

50th Anniversary Celebration Mass of St. Michael, the Archangel, Mission Church

St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church, a mission church of St. Joseph Parish celebrated its 50th Anniversary on September 19, 2009 with Most Reverend Jaime Soto, Bishop of Sacramento as the celebrant. Many visiting priests and deacons were in attendance including Fr. William Kinane, whose first assignment as a new priest from Ireland was to St. Joseph and St. Michael church in 1957; he was present at the dedication and 25th Anniversary of St. Michael's.

Over 180 people attended the Jubilee Mass which was followed by a BBQ, music and a slideshow held in the remodeled church hall and on the grounds. A gift to each parishioner was a commemorative booklet and a crucifix made from the original altar railing. Though the little church was built in 1959, its parishioners have recorded history of Mass being said in the area from the turn of the 20th century, through the "Boomtown" years.

Before 1900, there was no church north of Shasta and Redding until you reached Yreka and a priest would travel by horse and buggy from Red Bluff Parish to the mission church in Redding and then continue on to say Mass in people's homes like the Flanagan family in Churntown. He or another priest from Weaverville would also travel by horseback to say Mass in family homes in Kennett and then northeast to Delta and other mining towns on the way.

During the "Boomtown" beginnings, 1937-38, Mass was held in the Shasta Hotel, then in the Shasta Theatre until around 1946, when it was held in the Community Hall of the USBR housing site of Toyon until the church was built; a dream of the late Msgr. John O'Connor, who loved the community spirit of the area, and believed that the church population would continue to grow.