

FAITH & FORM

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ON RELIGION, ART AND ARCHITECTURE
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Annual Awards Issue



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Donald E. Saliers, PHD – Liturgical Consultant*

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Manuscript Submission: The editor is pleased to review manuscripts for possible publication. Any subject material relevant to art and architecture is welcome. Good visual material is emphasized. Articles may be submitted on disk along with hard copy or e-mailed to: mcrosbie@faithnform.com. Manuscripts, disks and photos will not be returned unless specifically requested and a return envelope with sufficient postage is included.

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On the cover: One of the 15 2002 Faith & Form/IFRAA Religious Art & Architecture Award winners profiled in this issue: St. Boniface Episcopal Church by Hammel, Green and Abrahamson, Inc. Photo: John J. Korom Photography

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EDITOR'S PAGE

By Michael J. Crosbie



"Sacred Trusts," a national conference held this past October at the Washington National Cathedral, was an opportunity to assess the value of our houses of worship not only as sacred places, but also as resources for their communities.

The conference was organized by Partners for Sacred Places, the Philadelphia-based non-profit group dedicated, as its mission statement explains, "to the sound stewardship and active community use of America's older religious properties."

The conference drew hundreds of attendees and speakers, who for three days probed the civic and social dimensions of our religious buildings, and how they can better serve (and be served) by the neighborhoods in which they dwell.

Of all the speakers, I believe that Father Michael Doyle, pastor of Sacred Heart Church in Camden, New Jersey, best captured the spirit of the conference. His talk was so inspiring that *Faith & Form* presents it in this issue (page 21). I urge you to read it carefully. Doyle relates how Sacred Heart is a center for community life. If churches have symbolically been conceived of as ships, (the word "nave" is a cousin of "navy") then they can also be lifeboats. In speaking of Sacred Heart, Doyle shows us how.

It is obvious that helping those in need, the powerless, and supporting community-based relief is of no interest to the current President and his administration. They have thrown the issue back to religious institutions, calling for "faith-based" initiatives.


While many congregations are hard-pressed to step in where federal and state governments have abandoned their role in social services, this might actually be an opportune time for churches, synagogues, temples, and mosques to forge new partnerships with their communities to provide aid, while at the same time obtaining support for preserving their buildings.

In addressing the plenary session of Sacred Trusts, Partners co-directors Diane Cohen and Bob Jaeger spoke about creating tools for helping congregations that want to make their sacred places a center of community support and life, and finding methods of support from outside the congregation. To that end, Partners has recently published a new resource, "Your Sacred Place is a Community Asset: A Tool Kit to Attract New Resources and Partners."

The tool kit contains CDs, videos, checklists, worksheets, guidebooks, and a web-based resource that can help congregations to think about how their buildings can be of value to the community; how to calculate the public value of the community-serving programs offered; how to document the congregation's history and its buildings; how to assess the current

condition of a congregation's buildings; ways to form partnerships on a local level that will support the community work of the congregation and help to preserve its buildings; and ways to reach out to the community to tell the congregation's story and what it has to offer.

"Your Sacred Place is a Community Asset" is available through Partners, and can be ordered through its website at: www.sacredplaces.org or by calling 215-567-3234.

Architects or artists might be able to provide invaluable help to congregations for many of the activities described in the tool kit. If you are looking for opportunities for pro-bono work, consider working with a congregation in your community (or one that you have worked for previously) to strengthen its community base and to forge partnerships that will help preserve these sacred places. 

A photograph of a church interior with a large, ornate altar and stained glass windows. The text is overlaid on the bottom half of the image.

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THE 2002 RELIGIOUS ART & ARCHITECTURE AWARDS

By Michael J. Crosbie

Each year, as an observer of the awards-jury process, one is always tempted to divine some trend in sacred architecture and art, based on the submissions (approximately 230 this past year) and the projects honored. The jury process was lively, and while not exactly the same as watching a horse race, there is a certain thrill in seeing the first cut of projects, and then the discussions that ensue as each contender is debated.

Every jury works a bit differently, but overall the process is fairly consistent from year to year. The five jurors pore over the submissions, reading the descriptive materials, scanning the photos and drawings, and grading each submission as “yes,” “no,” or “maybe.” A first cut is arrived at by tallying the scores, and a project is in for further discussion if it receives at least three yeses or maybes. The jurors then consider each first-cut project individually, together reviewing each binder and discussing the merits and demerits of the project.

Sometimes jurors act as advocates for a project, offering their insights into why they believe a project is worthy and attempting to convince their fellow jurors.

In the past three years that I have observed the jury process, I have yet to see any “horse-trading” or deal-making among jurors swapping one project for another, or agreeing to award one project on the condition that another one also be recognized. (Such bartering is not uncommon on many of the awards and competition juries that I’ve either served on or observed over the years.)

The best parts of the jury process are the discussions that arise about sacred art and architecture in broad terms, which give the jury pause to reflect on the role of architecture and art in worship. There are often surprises. A project that is hanging on by a thread may suddenly be appraised in a whole new light, based on a fresh re-reading of the submission materials. Sometimes a project submitted in one category (there are seven: New Facilities; Renovation; Restoration; Liturgical/Interior Design; Visual Arts; Liturgical Furnishings; Ceremonial Objects) is moved to another if the jurors feel that its value lies in an area that the submitter may have overlooked. Some years (such as this one) none of the projects submitted in a certain category are deemed worthy of an award.

MICHAEL J. CROSBIE is Editor-in-Chief of Faith & Form and was an observer of the awards jury process.



The 2002 Religious Art & Architecture Awards Jury:

Douglas Hoffman (chair), architect and Faith & Form Managing Editor, Cleveland, Ohio; The Reverend Hope Eakins, Episcopal priest, Barrington, Rhode Island; Kenneth J. Griesemer, liturgical consultant, Albuquerque, New Mexico; Lawrence Cook, architect, Falls Church, Virginia; David Wilson, artist, South New Berlin, New York.

Eventually, the pile of contenders is whittled down. The number of awards given is up to the jury. This year, 15 projects have been cited. Because the jury members change each year, a project turned down one year might be a winner the next. At least one of this year’s winners was submitted the year before (I recognized the submission) and was passed over. Last year this submission didn’t even make the first cut. This year, the jury was unanimous in its award. Every jury member is usually pleased (and sometimes surprised) by the final selection. Reflecting on this year’s winners, the jury concluded that simplicity and elegance in the work carried the day. We hope you agree.

Interested in the Upcoming Awards Program?

For more information on the 2003 Religious Art & Architecture Awards program please contact the Duke Endowment, 100 North Tryon Street, Suite 3500, Charlotte, NC 28202-4012, Attn: Tanja Franke, phone: 704-927-2252; fax: 704-376-9336; email: tfranke@TDE.org. The “Call for Entries” brochure is now available, with registration postmarked by June 13, entries postmarked by July 31, judging in August, and notification in September (for more information see the ad on page 29).

2002 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD



Architect:

LEO A DALY
Architecture•Planning•Engineering•Interior Design
Charles Dalluge, Vice President and
Managing Principal/Washington, D.C.
1201 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Tenth Floor
Washington, D.C. 20036
202-861-4600
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Project - Religious Architecture, New Facilities:

The Pope John Paul II Cultural Center
Washington, D.C.

Exhibit Designer:

Edwin Schlossberg, Inc.

Landscape Architect:

Michael Vergason Landscape Architects (MVLA)

General Contractor:

James G. Davis Construction Company

Lighting:

HMB Brandston Partnership, Inc.

Food Service Consultant:

Hopkins Foodservice Specialists, Inc.

AV Consultant:

Shen Milsom & Wilke, Inc.


The Pope John Paul II Cultural Center in Washington, D.C. is designed to communicate the historical tradition of the Catholic Church and the papacy, particularly in light of the message and persona of Pope John Paul II. Its mission is to provide an American focal point for reflection, dialogue, and learning about the theological, sociological, and cultural implications of Catholicism.

The initial concept for the Center was similar to a presidential library, where scholars could research important issues within the Catholic Church. As the design scheme developed, the concept, guided by the wishes of the Pope, was modified to create a contemporary Cultural Center including an Inter-cultural Forum and the Museum of Faith.

