Jones said there are more than 6,000 registered Catholics in the Sun City

VF CHURCHES PRINCE OF PEACE CATHOLIC SCW



This model of Prince of Peace Catholic Church is on display in the foyer of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church in Sun-City West. Steve Chernek/Daily News-Sun

Parish builds new church

SCW

■ From B1

alternately at each building, thus avoiding the idea that one group is for the parishioners who attend Mass at Lady of Lourdes while the other is for parishioners who usually go to Prince of Peace.

The priests — the Rev. Michael Minogue and the Rev. Harold Graf — will celebrate Mass in both places, not be assigned to just one; and four or five retired priests who help out also will share duties in both places.

"We are one. That is the principal idea here," said JoAnne Jones.

Although the groundbreaking is Sunday, the actual earth-moving likely won't start until fall, with the church ready for use in the

fall of 1998, officials said.

The parish steering committee has worked for almost 18 months. The project is headed by Dan Kedzie.

Bob Jones headed the building committee, and Hal Corcoran was in charge of financial aspects.

Others on the steering committee include John Baird, Ann and Dick Germscheid, Bus Isban, Ted Keil, John and Jackie Norris, JoAnne Jones, Al LaRose, Gene and Maureen Comstock and Enrico Hsu, Jones said.

Sunday's ceremonies will find the bishop celebrating Mass at Our Lady of Lourdes before lunch, then officiating at the religious ceremony that accompanies the groundbreaking at 1 p.m.