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### Christ the King: Understanding a Symbolic and Cultural Landscape

Many landscapes exist in our world. The landscapes are lived upon and walked upon every day, yet, often little or ample thought is given to the mundane world around us. James and Nancy Duncan take an approach to the landscape that allows for one to read the landscape, much like a text, both explicitly and discretely, and in such a manner that it can provide clues and information that allow one to learn from the present built environment (Duncan and Duncan 28). Pierce Lewis, a scholar on Landscape Studies, writes that landscape is our autobiography (Lewis 12). The Roman Catholic faith has long had a unique culture attached to it since the death of Christ and the establishment of the church by St. Peter. It has written several chapters in our landscape autobiography. Part of the religious culture is quite visible on the built landscape all throughout the modern world, with Vatican City in Rome as the Global focal point for the whole Catholic faith.

The church is a mark of the Catholic faith on the landscape that occurs over and over. The average church may be more generic than Vatican City, yet each church has found its presence on the landscape for a reason and each church plays an important role in the Catholic Church, its culture and in society as a whole. Paul Groth, another landscape scholar, would most likely consider the average church part of the everyday, but this is not problematic because the everyday landscape can "establish .. identity, articulate.. social relations, and derive cultural meaning" (Groth 1).

This paper will explore the symbolic landscape of the Cathedral of Christ the King in Lexington, Kentucky as a means of understanding the Catholic cultural landscape; I will first explain how the Catholic cultural landscape of Kentucky has developed overtime in the context of the regional landscape of the faith. I will also discuss specifically the site of Christ the King and how it was established as a parish and built landscape. I will look at the cathedral landscape to help explain how the symbolic landscape can be read and understood as a text. Thirdly, after having established the understanding of the church I will address how and why the church of Christ the King became a Cathedral and the meaning of this event for the Catholic Cultural landscape of Central Kentucky. **I. Developing the Catholic Cultural Landscape of Central Kentucky.**

The Roman Catholic faith has never had a stronghold on the landscape of Kentucky, but it has had a long presence. The earliest records of a Catholic presence in Kentucky began in 1785, twelve years before statehood for Kentucky. A group of 25 Catholic pioneer families from Maryland left their homes to settle on land in Nelson Co. that was sold to them by speculators. They were promised fertile land but in reality this turned out to be a false claim by the speculators (Weglicki-3-5, Ellis 79). This same year, Rev. St. Pierre was the first known Catholic priest to be in Kentucky as a missionary (Weglicki 3-5).

In the year following Kentucky statehood, two priests, Rev. Barrier and Rev. Badin, were commissioned by the Bishop of Baltimore, Bishop John Carroll, to work as Kentucky missionaries. They traveled by foot from Baltimore to present-day Maysville,

KY. From this point they continued to Lexington, KY where the first recorded Catholic mass was held on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1793 (Weglicki- 4).

The establishment of Catholicism in Kentucky has a strong connection to the French Catholic Church. It was during this time of Kentucky statehood development that the French Revolution was taking place. This caused many seminaries and Catholic schools to shut their doors in France and many French priests lost their parishes, churches and went into exile (Ellis 77). As a result, many of them made their way to America where Kentucky was open for Catholic missionaries to enter (Weglicki -3). Later, we will see that the founding of Gethsemane, near Bardstown, KY was by a group of French Trappist monks. The Trappist came to America in 1802 because of complications stemming from the French Revolution. However, after never being able to establish ground in American they returned to their home land ten years later. It was a second group of Trappist monks from France that established the contemplative monastery at Gethsemane (Ellis 132-133).