The architecture of the 120,000-square-foot Center combines elements of Catholic tradition with 21st-Century design. The front of the building is an asymmetrical design with a large cylindrical entranceway juxtaposed with a sleek rectangular form, housing the main building. This imposing, partially transparent, linear form is built of limestone, granite, copper, and sandblasted glass – all traditional materials used in Catholic structures. Other important architectural elements in the design include the reflecting pool, serving as an architectural counterpoint and place of contemplation; the copper-clad wing roof, surmounted by a 75-foot cross; and a cylindrical volume, housing an entry rotunda that welcomes visitors into the light-filled interior.

The Center's Museum of Faith provides an opportunity to explore faith and culture through state-of-the-art electronic and interactive exhibits. The museum also houses traveling exhibits of art treasures from the Vatican.

Jury comments:

This is an appropriate, contemporary expression for a major work of Roman Catholic architecture. There is an interesting juxtaposition of materials. There is a strong processional quality to the entrance, woven into the fabric of the building. The building has a welcoming, bright interior, with an elegant ramp. There is careful attention to detail. 



2002 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD

Architect:

Leslie Elkins Architecture
2365 Rice Boulevard
No. 204
Houston, Texas 77005
713-630-0039
713-630-0073 FAX
www.lelkinsarch.com

Project -

Religious Architecture, New Facilities:

Quaker Meetinghouse

This Quaker meetinghouse is the first building of a three-building complex. This Quaker meeting is a silent worship. The congregation wishes to meet in a square or circle. There is no clergy or formalized service. Neither religious icons nor specific reference to familiar religious symbols are included in the liturgy. It is in the silence and through one's relationship with God that one develops one's own spirituality.

The meetinghouse is approximately 40 feet by 80 feet, surrounded by 10-foot-deep porches on all sides. It is primarily wood framing, with 18-inch-deep glulams spanning the roof and porches. The exterior walls are 2 feet deep, providing an inherent insulation thickness, and a place for the mechanical conduits that need to run throughout the building.


The meeting room is located in the center of the meetinghouse, flanked by a prefunction/greeting/reading room through which most will pass en route to the meeting room, and the utilitarian spaces on the other side. In the center of the meeting room is a 12-foot-square "Sky Space" by artist James Turrell, who donated it to the congregation. When the retractable roof slides to the east, it is open to the sky.

There is an attempt to passively address environmental issues. The exterior walls contain an air space, which provides insulation. All of the windows and doors can be opened to encourage cross ventilation. The deep porches provide places for gathering and deep shade, protecting the many apertures from direct sun. The architecture is direct and clear. It presents little distraction from personal contemplation, yet simultaneously presents, through the integrity of its detailing, a commitment essential in such a meditative environment.



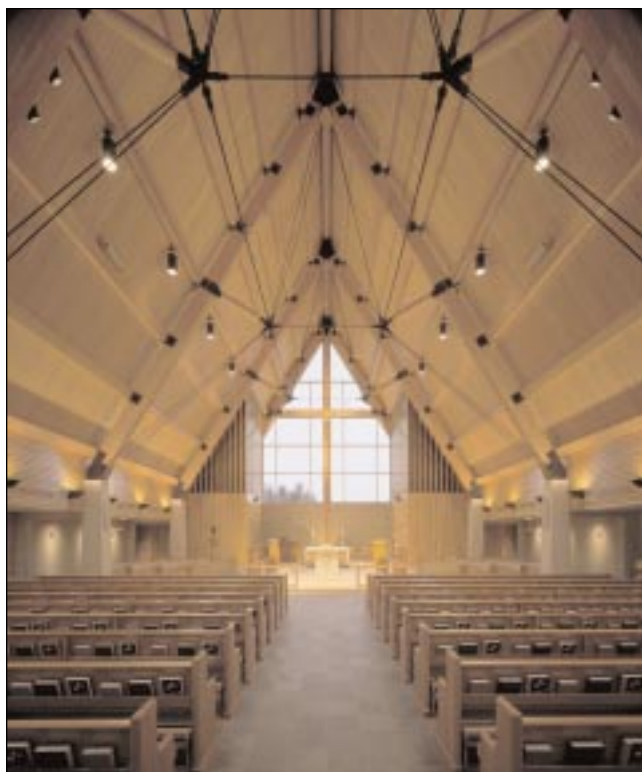
Jury comments:

This project has a transcendent, elegant simplicity, with its clean detailing in the Quaker tradition. In plan, the sanctuary is a simple square that expresses the time-honored tradition of appropriate geometry for spiritual spaces. The "Sky Space" is

exceptional. This project has is an amazingly successful combination of Quaker tradition and contemporary architecture. And it is a sterling example of creative collaboration between architect and artist. 



2002 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD



Architect:

Hammel, Green and
Abrahamson, Inc. (HGA)
James Shields, AIA
135 West Wells Street
Suite 800
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53203
414-278-8200
414-278-7734 FAX

Project - Religious Architecture, New Facilities:

St. Boniface Episcopal Church
Mequon, Wisconsin

Photography:

John J. Korom Photography

Having outgrown its 1950s worship space, St. Boniface Episcopal Church decided to build a new 250- to 400-seat worship space, while converting the existing space into needed education space. A new narthex was also required for social functions before and after services, as were spaces for a sacristy and music storage. Feeling that their existing structures “made us invisible,” the clients asked that their building become “a distinctive civic presence in our town.”


The 1950s ranch-style rectory was demolished, with the adjacent house and lot being purchased to become the new rectory. A tall and monumental new worship space was then sited facing directly onto Mequon Road, without the skew in plan of the earlier low and horizontal buildings. This allows the new worship space to develop a civic and urban dialogue with the street, and

transforms the existing buildings into background elements in contrast to the new church.

At the hinge point between the new and old geometry, a steeple was sited to pin the two compositions together, and to establish an important symbolic form of the type. The resulting pie-shaped open space between the new worship space, the spire, and the existing administration wing became the gathering space, or narthex, clad in glass with a view to the back of the property.

The new worship space is framed in exposed laminated timbers. The timbers are kept as light as possible through the use of steel tensile rods to produce a cambered fink truss, with minor compression members turned from wood on a lathe. The low base of the new worship space is clad in dark earth bricks, which complements the existing buildings. In a complete departure from the existing language, the new worship space is clad almost entirely (wall and roof) in copper. This beautiful and refined metal, used in the form of a steep gable, establishes the new worship space as something familiar and accessible, while at the same time unusual and strange. The copper will be allowed to weather naturally, slowly displaying the passage of years.

Jury comments:

The project's strengths are its use of materials and simple geometry. It becomes a positive icon from the street side, as it faces the community. The seating arrangement enhances participation of the worship community gathered around the altar table. The cable structure adds visual interest. The lightness of the structure draws your eyes upward. The extensive communion rail also helps to reinforce a sense of community. The richness of the wood is wonderful, and contrasts well with the slate floor. 

2002 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD



Architect:

Cunningham Group Architecture, P.A.
John W. Cunningham, FAIA
Brian Tempas, AIA
David Engleson, AIA
201 Main Street SE #325
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55414
612-379-3400 / 612-379-4400 FAX
www.cunningham.com

Project -

Religious Architecture, New Facilities:

Episcopal House of Prayer Oratory
Collegeville, Minnesota

Interior Designer:

Janet Dray, LEED Accredited
Cunningham Group Architecture, P.A.

Nestled in Minnesota woods, 76 miles northwest of the Twin Cities, the intimate Oratory at the Episcopal House of Prayer gathers people of all faiths for meditation—but only 24 at a time. By design, that is the maximum number that can be seated, in chairs or on cushions, in this 1,000-square-foot, meticulously crafted space. The Oratory rests on five acres of woodland at St. John's Benedictine Abbey, and was built as an addition to a retreat center affiliated with the Episcopal Diocese of Minnesota.

The design vision for the new Oratory



building was one of respect—create a tiny architectural jewel that blends with the natural environment, while providing a sacred context for prayerful activity.


To reach the Oratory, visitors walk 50 feet through the outdoors on a simple, rustic boardwalk leading from the retreat center. As the visitors cross the threshold into the sacred space they symbolically remove coats and shoes as an act of reverence and humility. This vestibule is rose-colored and slightly darker to induce calm and quiet before entering the main space. Approached as a gabled “little building in the woods,” the Oratory’s interior surprises visitors with its rounded, 16-



sided walls of honey-colored Baltic birch and multi-layered, wooden ceiling, evocative of a tent of the tribes of Israel.

