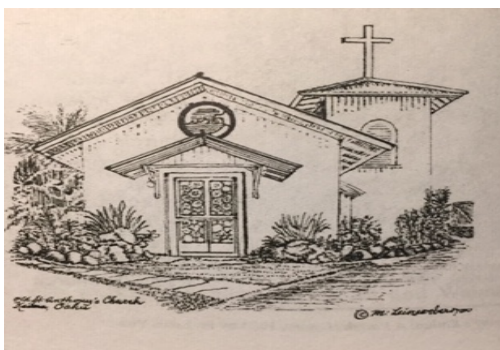


A Brief History of  
St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church  
and its Crucifix

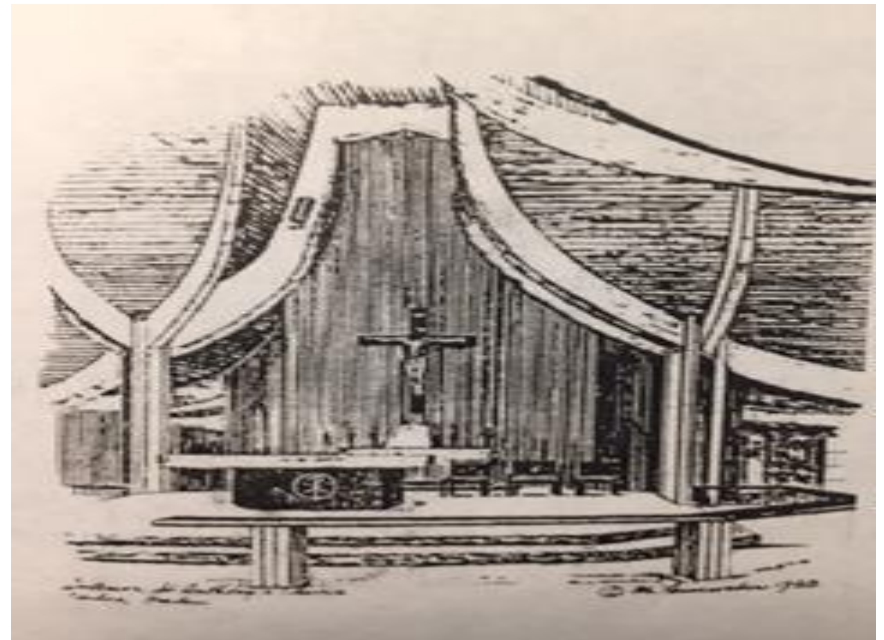
On the morning of January 22, 1933, the very first Mass was held in the original St. Anthony of Padua church (now St. Anthony's Kindergarten classroom). An earlier crucifix was placed behind the altar in the sanctuary.



20 years later, the small church could no longer support the rapidly growing parish and on July 23, 1955, the first Mass was held in what today is our Parish Hall. Once again, the crucifix was behind the altar in the sanctuary.



After the dedication of this new church, the Pali Highway opened, and with it came rapid population growth in the sleepy village of Kailua. It became quickly apparent that this second structure was unable to support the overflowing congregation at Sunday Mass. Construction began on a larger place of worship in the mid-1960s and on Easter Sunday in 1968, the first Mass was celebrated in the present-day church. Once again, the crucifix was behind the altar and was the focal point of our worship.



Tragically, during the early hours of July 24, 1982, a fire broke out in the church destroying most (but not all) of the structure. The present-day crucifix that had hung above the altar was severely burned almost beyond recognition. Restoration of the church began soon thereafter and services were once again held in the Parish Hall (the previous church structure).

The first Mass in the renovated church was offered on March 24, 1984. Meanwhile, the crucifix underwent a chemical treatment that solidified the charred, blackened wood, saving it from ruin. Thanks to the expertise of key individuals the magnificent crucifix was saved. Six years after the fire, on October 16, 1988, the crucifix was returned to the present-day church and hung on the wall by the baptismal font.

After countless hours devoted to prayer, discernment, and discussions with numerous parishioners; after meeting with Bishop Larry Silva; and after the Parish Planning and Building Committee, led by James Gomes and comprised of engineers and architects, assessed the structural integrity and feasibility of moving the crucifix, the process of returning the crucifix to its rightful place - in the sanctuary behind the altar - will begin on March 7, 2019, 37 years after the fire.

May our Lord watch over us and guide us as we begin this special undertaking. Let us together pray for a successful outcome.

(Sources used: The History of St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church, Copyright 2005 by the Kailua Historical Society; A History of Kailua Oahu's Catholic Church & School, Commemorative 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary St. Anthony of Padua Kailua, Hawaii)