Of the two priests commissioned by Bishop Carroll to establish a mission in Kentucky, Rev. Badin was the only one that could handle the challenge of missionary work in pioneer Kentucky. He established a mission on the banks of the Elkhorn Creek in Scott Co., known as the White Sulphur mission. Bishop Carroll continued to support the efforts of Fr. Badin and helped him to purchase land for the mission and by 1794 a small thirty by thirty foot wood church was erected at White Sulphur. Things did not continue to go smoothly for the church at White Sulphur for the years to follow the construction of the church. This parish became known as "that troublesome parish" (Bevins and O'Rourke 1985). This mission church also received a steady flow of priests

for the next several years, helping it to stay afloat. Attempts were made to expand the church to a brick structure, but often failed due to the internal turmoil of the congregation. In 1812, they were finally able to get their act together enough to build a more permanent structure. This allowed White Sulphur to continue to be the home base for the Catholic Church in Central Kentucky (Weglicki 9).

Due to the troubles and headaches at White Sulphur, Fr. Badin decided to move his efforts elsewhere and headed off for Nelson Co. and to the site of the original group of Catholic settlers of the state of Kentucky. Here, Fr. Badin established a home near Bardstown, KY; an area that became a place of strong importance for the Catholic faith in Kentucky and west of the Appalachian Mountains (Weglicki 6).

Fr. Badin's role in Bardstown, KY was an important one. In April 8<sup>1</sup>, 1808 the Dioceses of Baltimore was separated into 4 new dioceses: Boston, New York, Philadelphia and a little town in Kentucky called Bardstown. This was the first diocese west of the Appalachian Mountains and covered a vast area: Present day Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri and the northern portion of Arkansas (Ryan 73). Other than a geographic central location within the territory, the fact that Bardstown was chosen as the first seat of the Catholic Church west of the mountains sounds really quite random when compared to other developing places of the time; this also meant that new diocese covered an area from the Canadian border to the Deep South. Yet, this led the way for a Catholic stronghold in middle Kentucky.

Bishop Flaget was made the Bishop of the Dioceses and had a difficult role in the vast area of land. However, to start things off, he was able to make many accomplishments for the Catholic Church in Bardstown. By 1811, a seminary was

established: St. Thomas Seminary. In another connection to France, the French based Sisters of Charity of Nazareth established themselves in Bardstown at the site of the St. Thomas Seminary in 1812. Many sisters from this order went to White Sulphur in Scott Co. to work, which helped to unite Central and Eastern Kentucky Catholics with the Bardstown area. However, even the laborious and high-spirited attitudes of the sisters were not enough for the parish of White Sulphur, who once again proved to be a challenge. As a result of their troubles, in 1833 the sisters headed out of town and relocated their operation in the larger urban area of Lexington (Weglicki 8-10).

Also, during this time period, the Sisters of Loretto established themselves in Bardstown and the order of St. Dominic Sisters shortly followed (Weglicki 10-11). The establishment of the Trappist monks at Gethsemane Abbey of our Lady culminated the rise of the Bardstown area as a place of great significance to the Catholic faith in American and Catholic Culture (Ellis 133). The Abbey of Gethsemane may be the most well known aspect of the area because of the hardcore monastic and contemplative lifestyle of the monks and because of the well known author and theologian who was a Trappist monk at Gethsemane: Thomas Merton.

From 1819 to 1828, Fr. Badin - the priest who helped define the Catholic landscape of Kentucky up until this point in time, returned to France for a short while. While all of his endeavors for Kentucky seemed to be over, Fr. Badin continued to help shape the Catholic Cultural Landscape of America; in 1831, Badin purchased a piece of land outside of South Bend, Indiana which become the home to the Holy Cross Brothers who opened up the Notre Dame University in 1842 - a place that has made a profound mark on Catholic culture of America in a more contemporary context (Weglicki 9).

Badin made a final appearance in Kentucky in 1848, when he was present at the establishment of the cathedral in Louisville; at this time the head of the diocese was no longer located in Bardstown but rather moved because Louisville was a rapidly growing city (Weglicki 9). Bishop Flaget, in the presence of Pope Gregory XVI in Rome, made the suggestion that the diocese be moved to Louisville. In 1841, Flaget received approval for the move and it was carried out (Weglicki 16-17).