The Oratory is also grounded in nature, a focus found in the sacred spaces of many American Indian groups. At the ceiling’s peak, a clerestory window sits directly over a four-foot circle of exposed earth, rimmed by Minnesota granite. The relationship of the sky window and bare earth is intended to suggest the connection between heaven and earth, imbuing the building with a sense of both the immanent and the transcendent. A large diamond-shaped window frames views of the woods and sky. Smaller windows in the alcoves and the skylight capture natural light quality changes through the day, while indirect lights gently illuminate the space at night. The interior was carefully designed to maximize acoustics, as part of the building’s purpose is to provide a spiritual space for the human voice.

Jury comments:

The plan embodies the key elements of sacred space, with a spiritual journey, a threshold, and then redirection onto a path. The exterior is beautifully rendered in natural wood. Window divisions echo the branches of trees. Inside, it has the aspect of a kiva, with a circular environment for dialogue. There is a fabulous use of light inside. The plywood plane ceiling and dome is complex and beautiful, like a beating heart. 

2002 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD



Architect:

Jack DeBartolo Jr. FAIA and
Jack DeBartolo 3 AIA (principals in charge)
Tim Smith, Eric Aust, Aaron Taylor
(project architects)
DeBartolo Architects Ltd.
4450 North Twelfth Street, Number 268
Phoenix, Arizona 85014
602-264-6617 / 602-264-0891 FAX
www.debartoloarchitects.com

Project -

Religious Architecture, New Facilities:

Phoenix First Assembly/Early Childhood
Education Center/Youth Pavilion
Phoenix, Arizona

Contractor:

Arthur Porter Construction

Structural Engineer:

Rudow + Berry, Inc.

Landscape Architect:

Ten Eyck Landscape Architects

Civil Engineer:

JMA Engineering Corporation
GeoDimensions

Electrical Engineer:

C.A. Energy Designs / Plexus, Inc.

Acoustical Consultant:

Wardin Cockril + Associates

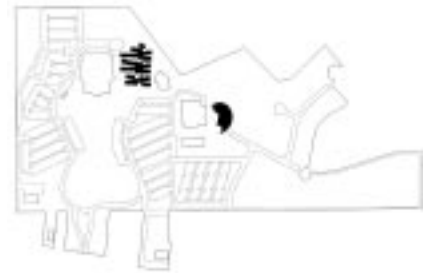
Photography:

Timmerman Photography, Inc.

Phoenix First Assembly Church has been working with DeBartolo Architects since 1994 on their 60-acre campus on a multi-building phased long range plan. The licensed child-care center (housing 500 children) and a new 1,000-seat performing arts pavilion are the first two buildings.


The Early Childhood Education Center takes advantage of the temperate climate and derives its form from the site, orientation, and vistas. Thirty specialized classrooms offer direct access to age-specific play courtyards and shaded spaces. Level changes are achieved with converging, perforated-metal ramps, bridging over the desert. Incremental site-cast concrete stem walls mediate the terrain and form a base for the lighter, plaster walls. Slot-skylights, light tubes, and carefully placed windows powerfully employ natural light and views throughout the entire complex. Children experience spatial variety, texture, form, contrast, light, and shadow in the context of a highly functional, intensely used facility.

The recently completed 1,000-seat Youth Pavilion is the second building of the master plan and serves the youth group of the church as a performing arts center for concerts, drama, and biblical training. One reaches the pavilion through a space between two existing buildings, where five printed banners and 1/2-inch chainlink have been employed to give a new definition to an existing space. Cele-



brated with a leaning and curving wall that reaches into the sky, the loggia entrance into the youth pavilion is the glassy void and "mouth" of the spiral. Once inside, the spaces constructed of durable and honest materials are raw and welcoming. Ascending the curving stair, one enters into the amphitheater and is immediately part of the space. Large 20-foot-square rolling aircraft hangar doors permit the stage to open to the outdoor amphitheater beyond, enlarging the effective attendance and transforming the interior space.

Jury comments:

A great deal is accomplished through shifting planes to create trapezoidal spaces, giving great interest to the plan. This is a striking Modern building that uses simple materials in elegantly detailed ways. There is sound integration of the interior and exterior. The building gestures to youth, reaching out to them, and welcoming them inside. There is sophisticated manipulation of the architectural elements, and originality in the use of materials. 

2002 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD



Architect:

RDG Schutte Wilscam Birge, Inc.
John A. Sova, Joseph W. Lang III, Robert
R. Krupa, Jeffrey J. Dolezal
900 Farnam on the Mall, Suite 100
Omaha, Nebraska 68102
402-392-0133 / 402-392-0413 FAX

Project -

Religious Architecture, New Facilities:

Saint Therese Catholic Church
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Liturgical Design Consultant:

Dale J. Sieverding, Ph.D.

Liturgical Furnishings:

Dave Fitzpatrick, Wood Specialties

Room Acoustics:

Russ Olsen, Acoustical Design Group

Photography:

Tom Kessler Photography

After completing a comprehensive master-planning process, Saint Therese Parish elected — as a first phase — to construct a worship center with seating for 500 and ancillary space to support educational and administrative needs. In the future, as the congregation grows, the worship center will become a parish hall, while the ancillary space will be converted entirely to offices.

The design of the facility was based on concepts drawn from Saint Therese's life. The theme of her journey to Christ through simplicity, humility, hospitality, and welcome can be found in the architectural detailing and entry sequence of the new facility. The complex has the feel of a quaint village, and is entered through a sequence of spaces, each more sacred


than the previous. The structure has a humility revealed in its clean forms and lines, as well as its honest palette of materials, including locally quarried concrete aggregate (pink quartzite) in the concrete walls, floors, and masonry, and its natural wood decking and trusses.

The contrast between Saint Therese's life as a cloistered nun and her outreach through her writings was also a key influ-

ence on the design. Reflecting this contrast, some areas of the building are cloistered and introspective, while others, such as the gathering spaces, have been arranged to afford views of Sioux Falls and the Cathedral in the distance.

Saint Therese was lovingly known as the "little flower" by her Sisters at the abbey, for her frail body but vibrant spirit. Her flower, the wild rose, was used throughout the design. Hand-wrought iron roses serve as door pulls and Stations of the Cross, and a statue of her likeness stands amid a rose garden off the gathering space.

Jury comments:

The use of concrete, wood, and steel in this project takes on a symbolic significance. The integration of these materials results in elegant details. This temporary worship space is rendered with a timeless quality, which makes it much more than just a multipurpose space. The clerestory helps to bring wonderful light inside. The building has a compelling spiritual quality. 



2002 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD

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Abrahamson, Inc. (HGA)
James Shields, AIA
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414-278-8200 / 414-278-7734 FAX

Project -

Religious Architecture, Renovation:

The Cathedral of
St. John the Evangelist
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Liturgical Consultant:

Richard S. Vosko, Ph.D.

This project involved the complete renovation of The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist. The 1853 Cathedral suffered a fire in 1935, after which the interiors were rebuilt in 1943. The 1943 interior design removed the altar and clergy from the worship space into a new apse, with no laity within 60 feet of the altar. The design also featured a 40-foot-tall baldachin over the tabernacle, overwhelming every other feature. Also, no adequate place for music was provided. The goal of the renovation




was to return the altar to a place of prominence in the main worship space, and allow a majority of worshippers to see, hear, and be in close proximity to the center of liturgical action.

The altar was returned to the main nave, to a position close to the 1853 original. The new altar is composed almost entirely of white marble salvaged from four 1940s side altars, removed as part of the renovation. It has been placed on a new marble platform to make it visually prominent and to provide for good sight lines. The altar is surrounded by a blood red floor with floor-mounted candle stands, and is further emphasized by a new cross, corpus, and corona, commissioned as an original work of art by an internationally significant artist.

The 1943 baldachin was removed from the apse as to not detract from the prominence of the altar. The tabernacle was placed in an original 1853 side chapel for private devotion, as called for in the Vatican document, "Ceremonial of Bishops." The deep 1943 apse has become a place for music, with enough space for the Cathedral choir of 50, a new organ, and an orchestra.

The Cathedral received entirely new lighting, sound, and mechanical systems as part of the renovation, with an emphasis placed on using these systems to support the activities of the mass.

Jury comments:

This is a dramatic transformation of a traditional church form. It includes the successful placing of a contemporary sculpture in a traditional worship environment. The illumination of architectural elements and the focal point is very successful. The use of moveable seating throughout adds flexibility and enhances the sense of group worship. Overall, the arrangement of the new floor plan is very successful, and encourages participants to focus on the celebration of the Mass. 



