

# Did You Know...

✠ News and trivia from our parish and the Catholic Church ✠  
-- contributed by the Christ Child Church Women's Club --

## Christ Child Catholic Church

*Dedicated to Growth in Christ and to the Challenges of Loving Service*

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"An altar is like an airport, where spirits take off and land."

-- S. C. Nwaokeke

We've seen it so often, for some it may not even register any more. In the sanctuary of our Church is a large and impressive altar, made from huge burls and branches of redwood. The altar is draped in fabric, and topped with the accouterments of its status and purpose. It's an understated creation of natural beauty, and has been there for longer than most can remember.



Did you know that the altar was hand-made, especially for Christ Child? It all started back in the early 1980's, when Fr. Michael Cincinato was our mission priest. Father Mike thought that a new altar would be a nice addition, and asked Clair Mullen if he might be up for the job.



Clair instantly and eagerly agreed to take on the task, and set about looking for the proper materials. Clair had in mind a motif that would be harmonious with the Church's surroundings -- namely, a redwood forest. Clair quickly located the intricate base structure, but had more difficulty in finding a suitable top. Fortuitously, a local tradesman generously offered the big unfinished slab needed to complete the ensemble.

But having all the materials at hand was just the beginning. Clair and all five of his sons set about the arduous work of cutting, shaping, smoothing and sanding the giant piece of wood, plus of course attaching the slab to the base.

#### Clair and his wife Pat



After a long and loving process, the finished altar was delivered to Christ Child the week of Holy Thursday. Characteristically, Clair did not want a lot of fuss made over him or his contribution, and he demurely stayed home from Mass that weekend.

Clair has passed on, and Pat has moved away to a more elder-friendly location "down the hill".

But whenever Pat attended services, she was always reminded of her wonderful man by the big beautiful altar he had created.

Let us all say a prayer for Clair, and be grateful for his beautiful legacy which lives on with us, gracefully accenting our church and our lives.

--- Karin and Greg Illes

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