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Parish to begin 75th anniversary celebration on namesake feast

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Christ the King Parish in Kahului will begin a year's celebration of its 75th anniversary with a 10 a.m. Mass on Sunday, Nov. 25, the Feast of Christ the King.

The program that follows will include a re-enactment of the history of Christ the King Church by parish school students, plus lunch and multi-ethnic entertainment.

The original mission church was blessed by Bishop Stephen Alencastre on the feast of Christ the King, Oct. 30, 1932. The parish added a school in 1958 and the church was enlarged and renovated in 1981.

Among the events planned during the year will be

A year of activities

Here is a calendar of 2007-08 events celebrating Christ the King Church's 75th anniversary

Nov. 25: Anniversary Mass, Feast of Christ the King

December: Misa De Gallo



a Christmas celebration on the Feast of the Epiphany in January, a parish school keiki carnival and a parish mission in February, a parish and school Earth Day celebration in April, marriage convalidations in June and a grand finale next November.

The parish is also planning to publish a souvenir book.



HISTORY OF CHRIST THE KING CHURCH, KAHULUI

Tiny Maui mission grew up big

Adapted from a text prepared by Christ the King Parish



Christ the King Parish began in the 1880s as a mission outpost of the then-flourishing Holy Family Parish in Puunene. Kahului at the time was an unimportant town of a few houses. Even the establishment of the Kahului Railroad Company in 1888 failed to result in much growth. It was so small that, when the bubonic plague arrived in 1900, much of the town was burned to the ground in an effort to wipe out the pests causing the disease.



Up until 1924, probably no more than 60 Catholics lived in Kahului. But with a valuable harbor and the expansion of the Hawaiian Commercial and Sugar Company, it was obvious Kahului would gain in size and importance. With this in mind, Anne Enomoto approached Frank Baldwin, manager of Kahului Railroad and



Jan. 6: Christmas celebration

Feb. 1-2: School Keiki Carnival

Feb. 18-20: Parish Mission

Feb. 23: Father Pat's Praise and Worship

March: Holy Week Celebration/Youth Easter Egg Hunt

April: Parish/School Earth Day Celebration

May: Santa Cruzan celebration

June: Marriage Convalidations

July: Observation of Visita Iglesia

August: Grand finale planning

September: Parish/School fellowship

October: Marian Festival — "Family That Prays Together"



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HC&S, to request land on which to build a church.

Baldwin offered Sacred Hearts Father Bartholomew Bax, then the pastor of Holy Family Church, a beach front property near the harbor (near Maui Seaside Hotel and the former Hukilau

Hotel). But Father Bax, a native of Holland, the land of dikes, worried about tsunamis. He suggested the church be located further inland. His request was granted in the summer of 1931 when a piece of property along the main highway was sold for \$1 (with the stipulation that it would not be resold) to build a Kahului Catholic church.

The plantation sent men and equipment to level the lot and construction began in 1932. The church, built in the style of a California mission, was blessed by Bishop Stephen Alencastre on the feast of Christ the King, Oct. 30, 1932. It cost \$18,000 and designed to be expanded easily. The two sides and the back were solid concrete, but the front, made of plaster, could be torn down when the time came to enlarge.

Christ the King was a mission of Puunene until 1942 when Sacred Hearts Father Evarist Gielen was appointed its first pastor. A small rectory was built and Father Gielen, an amateur artist, painted a bigger-than-life picture of Christ the King above the altar. The image remained there until the church was enlarged in 1980.

Sacred Hearts Father Eugene Rakels succeeded Father Gielen but died in 1947 after serving only one year. With the advent of Kahului's "Dream City," Sacred Hearts Father Anthony O'Brien bought four and a half acres from Alexander & Baldwin for \$16,000 to build a school. But it was his successor Father Joseph Putman who was in charge when the first wing went up in 1958. The school was staffed by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet.

Father Putman felt he needed an associate pastor to help run the parish, but the bishop had no priests to spare. So in 1960, Father Putman went to his native Belgium and returned with his twin brother, Father Andrew Putman.

The convent was hauled over from the recently-closed Holy Rosary School in Paia in 1961. That same year, the hall — now a kindergarten and library — was brought in from Spreckelsville. The school today enrolls children from preschool

Stays Together”

November: Grand finale



to grade six and is staffed by lay people and the Sisters of St Joseph of Carondelet.

By 1966, the parish had 700 families — about 3,500 parishioners — so Father Putman bought the acre between Christ the King and the Salvation Army Center for \$45,000.

Sacred Hearts Father Ernest Claes was named pastor in 1967 and in 1969 built a new rectory for \$45,850. His successor, Sacred Hearts Father Felix Vanderbroek, started the drive for a much needed church expansion. The task was finished by Sacred Hearts Father Joseph Hendriks who became pastor in 1979. Bishop John J. Scanlan blessed the new church, enlarged in the shape of a cross, on April 12, 1981. The renovation cost \$457,568, 25 times the cost of the original church.

Father Hendriks left on Jan. 20, 1989, ending almost 60 years of the dedicated service by the Sacred Heart Fathers. He was replaced by Father Gary Colton, a diocesan priest, who served until 1995. Marianist Father Charles Oyabu was the next pastor from 1995 until 1997.

In June 1997, Father William Shannon took the job as administrator and later pastor. He served until the parish was given to the care of the Missionaries of Our Lady of La Salette on July 1, 2004.

Today the pastor is La Salette Father Efren A. Tomas, who is assisted by Father Wilfredo Iminga, and Father Ronaldo Guzman.

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