2002 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD



Architect:

Zenon Beringer Mabrey Partners, Inc., Architects
Steven Ginn, AIA and Dave Beringer, AIA
1015 North 98th Street, Suite 300
Omaha, Nebraska 68114
402-391-2211 / 402-391-8721 FAX

Project - Religious Architecture, Renovation:

St. Patrick Catholic Church
Gretna, Nebraska

Artist:

John Lajba (Corpus)
Littleton Alston (Jesus and the Children statue)

Interior Design:

Apryl Lehmkuhl, NCIDQ

Photography:

Tom Kessler Photography

The parish of St. Patrick Catholic Church in Gretna, Nebraska, had outgrown its 100-year-old Carpenter Gothic church. The parishioners felt their old church was a strong part of their legacy and community, so most of the original church was preserved when they added on to increase the seating capacity from 240 to 980.

The original church was severed at the old communion rail to accommodate the addition, and now forms one transept arm of the cruciform-shaped plan. The new altar, seen as a symbol for the living Christ in the Catholic Church, resides at the center of


the intersection. Steeply pitched roofs unite the new with the old, while the height of the worship space imparts a sense of quiet reverence.

Above the lath and plaster ceiling of the original church, the architects discovered beautiful old wood trusses. By exposing the original wood trusses in the renovated old church, wood became the unifying element bringing the old and the new into one holistic composition.

Procession and movement between the altar, tabernacle, and baptismary is of major importance to Catholic theology. Spaces surrounding the baptismal font, tabernacle, and choir were defined with carefully considered wood structures intended to give them their own sense of place within the vast volume of the church. All of the church appointments were carefully considered and express their purpose as a prominent part of this church and its religious services.

The old church and its contemporary addition serve to unite modern Catholic worship that is steeped in tradition. Successfully uniting the old church and the addition with traditional Catholic theology and post Vatican II teachings was the central problem that this project solves. The result is a space which feels like a church suited to sacred celebrations: dignified and beautiful.

Jury comments:

There is a strong connection between the details, furnishings, light fixtures, and the windows. They all express a variation of a geometric theme. The exposed, skeletal structure in the existing building is celebrated, and expressed throughout. The exposed structure in the new space reflects the marriage of new and old in a fashion that is complementary. There are creative ways of admitting light throughout. Overall, this is an interesting transformation of an older building. 

2002 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD



Architect:

Regan McClellan, AIA
McClellan Architects
81 Vine Street
Suite 100
Seattle, Washington 98121
206-728-0480
206-728-0476 FAX



Project -

Religious Architecture, Renovation:

Embassy Center Apostolic Church
Bremerton, Washington

Structural Engineer:

Gary Gill P.E.

Photography:

Ross Ishikawa



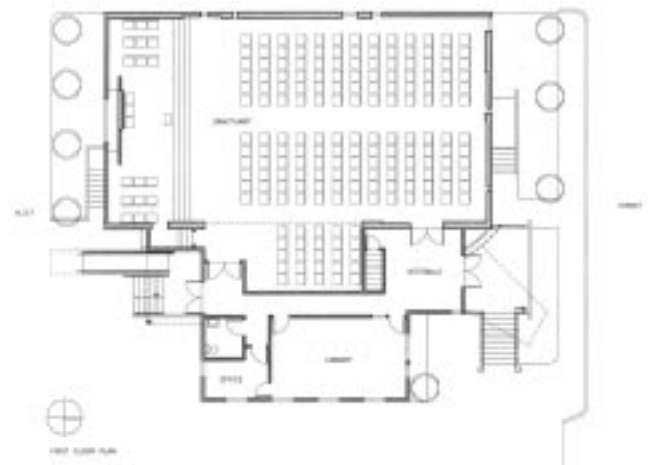
The Embassy Center Apostolic Church is a complete renovation of an existing building that dates from 1915. The meeting space was enlarged and a kitchen and daycare were added to the lower level. The church is located in an inner city neighborhood adjacent to the Bremerton Naval shipyards.

When asked what bible passage might best define the mission of the church, Pastor Robertson chose the "Sermon on the Mount." The following passages were the guiding light for the renovation:


"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid."

"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:14,16).

Pastor Robertson led the renovation effort with the two goals of providing for the congregation in prayer and projecting an image of excellence to the congregation and community. The most visible symbol of the church's rebirth is the steeple. "The Flame" is how the congregation has come to identify the steeple, which was inspired by the dove and flame of the Pentecost. The Flame projects an image that is at the root of the apostolic faith and creates a strong image for the church identity. At night the steeple is brilliantly lit and the church lets its light "shine before men."



Jury comments:

This project takes an ordinary building and transforms it into an attractive piece of sacred architecture that is also an asset for the neighborhood. There is an economy of means to achieve something quite extraordinary. The imagery of ships and sails not only helps to tie it to the local economy, but also reinforces the traditional imagery of the church as a ship. The building exudes confidence, and is a wonderful landmark for the community. 

2002 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD



Architect:

Nelson Chen Architects Ltd.
23/F Lippo Leighton Tower
Hong Kong, China
852-2882-8086

Project - Religious Architecture, Restoration:

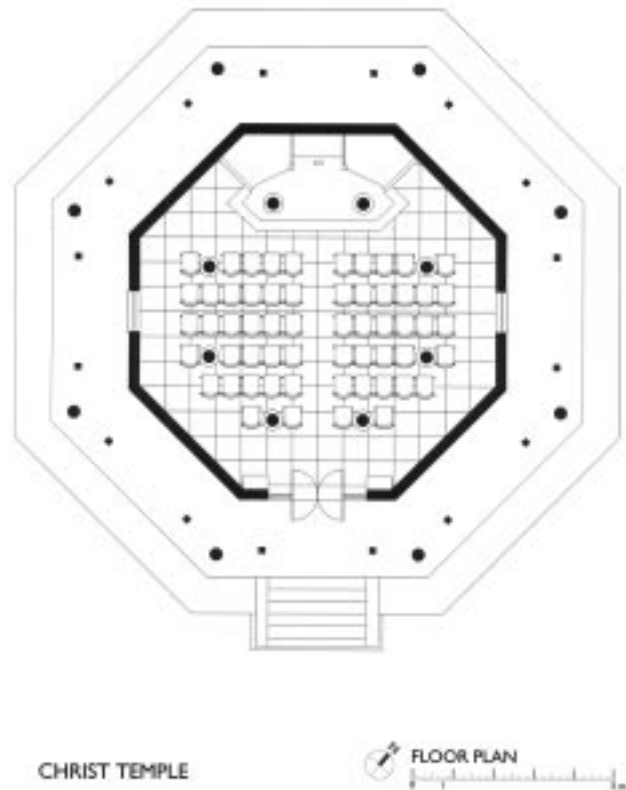
Tao Fong Shan Christian Centre
New Territories, Hong Kong, China

Tao Fong Shan was established in 1930 by Karl Ludvig Reicheit, a missionary from Norway who founded "Christian Mission to Buddhists" to introduce Christianity in a Chinese context. The original master plan, buildings, and grounds were designed by a Danish architect, Johannes Prip-Moller, in the style of Chinese monasteries. Tao Fong Shan is still owned to this day by the original Norwegian missionary group now known as "Areopagos," and is a historical site listed by the Antiquities and Monuments Office in Hong Kong.

The original purpose of Tao Fong Shan has evolved over the decades into a center for spiritual retreats, seminars, and theological studies, as well as promoting Chinese Christian art and publications. The octagonal Christ Temple continues to serve as the focal point, with the restored chapel used daily for church services, and surrounded by the other, less ornately designed buildings for meetings, offices, and residences.

The project included comprehensive restoration work, as well as interior renovations and adaptive reuse, to historical buildings damaged by fire and/or termite infestation, including: new roof structures, roof tiling, and waterproofing; timber doors and windows; all exterior finishes; interior fitting-out; and new air-conditioning, electrical rewiring, and fire services.

The original buildings were largely constructed of timber structure, supported on stone masonry walls, simply plastered, and white-washed, with distinctive blue-black clay roof tiles. These same building materials were utilized in the restoration. Only the main roof of the Christ Temple, originally constructed of reinforced concrete in the 1930s, was re-built due to extensive concrete spalling after years of water penetration and the rusting of steel bars within the concrete slabs and beams.



