Parish Snapshot
Founded: 1956 by Archbishop Connolly
Registered Households: 2,423
Address: 7112 S. 12th Street
Tacoma, WA 98465
Phone: (253) 564-5185
Parish history
Archbishop Connolly appointed Father Edward McCallion as the parish’s first pastor. When the parish was established in 1956, Mass was celebrated at nearby Geiger Elementary School for the first two years. When the parish school was built in 1958, part of it was used for Mass, Father McDermott said. The actual church building was constructed in 1969, he said.

JUDY BADER, PARISHIONER

“IT IS A STRONG COMMUNITY – IT’S GREAT, IT’S KIND, IT’S GENEROUS.”

When first established, St. Charles Borromeo had a temporary home in the basement of Geiger School where its first pastor, Fr. Edward McCallion, celebrated Mass until the St. Charles building was finished.

When first established, St. Charles Borromeo had a temporary home in the

parish grew to more than 2,000 families. In July 2000, Father McDermott was appointed pastor.

The Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia have been involved with the parish school since it was established in 1958. The school operated under direction of the sisters until 1985. Parish leaders say the selfless dedication of the nuns made possible the foundation of academic excellence for which St. Charles is still known today.

A school commission was formed in 1986 and the first lay principal took over direction of the school that year.

High points and growth
Archbishop Thomas J. Murphy dedicated a new library at the school in 1996 during the parish’s 40th anniversary celebration, a high point for the school and the entire parish community.

St. Charles Borromeo School has deep roots in the community and strong Catholic traditions. Today it is a pre-kindergarten through eighth-grade school with 535 students.


Parish building campaigns, in addition to the 1969 construction of the permanent church, have resulted in a kitchen, additional classrooms, the school library, and the Unity Center. Built two years ago, the center is used for various parish and school activities.

In a letter to new parishioners, Father McDermott acknowledges that St. Charles is a rather large community, noting, “It can be somewhat intimidating to break the ice and meet others, but you will find your fellow parishioners warm and welcoming.” It is a fitting tribute to St. Charles who lived a simple life in great piety while dedicating himself to helping the poor.

When the parish was founded, the community was evenly divided between professionals and business families and the families of laborers. In later years, it has grown to serve a mostly urban professional community.

The community.

“The laity really got involved; it was great to see that.”

Father Rink, now retired pastor, Father Michael McDermott said.

Father McDermott said outreach includes efforts to help home-less families; the Shoes for the Children program in which volunteers collect about 2,000 pairs of shoes every year for poor children; and participation in Paint Tacoma Beautiful, in which volunteers paint the homes of poor and low-income families.

“We have grown — we have the Unity Center and we’ve added to the school,” said longtime parishioner Judy Bader. “It is a strong community — it’s great, it’s kind, it’s generous. And it has been a really important part of our family.”

Bader — who was a school mother and is now a school grandmother — is an assistant bookkeeper for the parish, and she has done volunteer work for the school. Her husband, Steve Bader, is chairman of the parish Steering Committee.

Paint Tacoma Beautiful, in which volunteers paint the homes of poor and low-income families.

Judy Bader — who was a school mother and is now a school grandmother — is an assistant bookkeeper for the parish, and she has done volunteer work for the school. Her husband, Steve Bader, is chairman of the parish Steering Committee.

The parish was established by Archbishop Thomas A. Connolly in September 1956 and the community will celebrate its 50th Jubilee with a 12:30 p.m. Mass on Nov. 5, 2006 with Archbishop Alex Brunett as main celebrant.

“The school has always been a top priority, and the other thing that the parish does really well is outreach,” current pastor Father Michael McDermott said.

“We have grown — we have the Unity Center and we’ve added to the school,” said longtime parishioner Judy Bader. “It is a strong community — it’s great, it’s kind, it’s generous. And it has been a really important part of our family.”

Bader — who was a school mother and is now a school grandmother — is an assistant bookkeeper for the parish, and she has done volunteer work for the school. Her husband, Steve Bader, is chairman of the parish Steering Committee.

Paint Tacoma Beautiful, in which volunteers paint the homes of poor and low-income families.

“When first established, St. Charles Borromeo had a temporary home in the basement of Geiger School where its first pastor, Fr. Edward McCallion, celebrated Mass until the St. Charles building was finished. When first established, St. Charles Borromeo had a temporary home in the basement of Geiger School where its first pastor, Fr. Edward McCallion, celebrated Mass until the St. Charles building was finished.