In 1853, it was decided by Pope Pius IX that the Diocese of Covington was to be established. At this time, the new Diocese only had 6 priests in total - 2 of them being in Lexington. Much of the Diocese was divided by the growing Central Bluegrass area and the Appalachian region. With only 6 priests it was hard for churches to begin in the far and hard to travel to mountains of Eastern Kentucky. After building a Cathedral in Covington, the bishop's second goal was to increase the number of priests in the diocese. He established a seminary at the troubled Scott Co. parish of White Sulphur. During this time the Civil War broke out and not only divided the state, but divided congregations and the dioceses (Ryan 151-155).

For the next several decades after the Civil War, the Catholic Church and the Dioceses of Covington expanded rapidly and readily. Various bishops spent their share of time as head of the Diocese in Covington. Numerous churches sprang to life all over Central and Eastern Kentucky. On November 11<sup>th</sup>, 1944 Bishop William Theodore Mulloy was made the 6<sup>th</sup> bishop of the Covington Diocese and paved the way for the creation of the Christ the King Parish in Lexington, Kentucky (Ryan 311).

## **II. The Establishment of the Christ the King Parish: The Creation of a Symbolic Landscape.**

The first mass of the Parish of Christ the King was conducted on July 22, 1945 at St. Catherine's Academy on North Limestone in Lexington, Kentucky (The Parish). This however, was not the first church in Lexington for the Catholic community. The first celebration of mass in Lexington was held back in 1793 by the two French priests set forth by Bishop Carroll of Baltimore (Weglicki 7). In addition, Fr. Badin made frequent trips from White Sulphur to Lexington to celebrate mass from 1801 to 1804, the efforts were made to purchase a plot of land on West Main Street for the future home for a small Catholic community until 1812 (Ryan 58-61).

For several years prior to 1812, Fr. Badin campaigned for funds to help build a permanent structure and place of worship for the Catholic community in Lexington. In 1812, a brick church was constructed on Third Street and formed a presence on the landscape of Lexington. This parish was named St. Peter. From its opening in 1812 until 1821, St. Peter was still a mission church and did not have a regular church schedule, mass was only celebrated when a priest would visit the parish on their rounds of different churches in the dioceses. In 1821, a pastor was finally appointed to the church and Sunday services became the norm (Weglicki 15).

By 1836, the church of St. Peters was deemed too small and work began to build a new church on North Limestone on property owned by the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth. At the end of the following year, a new St. Peters church was finished and this church was the sole Catholic Church in Lexington when the Dioceses of Covington came to existence (Ryan 98).

Returning to the Parish of Christ the King, according to archival records, roughly 110 individuals signed in at the first mass celebration of the parish held at St. Catherine's Academy on July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1945 (Pioneers of 1945 1). The original pastor of the new parish was Monsignor George O'Bryan. However, Msgr. O'Bryan only presided over the congregation for a short while because he suffered from health complications (The Parish).

The new head of the parish was to become the most influential priest the parish has seen to date. Perhaps more interesting, the new priest was a native to Lexington, Kentucky. This new priest was Fr. Richard Garland O'Neill (The Parish). As part of accepting the role as the new pastor, Fr. O'Neill was also asked by Bishop Mulloy of the Covington Dioceses to purchase land for the new parish where a school, church convent and rectory could be erected (The Rev. 1). Records from the Diocese of Covington show that Bishop Mulloy and the Diocese of Covington loaned Fr. O'Neill \$29,000 (Ward 1) to enable the parish to purchase land **10 acres of land** on the estate of Henry Clay in November of 1945 (Guided Tour 4). At this time, most of the area around the land was rural and the newly established boundaries for the parish included less than 100 families (The Rev. 1). However, Fr. O'Neill did not consider this a problem, perhaps because he envisioned the future role of the parish as a cathedral. Fr. O'Neill was quoted saying: "My parish extend from the Ohio River to the Tennessee border" (The Rev. 1).

The land that was purchased from the Henry Clay estate was located along Colony Blvd. in the Chevy Chase neighborhood of Lexington. It was a rural area at the time of purchase, but this area (like most in America) experienced post World War II suburbanization trends. Fr. O'Neill was also able to use his local roots as an advantage.