Jury comments:

The restoration of this colorful sacred building is exquisite. It is a faithful restoration, creating spirituality through places for meeting and contemplation. The restoration makes good use of original materials, and inventive use of transforming old spaces to new uses, such as the former workshop into administration space. New elements, such as light fixtures, are sensitively placed.

2002 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD



Architect:

Austin Veum Robbins Parshalle
Douglas H. Austin, FAIA
Randy S. Robbins, AIA
Michael Engel, AIA
600 West Broadway
Suite 200
San Diego, California 92101
619-231-1960
www.avrp.com

Project - Liturgical/Interior Design:

Congregation Beth Israel
San Diego, California

Liturgical Consultant and Artist:

Laurie Gross Studios (Ark, Eternal Light)

Artists:

Gordon Huether (Art Glass)
Paul Henry (Furniture)

Photography:

David Hewitt/Anne Garrison

To design a new and larger facility that would become the third home for Congregation Beth Israel, AVRP sought inspiration from both the congregation's existing 1926 facility, with its domed sanctuary and beautiful stained glass, and from the City of Jerusalem. This was in keeping with the request of the region's oldest and largest Jewish congregation - to design a facility to serve current and future needs, while providing congregants with a link to their past.

The new facility sits on a sloping site with multiple levels, courtyards for gathering and lingering, and tall masonry walls. Domes over the sanctuary, chapel,




and science room evoke the sense of early synagogues. The facility is organized such that pedestrian movement is from secular space, through courtyards, entry kiosk and vestibules, to the sacred space of the sanctuary, and ultimately to the ark that contains the torahs.

Architecture, materials, and religious artwork are used as visual metaphors to stimulate a sense of history, place, and spirit upon approaching and entering the sanctuary. A Star of David is set into the Jerusalem stone flooring in the main foyer. Windows in the entry vestibule contain Hebrew text from the Five Books of Moses referring to the gathering together of community.

In the sanctuary, the slatted cedar ceiling forms a tent that represents the ancient and modern wanderings of the Jewish people. A dome sits above the

reader's table and the ark. Jerusalem stone walls are interrupted by the light of the east facing "Shabbat" (Sabbath) window that is flanked by narrow windows depicting God's creation of Earth. Colors and materials inspired by the Jewish bible and the description from Exodus of the original temple are the natural colors of the desert, used throughout the space, deepening into rich golds, blues, and scarlets of the torahs.

Jury comments:

The interiors of this elegant worship space are solemn and conducive to prayer. There is a good integration of furnishings with architecture, such as the chairs set into the 12 niches. An oculus over the bema admits light over the ark, creating a sense of mystery. This space is an oasis of calm within a bustling city. It captures a sense of the holy with the use of a contemporary architectural language. 

2002 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD



Architect:

Eskew+Dumez+Ripple
Charles Hite, Project Manager
Byron Mouton, Project Architect
Steve Dumez, Design Director
Shannon Downey,
Bob Kleinpeter, Sebastian Salvado
365 Canal Street, Suite 3150
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130
504-561-8686 / 504-522-2253 FAX

Project - Liturgical/Interior Design:

Kate and Laurance Eustis Chapel at the
Ochsner Clinic Foundation
New Orleans, Louisiana

Mechanical/Electrical Engineer:

Smith Seckman Reid, Inc.

Millwork Fabricator:

Dean Kageler/Axis Construction

Glass Fabricator:

Dependable Glass

Metal Fabricator:

Joly's Metal Works

Contractor:

Construction South

Photography:

Neil Alexander, Timothy Hursley

Commissioned by the Ochsner Clinic Foundation, this small interdenominational chapel serves the needs of the hospital's patients, families, and staff. As an interdenomina-

tional facility, the chapel could not rely on specific religious symbols or iconography in order to assert its claim as sacred space. Instead, the design introduces more universal themes of healing and reconciliation to engage visitors with the spiritual.

Seen from the main hospital corridor, the chapel manifests a mysterious, luminous presence. A high window provides a partial view to an enigmatic wood scrim. The darkened entry vestibule begins to establish the ritualistic sequence of spaces that typically anticipate places of prayer. Entering the vestibule, the dark wood floor gradually ramps up narrowing to the entry door, as light emanates from within the chapel through a stained glass wall.


Inside the chapel three distinct spaces were created to serve the project's programmatic needs. In the main worship space, a woven wood ceiling envelops visitors and defines a small group seating area. The calming sound of water is immediately apparent. Daylight spills in from a concealed window near a fountain source, illuminating a channel of water that washes along the wall before dropping into a basin beneath a cast glass altar. Lit from below, the altar glows within the chapel as a repository for personal artifacts or mementos. Two adjacent meditation rooms, designed for more intimate prayer, are each given a window to bring in natural light and provide a focus for reflection.

In contrast to traditional religious space, this small chapel deals less with celebratory gathering and more with



personal meditation and individual reflection. As one confronts issues of personal joy or sorrow, the space provokes a kind of indelible wonder while still affording the traditional sanctuary of religious architecture.

Jury comments:

It is impressive that this chapel is not pushed off in a corner, but is near a central place and easy to find. These three spaces have a wealth of variety. The running water is symbolically cleansing and helps one to pray and contemplate. The warmth of wood has a woven quality. This chapel is embracing. It is a shelter that holds and protects you. The layering of planes and the interpenetration of spaces speak to the mystery of life and the unknown, and this is appropriate in a hospital setting. A brilliant, artful solution. 

2002 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD



Architect:

Rafferty Rafferty Tollefson Architects, Inc.
Lee Tollefson FAIA
253 East Fourth Street
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

Project - Liturgical/Interior Design:

St. Joseph Abbey Church Renovation
St. Benedict, Louisiana

Liturgical Consultant:

Frank Kacmarcik Obl SB, St. John's Abbey

Acoustics:

Robert F. Mahoney Associates

Organ:

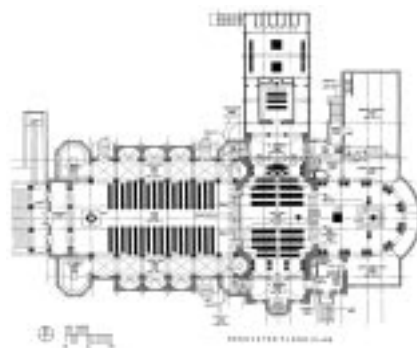
Dobson Organ Builders

Photography:

Rafferty Rafferty Tollefson Architects, Inc.

This project is a renovation of an existing Benedictine Abbey Church. The architectural intention is to support and enhance the monastic identity of the Benedictine community; to connect with the timeless simplicity of 1,500-year-old traditions. In this spirit, the executed design neither removed nor added any walls, with the exception of a new reredos. The new design is focused on the liturgical layout, a new floor design, new furnishings, and subtle clarifications of architectural detail, finishes, color, and light.

A key design concept focuses on the location of the monastic choir stalls, used for the Liturgy of the Hours. They are newly



positioned to de-emphasize, but not entirely eclipse, the altar, which is used for the Eucharistic celebration. The existing floor plan had the monastic choir stalls in the traditional sanctuary area, east of the altar. The design solution brings the monastic choir stalls forward and places them at the transept crossing under the dome. At the same time, the altar is relocated to the position once occupied by the choir stalls. This change in plan emphasizes the monastic Liturgy of the Hours by placing the monastic choir under the dome. The altar visually recedes from the dominant position. Unlike a parish church, this is conceptually appropriate for a monastic community.


The monastic choir stalls are designed so that each succeeding row of stalls steps up in order to insure clear lines of sight. This facilitates the interaction of the choirs in prayer and chant. The main floor under the dome was lowered 18 inches (three steps) to provide a more gradual spatial transition from the nave to the crossing. This allowed the new altar position to be three steps higher and more visible from the nave.

The original terrazzo floor is replaced by quarry tile with granite borders. Granite highlights each step in the terra cotta field of tile. Granite is also used at the floor around the predella for the altar, as well as in a new altar and font.

The new design also recognizes the importance and sensual qualities of wood within the space. The original ceiling of cypress boards and trusses had a very dark stain and finish. The existing pews and stalls were similarly dark wood. As part of the renovation, the ceiling and trusses have been sandblasted to create a lighter ceiling. New and naturally finished red oak pews, choir stalls, ambo and presider's chair bring a consistent color to the furnishings as well.

