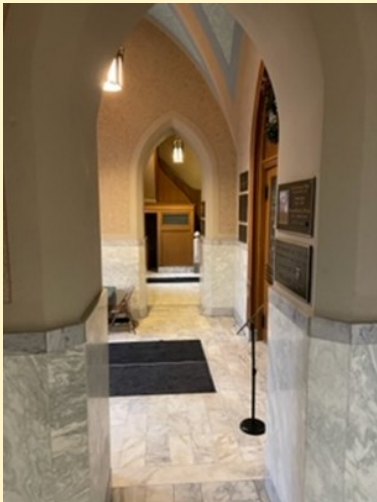




The Gathering Space or Narthex

Paragraphs 95-97

- The narthex is a place of welcome – a threshold space between the congregation’s space and the outside environment.
- It serves as a gathering space and as the entrance and exit to the building.
- This space helps believers transition from daily life to the celebration of the liturgy and then, after the liturgy, return to live out the mystery in daily life.
- The narthex is used also to assemble for the procession or to gather people for important liturgical moments such as greeting the catechumens, the parents and godparents of an infant prior to baptism, and for the greeting of Christians for the last time as their mortal remains are received into the church building for the celebration of the funeral rites.
- A narthex may provide access to the vesting sacristy, rooms for choir rehearsals, storage areas, and rooms for ushers. Adequate space is needed.
- The doors to the church have both practical and symbolic significance. They function as the secure, steady symbol of Christ “the door through which those who follow him enter and are safe as they go in and go out.
- In construction, design, and decoration, they have the ability to remind people of Christ’s presence as the Way that leads to the Father.



Reflection Questions:

1. What are your observations regarding the placement of our pastoral musicians, both up front and in the choir loft? How do these placements compare to the descriptions in *BOLS*?
2. What are your thoughts regarding the crosses and candles used in our church throughout the year?
3. Regarding our gathering space, what observations do you have about the purpose, size, and functionality? How does it serve the vision described in *BOLS*? What challenges are presented?

July Chapter 2, (Part 4) paragraphs 98 – 139

Looking ahead: We are planning another Group Discussion in August and a three-part series on Catholic art, architecture, and worship for the Fall of 2023.



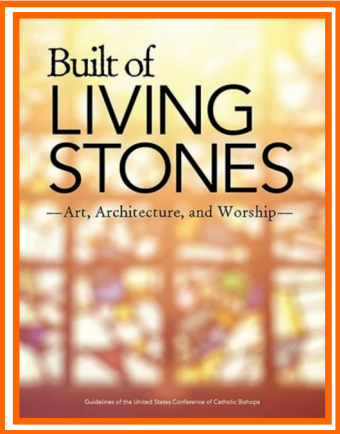
St. Patrick Parish

Built of Living Stones (*BOLS*)
A Year-Long Reflection on Our Sacred Space - 2023



Each month our parish is invited to continue reading and reflecting on the US Catholic Bishops’ document, *Built of Living Stones – Art, Architecture, and Worship*. This year-long reflection invites us to increase our understanding of how our beautiful church building and 21st Century Catholic worship intersect as we continue to learn about the sacred liturgy and use of sacred space.

As with prior editions, this month includes a summary of the reading, and highlights key points for each of the topics discussed.



Chapter Two: The Church Building and the Sacred Rites Celebrated There (Part 3; pages 33-36, paragraphs 88-97

This month, we continue under the heading of Accommodating the Liturgical Postures of the Congregations. and we reflect on the following topics:

- The Place for the Pastoral Musicians
- Other Ritual Furnishings
 - The Cross
 - Candles
 - The Paschal Candle
- The Gathering Space or Narthex



- SCAN the QR code to read a digital version of *Built of Living Stones* online. (Note: paragraph numbers, not page numbers, as the online page numbers differ from the hard copy book).
- For the 4 previous Summary pages visit our parish website, specifically: www.stpatrickbridge.org/book-study-to-begin/



The Place for the Pastoral Musicians

Paragraphs 88-90

- Music is integral to the liturgy. It unifies those gathered to worship, supports the songs of the congregation, highlights significant parts of the liturgical action, and helps to set the tone for each celebration.
- The building must support the music and song of the entire worshipping assembly.
- Because the roles of the choirs and cantors are exercised within the liturgical community, the space chosen for the musicians should clearly express that they are part of the assembly of worshippers.
- Cantors and song leaders need visual contact with the music director while they themselves are visible to the rest of the congregation.
- Apart from the singing of the Responsorial Psalm, which normally occurs at the ambo, the stand for the cantor or song leader is distinct from the ambo, which is reserved for the proclamation of the word of God.
- The directives concerning music found in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal and the guidance offered by Music in Catholic Worship and Liturgical Music Today can assist the parish in planning appropriate space for musicians.
- The ministers of music are most appropriately located in a place where they can be part of the assembly and have the ability to be heard.
- The placement of the choir should never crowd or overshadow the other ministers in the sanctuary nor should it distract from the liturgical action.



Other Ritual Furnishings

The Cross

Paragraphs 91

- The cross with the image of Christ crucified is a reminder of Christ’s paschal mystery.
- There should be a crucifix “positioned either on the altar or near it, and clearly visible to the people gathered there.”
- A crucifix may be suspended over the altar or affixed on the sanctuary wall.
- A processional cross of sufficient size, placed in a stand and visible to the people, may also be an option.
- If there is already a cross in the sanctuary, the processional cross is placed out of view of the congregation following the procession.



Candles

Paragraphs 92-93

- Candles, which are a sign of reverence and festivity, are to be used at every liturgical service. The living flame of the candles, symbolic of the risen Christ, reminds people that in baptism they are brought out of darkness into God’s marvelous light.
- For the celebration of the Eucharist, it is appropriate to carry candles in the procession and during the procession with the Book of the Gospels.
- At least two candles are placed near the altar in the sanctuary area. If there is a lack of space they may be placed on the altar.
- Four or six candles may be used for the celebration of Mass and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.
- If the bishop of the diocese celebrates, seven candles may be used.
- Candles placed in floor-standing bases or on the altar should be not obscure the view of the ritual action in the sanctuary, especially the action at the altar.



The Paschal Candle

Paragraph 94

- The Paschal Candles is the symbol of the light of Christ, rising in glory, scattering the darkness of our hearts and minds.
- It should be a genuine candle and choice of size, design, and color should be made in relationship to the sanctuary in which it will be placed.
- During the Easter Vigil and throughout the Easter season it is placed near the ambo or in the middle of the sanctuary.
- Outside of the Easter season it is moved to a place of honor in the baptistry and placed near the coffin at funerals as a sign of the Christian’s Passover from death to life.

