

**TIMARU DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM**

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**HERITAGE ITEM NAME** St Joseph's Catholic Church

**ADDRESS** 26 Wilkin Street, Temuka

**PHOTOGRAPH**



(www)

**FORMER PLAN ITEM No.** No. 115      **HNZ LIST No. & CATEGORY** 2033 / 2  
(at time of assessment)

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION** Lot 1 DP 51041

**VALUATION NUMBER** 2478013000A

**DATE OF CONSTRUCTION** 1879-81

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/  
BUILDER** Henry Evans, architect; Messrs Riley & Fin[d]lay,  
stonemasons; James Delaney, carpenter

**STYLE** Early English Gothic Revival

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION**

Hall-type church with rectangular footprint, gabled roof forms and battlemented entrance tower. Buttresses, lancet arched windows, clock face set beneath battlements on each side of tower. Pinnacles at each corner of the main roof and trefoil motifs on tower. Commemorative stone over entrance with dedication to Father Fauvel. Lower gabled roof over sacristy at the rear (east end) of the church. Low stone wall on Denmark and Wilkin Street boundaries.

**MATERIALS/STRUCTURE**

Upper Waitohi limestone walls (rough-hewn with ashlar dressings), concrete foundations, timber and corrugated metal. [Spire of Oamaru stone].

**ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS**

Entrance gates removed (1938). Sacristy demolished and new one built (1975-76). Spire removed (post-Canterbury EQs).

**SETTING**

The church stands on the east side of Wilkin Street; its site is bounded to the south by Denmark Street. Entry is at the west end overlooking Wilkin Street. Unencumbered views of the church can be had from Rayner, Denmark and Wilkin Streets. St Joseph's Catholic School is located on the opposite side of Wilkin Street. The extent of setting is limited to the immediate surrounds of the church, rather than the land parcel as a whole, notwithstanding the potential archaeological values across the church and school sites.

## **HISTORY**

Father Louis Fauvel, a French-born Marist priest, settled in Temuka in 1876 and thus was the Temuka parish formed. Initially Fauvel (1833-1904) oversaw the construction of a timber church, which soon became too small for the congregation. The foundation stone of a new stone church was laid by Bishop Redwood of Wellington on 16 November 1879. It was erected on the opposite side of Wilkin Street from the original church; the stone having been gifted by Henry Collett and then carted by parishioners to the site. A peal of three church bells were manufactured at the Meneely Bell Foundry in West Troy, New York and a clock (E Dent & Co. of London) was also installed in the church tower in 1881. Bishop Redwood returned to consecrate the church on 16 April 1882. The block of land bounded by Alexandra, Rayner, Denmark and Wilkin Streets was progressively subdivided from the late 1960s for residential development. The concrete presbytery (c.1881) beside the church on Wilkin Street was demolished and replaced in the early 1980s. The Studholme Street convent (1897/88) of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart, which was founded by Sister Mary MacKillop, has also been demolished. The church was damaged in the September 2010 Canterbury earthquake and the spire was subsequently removed for safety reasons. Services resumed in the church in December 2016. St Joseph's Catholic Church is part of the Opihi-Mary Mackillop Parish.

## **HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE**

St Joseph's Catholic Church has historical significance for its association with Father Louis Fauvel and the Catholic community of Temuka, especially those who endowed the church. Father Fauvel was instrumental in bringing the Sisters of St Joseph to New Zealand, in order to open a school in Temuka.

## **CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE**

St Joseph's Catholic Church has cultural and spiritual significance as a place of Catholic worship and fellowship. The stained glass windows inside the church contribute to the building's commemorative function.

## **ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE**

St Joseph's Catholic Church has architectural significance as a Gothic Revival style church designed by Timaru architect Henry Evans. Although Father Fauvel has been credited with the design Evans was acknowledged as the architect in contemporary descriptions of the new church. He practiced in Timaru between late 1877 and early 1883. St Joseph's Church reveals the ongoing popularity of the Gothic Revival style in the later 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## **TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE**

St Joseph's Catholic Church has technological and craftsmanship significance for its stone construction and detailing, as well as the stained glass windows installed in the building. The stone was quarried on the Collett property near Kakahu, at which a number of historic quarry and kiln sites remain. A full set of French stained glass windows made by George-Nicolas Dufêtre of Grigny were installed in the church under the direction of Father Fauvel. Both the studio in which they were made and, in the case of the St Germaine window, the subject matter of the windows attest to the French heritage of St Joseph's first resident priest. Dufêtre (1841-?) made stained glass in France between 1866 and 1897.

## **CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE**

St Joseph's Catholic Church has contextual significance as a Temuka landmark. Although the spire has been removed the church makes a notable contribution to the streetscape and is the key feature in a Catholic precinct that also includes the primary school across the road.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

As the church pre-dates 1900 its site has potential archaeological significance relating to the structure's construction and the development of the Catholic precinct since 1876.

## SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

St Joseph's Catholic Church has overall heritage significance to Temuka and Timaru district as a whole. The church has historical significance for its association with Father Fauvel and the foundation of the parish and cultural and spiritual significance as a place of Catholic worship and fellowship. St Joseph's Catholic Church has architectural significance as the work of Timaru architect Henry Evans and technological and craftsmanship significance for its stone construction and French stained glass windows. St Joseph's Catholic Church has contextual significance as a Temuka landmark and its site has potential archaeological significance in view of the church's late-19<sup>th</sup> century date of construction.

## HERITAGE CATEGORY

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## REFERENCES

- *Timaru Herald* 21 February 1878, p. 4; 17 November 1877, p. 1; 29 September 1879, p. 3; 5 November 1879, p. 8; 6 July 1881, p. 3; 14 September 1881, p. 1; 6 July 1881, p. 3; 19 April 1883, p. 7; 18 December 2016 (available online).
- *Temuka Leader* 12 October 1880, p. 2; 5 February 1881, p. 2; 12 March 1881, p. 2; 8 December 1881, p. 3; 1 September 1904, p. 3.
- *Grey River Argus* 31 August 1904, p. 3.
- *South Canterbury Times* 23 February 1881, p. 3.
- *Globe* 6 May 1880, p. 2.
- <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/2033>
- F Ciaran 'Stained Glass in Canterbury New Zealand, 1860-1988' PhD thesis, University of Canterbury, 1992.
- *Cyclopedia of New Zealand – Canterbury Provincial District* Christchurch, 1903; available online.
- <https://www.nzceo.org.nz/mary-mackillop-a-saint-for-australia-and-new-zealand/>
- <https://archives.chchcatholic.nz/history-of-parishes/south-canterbury/>
- S Brosnahan *Thinking about Heaven – a history of Sacred Heart parish, Timaru* Timaru, 2011.
- <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/st-josephs-church-temuka-memorial>



Extent of setting, limited to immediate surrounds of the church, 26 Wilkin Street, Temuka.