New and creative use of both natural and artificial light has also transformed the church. The old windows have been replaced with new Reamy art glass from Europe, which filters a softer light into the church. This quality of glass is also beautifully sensitive to changing daylight and the space now has a more vivid and dynamic quality. The space is further enhanced with new artificial lighting that consists of a programmable, remotely controlled system. Artificial lighting is set into scenes that work with various liturgical functions and activities.

Jury comments:

The new design responds to the monks' needs, and helps to facilitate the church's various uses during the day. The new clay tile floor creates an earth connection and adds to the space's acoustical quality. There is a sense of timelessness in the furnishings that complements the architecture. One is impressed with the beautiful detailing in the choir stalls and other woodwork. 

2002 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ART AWARD



Artist:

Herman & Coliver:
Architecture/Planning & Design Studio
Susie Coliver & Robert Herman FAIA
363 Clementina Street
San Francisco, California 94103
415-552-9210 / 415-552-9811 FAX

Project - Religious Arts/Visual Arts:

Ten Commandments at Main Sanctuary
Peninsula Temple Beth El
San Mateo, California

The Hebrew word PARDES was used as an acronym (based upon its four consonants: PRDS) by Jewish sages to describe the four ways in which they interpreted the Hebrew scriptures. The four ways of parsing text evoked by the PaRDeS are used as a device to render the Ten Commandments accessible to the breadth of congregants who make up the synagogue.

Congregants bring a wide variety of backgrounds with them when they come to pray, or just to sit in the sanctuary. Some come from an orthodox upbringing, and not only read Hebrew, but also know what the words mean. Others, though quite traditional, may not be so fluent in Hebrew, but find solace in the familiar classical translations of the text. Still others find that the verses of the past hold little relevance, and wonder how the Bible might be made meaningful for them today. Finally, some who sit through services are so young that they cannot yet read, but they do know how to count to ten, and can recognize an arithmetic progression.

The first layer of textual interpretation according to the PARDES is the Peshat layer, which corresponds to the front layer of these Ten Commandments. It is the simple, plain, literal sense of the text, rendered in crystal clear glass with the traditional Hebrew abbreviations of the commandments carved into this hard, solid, impermeable, ancient material.


The second layer of the PARDES is the Remez layer. It is

where a word or phrase hints at a truth not immediately conveyed by the plain sense of the text; in other words, the translation. For this installation it is the familiar English version of the commandments, silk-screened onto a fine stainless steel mesh, which, though nearly as solid as glass and strong as metal, becomes translucent when illuminated in a special way.

The third layer of the PARDES is the Derash layer. It is a search for a deeper meaning than the literal text suggests. In an attempt to arrive at a contemporary relevance for each commandment, the Rabbi and a committee of congregants spent several months discussing how the commandments spoke to them in the context of today's world. The third layer of the commandments is made of a diaphanous sheer fabric. It waves gently with a passing breeze and is always subject to slight changes. It may easily be replaced as each successive wave of students reinterprets the Ten Commandments to speak to their particular sensibilities.

The fourth layer is not unlike the fourth child at the Seder table—the one who is too young to ask a question, or in this case, the one who is too young to know the meaning of text. In the PARDES, it is the Sod layer, a secret or mystical meaning hidden in the text as a code. In this rendering of the Ten Commandments, it is a mobile of copper plates, hanging as if in thin air. One plate hangs under the first commandment, two at the second, and so on. For the member of the community who cannot divine the meaning of words, but can nonetheless recognize a numeric progression of one, to a few, to many, the Ten Commandments can still have significance and be accessed at some level.

Jury comments:

This piece brings together the Jewish cultural traditions of reading and interpreting text. The mystic tradition is also represented. The layering of meaning in the piece, with the perceiving of new meanings over time, is very strong in the Jewish tradition. There is a great combination of very different materials. The poetry is in the continuous new interpretation of meaning, which this piece expresses. 

2002 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ART AWARD

Artist:

Erling Hope
Hope Liturgical Works
1455 Bridge/Sag Turnpike
Sag Harbor, New York 11963

Project - Religious Arts/Visual Arts:

"Stand 1"
"Stand 2"
"Aramesque IV"
"How Words Work"
Hope Liturgical Works
Andover Newton Theological School
Newton Centre, Massachusetts



The Institute for Theology and the Arts at Andover Newton Theological School brings together clergy, artists, seminarians, and others for two week-long sessions that explore the rich territory that lies between art and faith through studio and classroom learning. The role of the Artist-in-Residence is to investigate the ways in which objects, images, and the built environment can contribute to truly contemporary liturgical experience.

Several pieces of sculpture and painting link the interior of the sanctuary with the world outside, a gesture which emerged as a theme for the year (2000). Inside, the artist transformed the sanctuary space for each morning's service to reflect the ways in which this small and temporary community was evolving, and to engage a large environmental sculpture taking shape during the week outside on a lawn exposed to the community at large. Titled "Stand 1," the exterior sculpture was fabricated from mountain laurel.

In the sanctuary, worshippers confronted a smaller installation bearing similar elements. Short cut-offs of mountain laurel describe "Stand 2." A mural on the back wall draws inspiration from a dream of the artist. Composed of ashes, chalk, and ink, "Aramesque IV" describes a surreal night seascape with an immense menorah-like river of light flowing down and converging on a point on the horizon. People, "pilgrims," walk out on the water to the point where the light meets the water, and return again.


"Texture 1: How Words Work" completes the suite. Brass escutcheon pins piercing a carved pair of hands describe a poem written in braille. The title, "Texture..." is a play on words, suggesting both the tactile sense, but also "Text." The poem is as follows:

*It is in the way in which words can reach so far and so tenderly
beyond themselves that they are Divine.*

*It is in their wont of grasping more than they can hold that they
are human.*



Jury comments:

These pieces are thought provoking, temporary installations for a community called together on an occasional basis. The art expresses the temporary nature of this community. There is a conscious attempt to engage art into the community faith and its expression. The jury commends the leadership of the school for bringing contemporary art into today's worship, and for recognizing art's importance in the worship experience. 

THE CHURCH AS HEARTH

By Father Michael Doyle



Kathryn A. Brown ©2002

Editor's note: The following is an edited version of the author's keynote address to the National Conference of Sacred Trusts at National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., held this past October.

Come, Holy Spirit, and help me to speak to you in this sacred space of awesome grandeur. What sounds these stones have heard along the years. What words! What accents. I want to say that I am greatly honored to be here making words with the air in this historic space, where great words have been spoken and great thoughts have been shared.

I'll begin with a story. Long before this cathedral was envisioned, a man by the name of Arthur Guinness, in 1759, founded a brewery in Dublin that still bears his name. It continues to prosper. Two-and-a-half-million pints of Guinness Stout are brewed in Dublin every day. It so happened that one day at quitting time, there was a Guinness worker missing. Other workers searched everywhere, but could not find him. Finally with heavy hearts they climbed up the ladder to look into the huge vat of Guinness. To their dismay, they saw the body floating on the top. They moved out on the catwalk, nearer. He was muttering. That was good. They moved a little closer. He was praying, "Oh, God, give me a mouth worthy of this occasion."

Now, that is my prayer this morning. Oh, God, give me a mouth worthy of this place, of this occasion, worthy of this National Conference of Sacred Trusts to renew sacred places across America. It says what I want to say, to start, but I would like to add that Arthur Guinness' grandson, Benjamin Lee Guinness, funded the restoration of the famous St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin, and his great-grandsons continued that restoration into the 20th Century. So there is a connection between a pint of Guinness and the restoration of sacred places. In fact, I have proclaimed for all the years I have been in Camden, New Jersey, that every church and synagogue should be at least as friendly, at least as welcoming as an Irish pub. Hospitality is the first requirement at the door of sacred space.

I have no degrees in architecture. Nor did I study "deferred maintenance" in pastoral care in the seminary. I didn't study "capital campaigns" in moral theology. I studied capital sins and not a word about stained glass, just stained souls. Words like "immaculate" mean without stain. We never heard of "paper trails" for maintenance. "Gutters One" or "Gutters Two" were not in the curriculum. But one thing I did learn in the seminary was a bit of Latin. I learned that the word "focus," which we use very often, is the Latin word for "hearth." Hearth was the central

spot in the home I was raised in. It was the focus, the central location. On it was the fire, the warmth, the cooking; around it, the conversation. Sacred Heart in Camden, where I have been pastor for more than 25 years, is a Sacred Hearth. Its sacred space is a hearth! The best way to save a hearth is to build a fire. First of all, the fire of good liturgical celebration, good worship lifts people from the hard concrete burdens of life to transcendent levels of hope. Hope is the best four-letter word in the English language. It should be the continuous anthem of every worshipping congregation.