He felt comfortable enough knocking on every single door of all the residents in his parish boundary to explain the role of the church in their neighborhood and to personally invite each family to the church. O'Neill also had many local contacts in the horse industry of the Bluegrass Region who he could go to in order to solicit financial assistance as the new parish tried to establish itself in the growing city of Lexington (The Rev. 1).

Today, the site of the Cathedral of Christ the King is quite an awesome mark on the suburban landscape of Lexington. However, this was not always the case. The first official mass held for the parish on its own grounds was on May 12<sup>th</sup>, 1946. The structure was a small and humble prefabricated wood structure (The Parish 1). This was all they had at the time and it was not even a place the parish could truly call their own; as the structure had previously served as a church in Ft. Wright, Kentucky at the parish of St. Agnes (Guided Tour 4). The church was physically relocated from Ft. Wright to Lexington. Continuing with Fr. O'Neill's vision for the church and parish, he knew this small church could only be temporary and began to make plans for expansion and new building. However, this wood church structure had a more involved existence on the landscape than intended.

Fr. O'Neill sought out a church architect from nearby Cincinnati to draft plans for a school, church, rectory and convent. The selected architect was Edward J. Schulte, whose resume contains an extensive list of churches and religious buildings mostly local to the region but also on projects as far away as Arizona and New Mexico. Perhaps the title of his autobiography best describes the type of architect that he was: The Lord was my Client (Schulte 1-2). Plans were drafted in 1947. Records show that a \$300,000

mortgage was arranged by Bishop Mulloy to help pay for the school and convent construction costs. The Covington Dioceses would also make small loans from time to time to help the parish pay off the principal balance (Ward 1).

By the fall of 1951, the new school and convent of Christ the King opened its doors. Records show enrollment for the first year of operation was 378 students and a staff of 10 sisters from the Divine Providence Order (Schara 1). The present road that borders the church campus is named Providence, which is named after this group of nuns (the nuns no longer reside or work at the school). James Hanlon writes on the works of Lawrence Berg and Robin Kearns and explains that "place names are more than simply labels.. ..place names constitute 'a symbolic and material order that provides normality and legitimacy to those who dominate the politics of (place) representation'" (Hanlon 22). The fact that a nearby road is named after this group of nuns suggests that the church dominated the politics of the developing area.

Despite the site now having a modern school and convent, the parish was still celebrating mass in the small white-washed wood structure; although, in 1949 and again in 1958 new wing expansions did occur to the church structure (Guided Tour 4).

J.B. Jackson, one of the founders of the landscape discipline in America, states that a practical way to understand the American landscape is to look at how "new communities] set up certain basic institutions," and "how space is organized by the community" (Jackson 114). In this context, it is important to understand how the site of Christ the King developed overtime as a Catholic community, as it helps to provide insight and a reading of the cultural landscape of the time. The fact that the parish chose to build and invest money in a school building before building a permanent church

building shows that the people of this time put others before themselves, in this case, they put the education and development of the children before their own spiritual needs of a place of worship. The school motto of "Character Knowledge Spirit," reflects these values (Schara 1). The place of the school became the center for activities and life of the parish. Parents of students in the school spent time as volunteers in the classroom and other parts of the school (The Rev. 2).

The school continued to grow quite rapidly from the date it first opened its doors. By 1959, the Christ the King School had an enrollment of 715 students and many of the classrooms were bulging at capacity; one classroom reached 74 students in a single room. Temporary classrooms were purchased for the grounds and in 1966 a school expansion took place between the school and the convent (Schara 1). This expansion to the school occurred before construction began on the parish church, once again showing the importance and priority the school and children had over the desire for a place of worship.

Most of the rapid growth of the parish could be attributed to the post-war climate of the times which abetted in the establishment of suburban neighborhoods within the parish boundaries, as well as the baby boomer generation which helped lead to the success and strong enrollment at the school of Christ the King. In the year 1960, literature in the Christ the King Archives state that the parish had grown to 500 families - roughly five times the size of the original congregation at the time of the parish's establishment fifteen years earlier (The Rev. 2).

