

Joyful return

Parishioners fill Maria Lanakila Church for the first time since last year's deadly Lahaina wildfire

Photos by Dann Ebina



Maria Lanakila Church was miraculously unharmed in the Aug. 8, 2023, wildfire that devastated Maui's historic Lahaina town, but nevertheless remained closed amid the still-ongoing disaster relief efforts. It finally opened its doors Dec. 11 in a "soft opening" for parishioners that also saw its refurbished rectory blessed by Bishop Larry Silva, above. At left, people gathered in front of the church, which now features a new lawn (and on Dec. 11 included chairs for the overflow crowd). At top, Maria Lanakila was filled with grateful faithful who were overjoyed to return to its pews.