Sacred Heart Church is in the worst section of the poorest town in the U.S. The neighborhood of Sacred Heart has within a few blocks surrounding it, a county sewage plant of 80 million gallons a day, a trash burning facility of 1,500 tons a day, a cement factory that dumps 50 tons of dust annually, a car crushing facility in the open air that dumps enormous amounts of iron dust into the air, three massive scrap yards, an aluminum smelting facility, etc., etc. Environmental injustice to the poor is barbaric. It is a place where everyone is poor. There, the church has been standing since 1886. There, it is being renovated. I wish I could call Frank Sinatra back from the dead to sing, "If you can do it there, you can do it anywhere." On the brighter side, we have good people. We have the magnificent Delaware River on the west side of the parish and Walt Whitman's bones entombed on the east side of it.

Our first task when I came there, more than a quarter of a century ago, was not restoration, but the creation of good liturgy. We decided to light a good fire on the hearth where people would gather around. A worthy service that was connected to life. We set out to bring nature in and bridge the gap that exists in our present dislocation with nature. We established a neighborhood garden with vegetables and flowers, the flowers coming to the church. We celebrated feasts and festivals – an active, vibrant celebration of God and God's creation. People came, people contributed. Simply said, people brought coals for the fire. We believe that all good liturgy and all good worship of God should lead to justice. If we break bread on Sunday, we have to break some bread on Monday.

Our school today has 240 children from kindergarten to 8th grade. In addition to the tuition, we will have to raise half a million dollars this year to keep it open. Our children are from the neighborhood. It's a Catholic school with a vast majority of Baptist children. The Catholics have gone to the promised land of suburbia. Keeping the school going is an expression of our church. After we got good liturgy going, we began restoring the church. Sacred Trusts gave us a grant to study the condition of the church. It's like a physical. Every old sacred place needs a

FATHER MICHAEL DOYLE, *Pastor of Sacred Heart Church in Camden, New Jersey, can be reached at: shcamden@bellatlantic.net.*

physical. The provision of money for such physicals for sacred buildings is absolutely essential in this country. Over the past eight years, Othmar Carli and Don Harle restored 20 canvas paintings 60 square feet in area, knitted the cracks back together, renewed the stencils and repainted it all. This year, we put a tile roof on it that will last 150 years. On the grounds of the church, we established a little medical clinic. We have volunteer doctors and nurses, but for only one afternoon a week – you have to be sick on Thursday. But it's an expression of our belief that people without medical coverage should be healed. We have a children's clothing store that provides families with good clothing at a very, very low prices. We have a Family Resource Center. We have a housing effort that has renovated 104 homes in this area in the past 14 years. But, all of it comes from the fact that we have a church there, centered in the neighborhood, prayer in stones, a form, a visual form, that gives expression to reality and transcendent reality. We provide and deliver 1,100 turkeys and baskets every Christmas. We set up a toy store in December to provide new toys for 1,600 children so that parents can buy the toys very, very cheaply. But what we give them is the dignity of choice and the dignity of purchase.

Our objective, and we fail very often, is to honor the poor. The Church's mission is not just to help the poor, but to honor the poor in the way we help them, in the way we enable them. We are very deeply involved in community organizing, linking with more than 20 other churches to build an organization of power and development to demand justice, to promote development. We have a neighborhood dinner or picnic every month for the people on the street or off the street. Seventy-five people sit down and eat with dignity. There is a Food Sharing Program that provides food to 170 families each month. We have yoga classes in our Children's Chapel for local people. We have a building leased to a program that provides education for young men just out of prison. We share the same building with a neighborhood church for drug counseling.

Our church is a holy place for Catholic worship on a Sunday and an active place for trying to heal people of every religion or no religion the rest of the week.

We believe that beauty will save us, that God never made an ugly weed. The beauty of sacred space tells you that you are beautiful – that you are a temple of God. Today our restoration is not finished but our church is beautiful. I remember the day a little child, five years old, came into our church. She looked and threw her arms up and said: "Oh, it's wonderful here!" We believe that the poor have a right to beauty. We have many concerts in our church. The nearby Creative Arts School has many of its great presentations in our church. We have an annual Hearts and Hands Arts Festival in September. It is held on the street, with the church open for an organ recital and meditation. We've added a new painting to our church, which is connected to the present world. The huge painting is 20 feet high and 15 feet wide, and is a peacemaking picture with eight great faces of modern heroes and heroines on it, interspersed with the children. There are five men and three women. The five men died for peace and justice – Martin Luther King, Mahatma Gandhi, Oscar Romero, Yitzhak Rabin, and Anwar Sadat. The three women died worn out from works of justice – Dorothy Day, St. Katherine Drexel, and Mother Teresa (who once visited Sacred Heart Church).

The church is stones or timbers that pray in public – an edifice in shape and form that lifts the spirit. It has to be a grandmother's lap where good things happen and welcome is


always there for the one who comes. It has to be a place that announces God but preaches not just with words. It is the life in the sacred space that yells for restoration. The American people are generous. They will listen to the sounds of life in a sacred place.

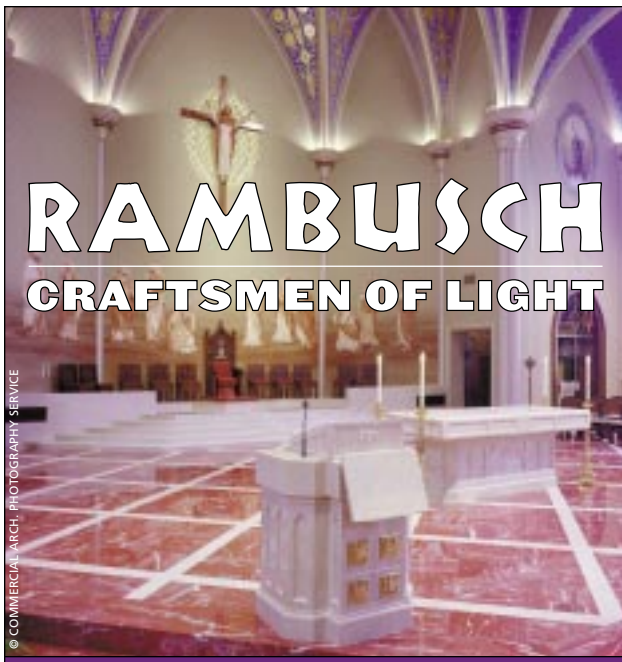
A society without a church or synagogue or mosque, with no sacred space, would surely be heading nowhere. It would be a "hammer and sickle" society, beating everyone down to the ground. The old Irish emblem of the "plough and the stars" said it all - we must plow the ground. We must work with concrete reality, but we must look above that, and see the stars.

A church points to the stars and helps us not to get all bogged down. Every church and mosque and synagogue and temple, every sacred space in the neighborhoods of the U.S., in the country places, in the valleys and the mountains, wherever they are – they are the high point. They make the point. They live the point. They point beyond the breakdown, beyond the breaking point, to a noble level of human nature, to generosity beyond the call of duty, generosity of time, and talent, and treasure. They point to God and they must be saved. Saved not only for God's sake but for the country's sake, as well. They are good for society. A sacred place is an anchor in any neighborhood, especially a poor one. The loss of a church or sacred place is the loss of a mother where there is no father. It is the pole of the tent, the linchpin that holds a neighborhood together. It connects earth and heaven. It presents a ladder to a life beyond, but it also offers a lifeline against despair and destruction in this world.

Twenty years ago on a wall in Belfast in my own country, there was a sign painted among much graffiti: "Is there life before death?" Sacred space must be responsible for announcing life after death but it must be deeply involved in making sure there is life before death. I look at the city of Camden where I have worked since 1968, and it is very clear to me that churches and places of worship are the last, best hope of Inner City, USA. The only glue left. The church of Sacred Heart is a little catalyst. It is the power that enables the many little efforts that are made.

Faith-based communities are not just ideas floating like feathers in the air. Or just words, even the marvelous words of astronauts, blessing the heavens and proclaiming that space is sacred. No. Faith-based communities are anchored with gravity in locations of the Earth. They exist in sacred space with roofs and leaks, and maybe gutters clogged with twigs, feathers, and bird droppings. The building has to be saved for the faith-based community to work. If we can fetch stones from the moon, surely we have the ability to restore the stones in the old temples of the nation. To paraphrase the Greeks: "Give me a sacred place to stand and I will move the world."

