



**Sacred Heart, Bishop Falls, GF, NL
(Established 1938)**

Parish History *Established 1938*

Missions: Botwood, Fortune Harbour

Bishop's Falls is a town in central Newfoundland near the Exploits River about 16 kms downstream (east) of Grand Falls-Windsor. It was named in honour of Bishop John Inglis who visited the Falls in 1827. The census of 1901 shows a population of 20 people.

As the railway made its way across the island, people of various denominations were seeking employment and taking up residence. A number of Catholics settled there and these were attended to by Fr. Gregory Battcock of Whitbourne. In 1910 the number of Catholics was 129, the largest single denomination. In 1925 a new Catholic church was built and was dedicated to the "Sacred Heart of Jesus".

In 1909 Fr. William Finn (later known as Msgr. Finn), was appointed to Grand Falls and Bishop's Falls became a mission of that parish. In 1921, Fr. James Hinchey was appointed to Bishop's Falls although it did remain a mission of Grand Falls until 1930.

Fr. Joseph Hogan succeeded Fr. Hinchey in 1940. He also provided the leadership for the construction of a Catholic school from Kindergarten to Grade XI. A convent was built at Bishop's Falls with the first Presentation Sisters arriving in September of 1945.

Fr. Hogan was transferred to North River in 1955 and was succeeded by Fr. Joseph O'Brien (later known as Msgr. O'Brien) for two years.

Fr. Leo Burke arrived in Bishop's Falls on October 1957. He remained as parish priest until his mandatory retirement at the age of 75 in 1988. A new Catholic complex was built in the west end of town. A new church was officially opened in 1961 followed by a new parish presbytery and in 1970 a new school finished the complex. As a tribute to his work the school was named "Leo Burke Academy". Plans for a new convent were abandoned following the news the Presentation Sisters would not be staying in the community. The convent was closed in 1976 and was torn down a few years later.

Fr. Burke was instrumental in bringing the Knights of Columbus to Bishop's Falls. He retired in 1988 and remained in Bishop's Falls until his passing in 2003.

Fr. Ron Bromley served in Bishop's Falls from October 1988 to October 1992 and during that time established the first parish council. From October 1992 to today Fr. Linus Coady has been parish priest at Bishop's Falls.