



First Kindergarten in Immaculate Conception Church
By Alice de Pfyffer, Neave, Lundy

The year is 1939, and the war has started in Europe.

Father McKenzie (later Monsignor) had invited the Sisters of Charity to come to the Kelowna parish to start a kindergarten class and to teach catechism classes to the young people of the parish.

I can remember my mother and my Aunt Helen discussing something about my going to school but I would be missing my afternoon nap (we had those in my day). They put the question to me, would you like to go to school for half a day. Of course, I was not too sure what kindergarten or school was about.

I must have said “yes” as I was registered along with my friends Sheila Moss and Margaret McCormick.

The class was to run from May 1939 to the end of June. It was a very short duration but it was the start of the Catholic education system for Kelowna.

I can remember our classes were held in the rectory for those two months. We of course had to behave as little ladies and dress accordingly. Looking at the picture I am not too sure we enjoyed our time there – such frowns on our little faces!!!

The sisters taught the First communion class in 1940 that I was part of. I can remember that day very well, for some reason I felt it was a special day. I don't know if it was the white dress, the veil or the white flowers that held my veil to the top of my head but it gave me a special feeling.

The arrival of the Sisters was a wonderful beginning for the parish. They expanded their teachings to not only school grades, Sunday school on Sunday afternoon at 2 pm. but in music lessons, May Day procession with the singing of “Oh, Mary we crown thee with roses to-day” as we proceeded down the driveway and over to the shrine with the Blessed Virgin on it. The nuns instigated in 1941 the start of the Sodality of Our Blessed Lady, Christmas plays, Catholic Youth Organization and the junior and senior choirs were all part of their leadership. Some of these wonderful extra activities within Immaculate Conception parish I did take part in and they were wonderful experiences with many fond memories.