This same year, 1960, Fr. O'Neill (whom by this time was granted the title Monsignor), began intensive fundraising efforts for the construction of a parish church.

It is noted that Msgr. O'Neill often referred to the planned church as "cathedral," even before the ground was broken for the church and twenty years before talks began on considering Christ the King as a cathedral for a new diocese (The Rev. 2). For five years fundraising for the permanent parish church went on, with construction finally beginning in 1965 (The Parish).

In May of 1967, at the cost of \$1.5 million, the church of Christ the King was at last completed (The Parish). The church was built to the original plans of Edward J. Schulte, who had designed the plans for the school, convent, church and rectory back in 1947 (The Rev. 1). The church was erected with polished Bedford Stone from Bedford, Indiana and was laid out in a contemporary ecclesiastic cruciform design (Guided Tour 4). Mario V. Caputo, author of *The Parish Church*, states that, "in the concept of [the cross] design, the people seated in the transept, or arms of the cross, and in the nave, the body of the cross, are brought closer to the altar and to participation in the mass (Caputo 58).

### **III. Understanding the Symbolic Landscape**

A church is unarguably a symbolic landscape and has been so since the first churches. In fact, D.W. Meinig argues that, "all landscapes are symbolic" (Meinig 6; Cosgrove 1998). Symbolism in churches was originally used as a tool to educate, teach and explain religious stories and teachings to those who could not read. Often the walls of the church portrayed the bible (Johnson 129). The symbol of the cross design for a modern church does not carry the same role of symbolism as one may find in a

Romanesque or Gothic church, yet has symbolic value none the less. The cross has long been the primary symbol of Christian faith (Johnson 84).

The symbolic nature of the architectural cross design and layout of Christ the King Church and other churches is quite subtle (in comparison to a mural drawn on a wall). Rather than the cross being something observed, it is now a space one can walk around in- the cross becomes the environment of the church and symbolizes that all who believe in the faith are all part of the cross, and stand with others on the cross and are one with Christ on the cross. An approach to the landscape in this manner is through an epistemological understanding where the material landscape helps provide understanding of lived human practice (Henderson 189). F. Ernest Johnson, author of Religious Symbolism, refers to this notion as "the second great field of symbolism," because it helps the interior atmosphere of the church landscape which promotes the awareness of God and helps set the space apart from the interior of any other buildings or large public buildings (Johnson 136). According to J.B. Jackson, as explained by Dennis Cosgrove in his book *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*, "landscape is anchored in *human life*, not something to look at but to live in, and to live in socially. Landscape is a *unity* of people and environment" (italics part of original) (Cosgrove 1998). And an explanation of Tom Stephenson in Cosgrove's book explains that "we are not to see landscape so much as to experience it physically" (Cosgrove 1998).

The exterior of the church at Christ the King also has a profound symbolic value. Caputo writes that, "in designing the exterior of a church, the form should reflect the character of the people and the surrounding neighborhood and town.. [and] be simple in design, dignified, functional and contemporary" (Caputo 15). The church at Christ the

King is more integral to the latter part of this statement, but the fact that it is actually a cathedral rather than a parish church may speak to the difference of this issue, as Caputo was referring to a parish church.

The Bedford stone which comprises the structure shows and represents a strong house of God. Caputo continues to express his thoughts on the church edifice: "It is built for the glory of God and its outward design must express its inner purpose and meaning" (Caputo 6). The image of Christ the King does just that. It tells people that this is a strong structure which houses great importance, yet it is simple and welcoming at the same time. Denis Cosgrove explains that J.B. Jackson wrote that stone holds a sacred power, and that "stone is not dead and inert, but rather 'a concentration of power and life'" (Cosgrove 1998).

The architecture of this site speaks to the congregation as well as the community at large. Its stone facade represents power and strength and its tall steeple reaches towards the sky as a conduit between the church sanctuary and the heavens. The image of the steeple also appears as a lighthouse that looks out over the community keeping it safe from danger and always on the lookout.