So the neighborhoods must have their sacred spaces, not only for altars and pulpits but as centers for civic engagement, action, participation, life, focus, motivation, and culture. Far better than building prisons is to help preserve old churches and synagogues. I know that there is a separation of church and state, and so there should. But when our young men and women are wounded in war, are frightened and dying, this country provides, by its taxes, religious services and ministry to the wounded. Few claim it should not be done. We will never ask for public funding of religious ministry, but sacred places, places of great nurture, if they are wounded should be saved, because they save the wounded around them. They are anchors of hope and healing. We must save our sacred places because in saving them, we save ourselves. 



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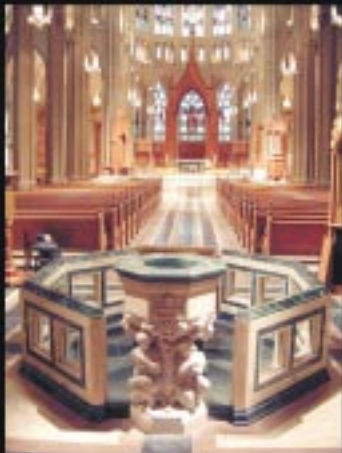
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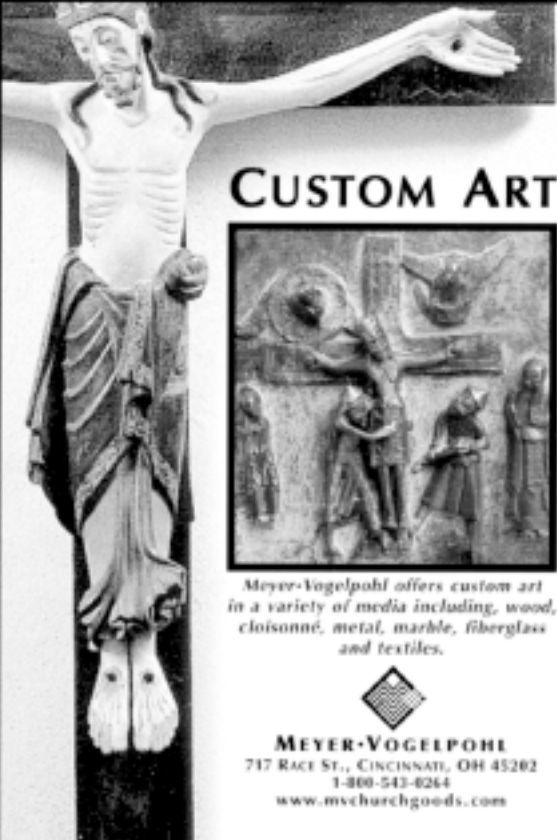


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JUST ONE MORE THING...

By Betty H. Meyer



Here's a riddle: When are the clergy like architects and architects like the clergy?

Sadly, some members of the clergy feel that they should remain in the background and let the building committee play the major role in interviewing the architects, asking the questions, and eventually making the all-important choices. Rightly or wrongly, they feel inadequate to deal with the practical, business questions that are necessarily involved in a building project, separating what they see as their spiritual vocation from that of the concrete, informed responsibilities of the architect. The lay people on the building committee admire and respect their minister but often concur that he or she is not a realist in practical matters.

Just so, some architects feel that they are not sufficiently informed on religious or philosophical matters to enter into the discussion, and when such subjects are addressed they defer to the building committee and the clergy.

I want to suggest that the sensitivities of architects and clergy are surprisingly similar and that both voices should be heard in all discussions, on all subjects. Each needs what the other has to give and their commonalities should be recognized.

First, they must both help the building committee members to lose their inhibitions and suspicions about architecture as an art. Unfortunately, art is often a foreign language to the laity, and sometimes even to the clergy because our seminaries seldom include the arts in their curriculum.

Secondly, after recognizing architecture as an art, a discussion of the response to it should be in order. Both the architect and the clergy should stress the importance of the senses and the emotions, as well as the intellectual and rational. I remember when I was to graduate from college and was asked to give a commencement address, I decided I wanted to talk about "Educating America Emotionally." I was told that this was not a "fit" subject and that I must choose something more academic. Fortunately, today there are many books published on emotional intelligence and I feel vindicated. The clergy and the architect understand this and want the laity to understand how the senses and emotions will enter into their response to both sermon and architecture.

The clergy wants the laity to listen until they hear, and the architect wants them to look until they see. Both work with symbols that they hope will lead congregants to a quickened awareness, a hidden reality, or perhaps even a re-discovery. Sometimes there is a question about how the other feels about meaning or interpretation. Artists and architects are reluctant to

attach specific meaning to their work. They say it is not meant to inform or instruct but to disclose, and that it is a mistake to try to factor out a meaning. Rather, it is for the "form" to evoke an individual response from the individual's imagination. One is on one's own.


Is this what the clergy hopes for too? Some may or some may not. Theologian Paul Tillich believed that our responses to and answers from art will assume as many forms as there are questions. If we respond to a form, we may receive an answer to our question, new power, and we will become a "new being." Is not the congregant allowed to ask her own questions, build his own faith, determine her own meaning?

This is what both clergy and architect hope their work will evoke, and I do believe that if this does not happen, if art and religion are estranged, that our imaginations will atrophy and trivialize. We will cease to be individuals.

I talked recently with a retired minister, Richard E. Crusius, of Allentown, Pennsylvania, whose work I think exemplifies the possibilities. He shared a brochure with me that concerned responses to a building project. He wrote:

"We are gifted by God with the ability to see even as we are created to hear, to smell, to touch, and to taste. By these senses our actions are directed and others will act in relation to ours."

He described his amicable relationship with the architects, Robert Metcalf (later Dean of the College of Architecture and Design at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor) and David Bolasky of Wallace and Watson in Allentown. Both of the projects done with these architects, one at the beginning of Crusius' ministry and the other at his retirement, won national awards (one from the Church Architectural Guild, and the other from IFRAA and published in *Faith & Form*). Crusius commented: "I believe that by sensing life and listening to our God of faith this has happened."

I have come to the conclusion and I hope you have too, that the answer to the riddle is that the roles of the architect and the clergy are almost interchangeable. They are both artists by spirit! 

BETTY H. MEYER is Editor Emeritus of Faith & Form.

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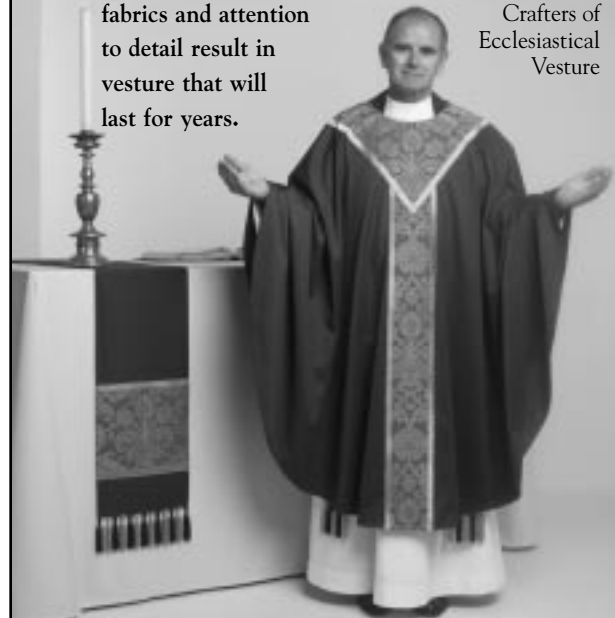
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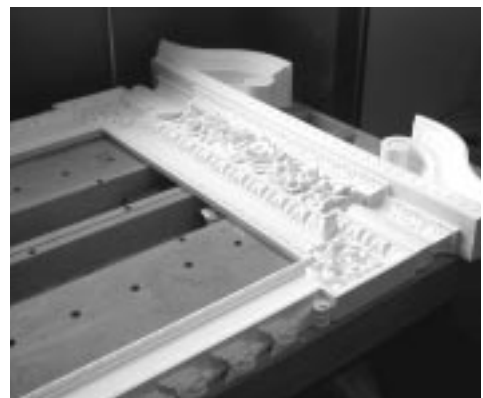
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