



Celebrating 150 Years of **Living Faith, Hope & Love**

PARISHIONER SPOTLIGHT / BARBARA STACK

As part of our celebration of Saint Michael's 150th anniversary as a community of faith, we will be spotlighting long-time parishioners to share their experiences, memories and faith journeys. Our first in this series features **Barbara Stack**, a life-long North Andover resident.

You may recognize Barbara as a long-time parishioner and volunteer here at Saint Michael's. The only child of Catherine (Murphy) and Thomas Stack, this octogenarian's family roots go back decades in town. Her maternal grandparents were members of Saint Michael's Parish from the early days when the original church was located on Water Street. Her parents were married at Saint Michael's Church after it was rebuilt on Main Street. Her grandfather, a member of the choir was so dedicated to his ministry that he walked his daughter down the aisle on her wedding day before returning to the choir to sing for the wedding mass. Her father, too, was active in parish life and served as an usher.

As a young girl, Barbara recalls attending parish events at Merrimack Hall on the corner of Water and Merrimack Streets. This structure was erected in 1880 and functioned as a hub of social activity for both the parish and local organizations who rented it out for events until it was demolished in 1957.

Barbara attended religious education classes and made her first communion at Saint Michael's on May 13, 1939. She remembers one time she and a friend were caught whispering in class and were sent home by the priest. Upset from the rebuke, she told her parents she wanted to join the Protestant church but this did not go over well.

Through the years, Barbara has been an active volunteer, having served as a eucharistic minister, religious education teacher and founding member of a Sodality group she and fellow parishioner, Maryann Marinelli, formed. She said she's always had strong faith and credits her parents with raising her well in the Catholic church.

Barbara maintains her faith by praying the Rosary, attending Mass, and receiving the Eucharist. While she is unable to attend her preferred 4 p.m. Mass these days, she makes time to watch the daily Mass on the Catholic channel and counts on friends to bring her the Eucharist.

Barbara believes that it's the priests and people who make the Saint Michael's community so special. She has gotten to know many through the years and spoke fondly of Father Keyes for whom she prays every day. "He knew everybody's name, young or old." she said.

Thank you, Barbara, for sharing your memories and your faith through the years!



Barbara Stack on her first communion in 1939 (above) and today (below).



Visit <http://bit.ly/stmichael150> to see more historical photos and to learn more about the 150th celebrations!