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[Print this Page](#)

[«--back to story](#)

## 75 years at Christ the King

Weekend's events celebrate longevity and also diversity

By CLAUDINE SAN NICOLAS, Staff Writer

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KAHULUI - Hundreds of Christ the King Church parishioners marked the church's 75th anniversary by celebrating their cultural diversity this weekend.

The Roman Catholic parish on the corner of Wakea and Puunene avenues estimates its membership is about 85 percent Filipino, with the rest representing other ethnic groups such as Hawaiian, Japanese, Portuguese and Tongan. Parishioners dressed in attire Sunday that represented their cultures, and they recited prayers in their native tongues.

"Regardless of race, color and language, we are one church and we want to honor that and celebrate that," said the Rev. Efren Tomas, the pastor. Since November 2007, the church has been holding monthly events to celebrate its 75th anniversary.

Sunday's finale included the burying of a time capsule on the front lawn of the church. Items were fitted into PVC pipe that was placed about two to three feet into the ground. It held memorabilia from Christ the King School, the church and the community. There were yearbooks, photos, prayer cards and newspaper articles about the year's events. There was also a church record that spanned from 1932, when it was first founded, to 2008.

It is to be opened when the church celebrates its centenary 25 years from now.

The records, compiled by church secretary Jody Mitsumura, shows there have been 5,380 baptisms and 2,551 deaths recorded at Christ the King as of November 2008. Considered to be one of the largest Catholic churches on Maui, Christ the King draws most of its parishioners from Central Maui.

The church's 75th anniversary celebratory Mass included visiting Bishop Oscar Solis of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. Solis is originally from the Philippines and is charged in Los Angeles with recognizing the different ethnic groups his Catholic church ministers to there.

### Article Photos



Bishop Oscar Solis uses incense to bless the time capsule outside Christ the King Church on Sunday morning. The capsule — sealed PVC pipe — contains items from the first 75 years of the church, its school and the community it serves.

The Maui News / AMANDA COWAN photo

"The goal here is unity in the midst of diversity," Solis said. "The community here on Maui is no different," Solis said Sunday. "You have diversity, and yet there is unity. It's a wonderful display of faith in action."

Tomas said he was encouraged by this weekend's celebration turnout. With the 75th anniversary behind them, Tomas said he looks forward to his church's engaging in its community through activities such as reaching out to those imprisoned and assisting families who face financial difficulties.

"We're trying to help them," Tomas said, adding that the church has a food pantry that helps the community's needy and a fund that will help families with basic needs.

Lucy Peros, the chair of the anniversary committee, said she was gratified by the outpouring of support throughout the year. "No one said no," she said.

Committee member Jasmine Higa said she was impressed by how parishioners of different ethnic backgrounds were able to unite. "Everybody came together as one to help each other."

\* Claudine San Nicolas can be reached at [claudine@mauinews.com](mailto:claudine@mauinews.com).

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