



Christ the King Catholic Church

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Parish History

The late Monsignor William J. Sweeney first came to Richland from Kennewick in 1943 and celebrated Mass in a large tent for 150 people. Later that year, the tent was replaced with a larger tent that held up to 1,500 people. In 1944 the U.S. government constructed Christ the King's first church, a Government Issue "chapel," built on the site of the present church, and Father Sweeney was the first pastor.



In 1954, the Diocese of Yakima bought our 11 -acre site from the federal government for \$24,387 and a year later the new million-dollar school and convent were dedicated. In 1957, a three-year campaign was organized to raise three hundred thousand dollars to reduce the dept incurred from the construction of the new school and convent. In 1964, the confraternity of Christian Doctrine program began to provide religious education to an hundreds of parish children. A parish resource library was started in 1976.

As a means of generating support for the school, an annual "Sausage Fest" began in 1977. It is now staffed by 1,300 volunteers and attended by thousands.



In 1978, Father Sweeney retired as pastor, and continued to provide spiritual support for our parish until his death in 1996.

In 1981, the old church was torn down to make way for a new, bigger church with seating for 900. Two years later, Father Richard Wuertz succeeded Father John Murtagh as pastor and was assisted by Fr. John O'Shea and Fr. Maurice Peterson. In 1986, Christ the King's first permanent deacons, Robert DaValle and LeRoi Rice were ordained by Bishop William Skylstad. Later, Al Rizzo was ordained as our third permanent deacon.

In 1992, Father Richard House was ordained and assigned to our Parish as associate pastor. Father Thomas Kuykendall succeeded him in 1994. In 1997, Father Thomas Champoux was appointed pastor. Our current Associate Pastors are Father Wilar Zabala and Father Van Nguyen. We have also been served by Fathers Emmett Sarsfield, Gary Norman, Darell Mitchell, Robert Siler and Nicholas Milich as Associate Pastors.

Our parish is home to about 2300 families. Our school and religious education programs, and many other groups and ministries continue to thrive.