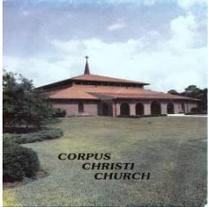


Corpus Christi Catholic Church

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307 Beach Drive, Destin Florida 32541



The Catholic Church has a rich heritage in Northwest Florida with the first Mass being celebrated in Pensacola by five Dominican priest on August 15, 1559. The catholic church in Okaloosa County has grown side by side with the economic, social and civic development of the area. In 1915 Okaloosa county was formed from Walton and Santa Rosa counties and in 1915 a Catholic Church named St. Mary's was dedicated in Fort Walton Beach by Bishop Edward P. Allen of Mobile. The early settlers were men and women of courage and faith who kept it alive and handed it on to future generations. It was love and faith and a vision of the future that prompted the purchase of a 20 acre site in Destin in 1970. In 1976 a census of Destin and South Walton was taken by the Legion of Mary. After a report of the census was given it was decided to start a Catholic Parish in Destin. On October 25th, 1977, Monsignor Patrick Cunningham, then pastor of St. Mary's Church in Ft. Walton Beach, was appointed the founding pastor and the new parish was named Corpus Christi. The first Mass was celebrated on October 31st, 1977 in the Lakeshore Room of Shoreline Towers, Destin, FL thanks to the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Shahid. Masses were at the Towers until May 1978. Then on May 28th, The Feast of Corpus Christi, the Parish celebrated its first outdoor mass with a procession of the Most Blessed Sacrament on the site where Corpus Christi Church and Rectory now stand. Sunday masses were moved to Destin Elementary School and were held there until December 24th, 1978. During this time the Parish building program was being planned. Sixty families were registered but the Parish would also take care of a great number of both summer and winter visitors. A facility was designed by George T. Kearin. It was a Rectory, Administrative and Chapel combination. The site for this first building was blessed on September 7th, 1978 and on the following day construction was started under the supervision of Joseph L. Vota, contractor. It was completed on December 24th, 1978 in time for Christmas Masses. Next the beautiful Grotto of Our Lady of Grace was dedicated on December 8th, 1979. Soon there was a need for a Church building. Architect George Kohut was engaged by the Diocese to design a new Corpus Christi Church. The contract was awarded to Toler-Trammel Construction Company, Ft. Walton Beach, FL. Ground breaking took place on October 1983 and construction started on October 12th, 1983. On June 24th, 1984, The Feast of Corpus Christi, the new church was dedicated by the Most Reverend J. Keith Symons, Bishop of Pensacola- Tallahassee. The new parish of Corpus Christi from its inception gave priority to the interior life and religious education. The Holy Name Society, The Sodality and the Legion of Mary were organized and the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine was founded. The Pope John Paul LL Center School of Religion was dedicated on September 8th 1988 and on the feast of the birth of Mary Mother of God, Bishop Symons celebrated mass with the people of the parish. In August 1989, Monsignor Patrick Cunningham retired and was succeeded by Monsignor Terrell F. Solana, Father William Condron, Father Robert Morris and in July 2015 by our present pastor Father Viet Huynh. Since then our Parish has grown with seasonal visitors and has tried to accommodate all by building adaptations and expanded parking facilities. The Parish has only one purpose for its existence that is to continue the mission of Jesus. Its primary goal is to help every member grow to the fullness of his or her Christian vocation, and so devlope a Parish Family atmosphere for ourselves and all our visitors.