The presence of a church in a community has long had an effect and has played an integral role on the American landscape. Evidence of this notion is highly visible on the New England village landscape that has been duplicated time in and time out in the United States. Part of this well known landscape is the church steeple, if not one but two - often on a street named Church Street which runs in near proximity to the Main Street. If a community of this fashion did not display at least one church steeple, something

would look and feel in disarray. The feature of the church upon the landscape helps us to know a "typical American," landscape (Meining 166-168).

The modern church does not always follow this same concept. Many modern churches have a form that follows the function of the church more than as a symbolic landscape. I would argue that the Cathedral of Christ the King is a modern church in the sense that it is designed with function in mind, yet it also adheres to many traditional aspects of a church- aspects that do not always adhere to form and function. Seasoltz, an author on the subject of church architecture, believes that in today's age many people have come to the realization that they don't need a strong symbolic structure to find security, but rather security can be found in the church community (Seasoltz 125-126). This notion resembles an understanding of landscape through Yi-Fu Tuan's idea of landscape as "sense of place" (Groth 13).

One traditional aspect of the cathedral of Christ the King that continues to be present in the landscape is the unique stain-glass windows. Even though we have reached a modern age, symbolism is still used as an education tool (Weber 7), and aspects of it can be read as part of the cultural landscape. The symbolic tradition, often stemming from art, does not have the same educational role; yet, it still has a profound affect on inspiration - an important aspect of the role of the church given its divine nature (Johnson 130). However, Caputo has a cautious approach to the subject of stained glass windows in a modern church; he advises that it is best to avoid a complex design in the windows because it can lead to distraction from the event that occur inside the church, such as the mass (Caputo 6).

In the case of Christ the King, the stained glass windows are a unique aspect of the church structure and add to the richness of the landscape. The style of stained glass is much different than traditional forms. The method is known as, "Paving Stones of Glass," and uses the thickness of the different colored glass set into concrete to enhance, in contrast to traditional lead mold windows. The artist of the windows in Christ the King was Gabriel Loire of Chartres, France -bringing yet another connection of the French influence on central Kentucky Catholicism back into play upon the landscape (Guided Tour 1).

Perhaps the most important aspect of the stained glass windows present at Christ the King is the grand window located over the main entrance to the church. Knowing some of the information about the history of the church in Kentucky, as discussed earlier in this paper, helps to understand this aspect of the landscape. This particular window is of importance because it portrays a symbolic reading of American and Kentucky Catholicism to all who enter and exit the church's main doors. Centered on this image is Christ the King, the namesake of the church and the most important human figure of the Catholic Church. On the left hand side of the figure of Christ are important figures in American Catholicism and include the following figures: St. Joques - the first American martyr; St. Elizabeth Ann Seton - founder of the first American order; St. Cabrini - the first U.S. citizen to be canonized a saint. On the right hand side of the figure of Christ are important figures of Kentucky Catholicism and include the following figures: Sister Demedio- one of the profound Sisters of Divine Providence who first taught at Christ the King School; Fr. Nerinex - a missionary to Kentucky; Fr. Badin - known as the apostle of Kentucky and celebrated the first mass in Kentucky; Mother Sister Spaulding - an

influential nun from the Sisters of Charity who lived and worked throughout Central Kentucky.

#### **IV. From Church to Cathedral: The New Catholic Landscape of Central Kentucky**

With the construction of the church complete, the parish became quiet for several years. It was not until 1988 did the church begin to make a stir in the Central Kentucky landscape once again. Msrg. O'Neill had been retired for twenty years at this point in time and deceased for fifteen years (The Rev. 4). January of 1988, the church received word from Pope John Paul II that the church of Christ the King would reach its envisioned destiny of being a cathedral. The Pope declared that the Diocese of Lexington was to be established and comprise 50 counties of Central and Eastern Kentucky. Majority of the new diocese came from the Diocese of Covington (43 counties), while seven counties came from the Archdiocese of Louisville (Weglicki 41).

