

Building Renovations – Church Changes

The church renovation was completed in October 2009. Archbishop Alex Brunett rededicated the church in November 2009. The debt reduction project of 2011 is to pay off the remaining amount owed for the renovations.

Background

Thinking about changes to our worship space began in earnest in 2005, after a number of surveys and questionnaires revealed that for parishioners the most overwhelming parish need was to enhance the Catholicity of our worship space. There followed opportunities for parishioners to provide input, drawings were composed and eventually the Pastoral Council unanimously recommended that work begin on the Church.

Purpose of the Changes

The overall purpose of the changes was to help parishioners be explicitly initiated into and sustained in the Catholic Christian Tradition. Every time people go into the remodeled church, they are reminded of the central aspects of our Catholic Christian identity. That identity provides a firm basis for a Catholic Christian philosophy of life, against which the appropriateness of the various trends and fashions in society are measured. In addition, maintenance items were addressed (lighting, heating and the sound system in the Church as well as upgrading the bathrooms).

Importance of Church Building

Church buildings are important because they assist people in coming closer to God and from that position reaching out to others. Since 1924, an extraordinary amount of outreach and pastoral work has taken place in this geographical area because of St. Theresa's. Reaching out to others gives people the opportunity to make God the center of their lives. From such activity, there has overflowed (as is always the case) concern, care and compassion for others. All of us have benefited from the vision and generosity of our founding parishioners.

Our existing worship space had many fine features and those were retained. The changes enhanced what we had already by making the space exclusive for worship and the features and furnishings more explicit for a church. This was necessary for three reasons:

- In such an explicit context the central features of the Mass are more pronounced and Mass is celebrated with greater effectiveness.
- A Catholic sacred space reminds us of Gospel and Catholic values, so that we might bring their meaning to the world.
- Our Catholic culture must be obvious in our church. Many of those who received Catholic education in the decades immediately following Vatican II did not receive a

thorough initiation into Catholicism, and were therefore unable to pick up ‘the hints’ of Catholic culture in our previous, more modern Church.

The Cost

The project was estimated to cost \$1.4million, about half of which was to bring about the changes to make our Church an exclusive space for Catholic worship. The other half of the cost was for maintenance in the Church building as well as upgrading the bathrooms. The project came in under budget at a cost of \$1.3 million.

Over 200 families pledged their support for the renovation. After the initial round of pledges was received, the families who had not yet pledged were asked to contribute to the project the equivalent to one month’s income every year for a three-year period. Families who were unable to contribute financially found other ways to support the project. The remaining amount was borrowed from the Archdiocese of Seattle.