Records show that the population of the Diocese of Lexington was over 1 million people, with a Catholic population of roughly 40,000 people. For the city of Lexington, the Catholic population was about 10% of the total city population. Not only was Lexington the fastest growing urban center of central Kentucky, it was also geographically a good location in terms of transportation, which would be a uniting factor for the new dioceses (Weglicki 41).

The church was officially made a cathedral on March 2, 1988 when Bishop Williams became installed at the first bishop. He was to oversee the church for 16,423 square miles which contained 67 Catholic parishes and missions (Establishment).

The fact that Christ the King became a cathedral speaks largely to the changing landscape of Lexington, KY. Catholicism was never a predominate part of the community in raw numbers, nonetheless, it was still deemed necessary for the establishment of a cathedral. A large part of this situation may be attributed to a change in the local demographics of Lexington. In 1957, the IBM Corporation located to Lexington. Along with this company, many people from the northern parts of the United States, historically a portion of the United States with a higher Catholic demographic than the Southeast United States, moved to the Bluegrass Region. Therefore, the Catholic Church of Lexington may have grown because of economic migration rather evangelical efforts of the church.

In addition, Vatican II in 1964 brought about many changes to the church, which in many regards made the church more open to those who had not been part of the Catholic Church. Changes also attracted people to the church. Some of the major changes included the celebration of mass in the local language, rather than Latin, and the altar was repositioned to face the people of congregation (Reuter 1). Vatican II was perhaps the biggest event for the Catholic Church in modern history and it had a profound role on Catholic culture all over the world, which can be read upon the church landscape in such examples as the position of the altar, incorporation of lay people and Saturday night mass, which all brought about social change and cultural change.

## **V. Conclusion**

Much can be learned about society and culture from the built landscape. It is imperative to furthermore understand that the idea of landscape is not static. George

Henderson writes that the landscape "is neither created nor destroyed; it simply changes form" (Henderson 187). The dynamic aspect of the landscape is often a result of changes in the values of those that live upon the landscape and the landscape can become redefined (Jackson 115). Richard Schein states that "the landscape-as-text is unstable and requires constant reinterpretation" (Schein 676).

The site of Christ the King fits quite well with the just mentioned ideas of an ever changing landscape. The transition from church to cathedral in 1988 was not the end of the story, as the landscape does indeed continue to recreate itself and modify itself. Sometimes this is done subtly, such as small changes made to the church landscape to correspond with the different seasons of the church calendar; examples of this include the draping of purple cloth during advent or red cloth during the Pentecost. While, other changes to the landscape have been more noticeable, such as the creation of the Cathedral Center (a gymnasium and meeting/reception rooms) in 1992 or the demolition of the original convent that occurred in order to renovate and expand the school in 2002 (Guided Tour 4; Schara 1). Just as Schein suggests of landscapes, the Christ the King landscape is constantly becoming (Schein 662; Cosgrove 2000; Mitchell 30).

Despite the renovation and expansion, it still follows a linear path for the understanding of the landscape, as we have already seen in this piece that the parish has made many sacrifices for the sake of the school and the education of the children. During expansion, the parish did attempt to carry on the "sense of place," put forth by Tuan (Groth 13), by trying to match the exterior building material with that of the original polished Bedford stone of the old convent. Yet, the fact that the exterior is not a match leaves a mark on the landscape of a new era and helps one to understand the landscape in

a larger social context that stem from changes in economics, society and the Catholic culture.

The intent of this paper was to explain how cultural landscapes can be understood by using the site of the Cathedral of Christ the King as a medium and example of a symbolic landscape. In order to fully comprehend this landscape, it was important to look at how Catholicism developed in Central Kentucky to gain a sense of the cultural environment and it was equally important to analyze how the specific site of Christ the King developed over time - as in this context it was read as a text, which is an approach to landscape. The landscape at hand, as all landscapes, is still in the process and will continue to be so. Therefore, the story and autobiography of this landscape is still being written.

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