

March -The Building & Sacred Rites (continued).

Summary:

The Church building houses the community of the baptized as it gathers to celebrate the sacred liturgy. By its practical design and beauty it fosters the full, dignified, and graceful celebration of these rites.

Regarding the Baptismal Font

- The baptismal font is one of the oldest fixtures in our church building and has been used for decades. Can it be somewhere more prominent and permanent?
- The current font doesn’t accommodate immersion.
- The font is not used for anything other than baptismal ceremonies. Holy water fonts are located at each entrance (five in total).



Regarding the Tabernacles

- The tabernacle looks brighter and cleaner since the doors were refinished.
- Are the tabernacles at Mary’s and Joseph’s shrines ever used/needed?
- The main tabernacle is regularly used, prominent, and separate from the Main Altar.
- Is there a way to use lighting options to focus more on Main Altar during Mass?
- The “upper” sanctuary has seating available for adoration but do people use this space? Is it too remote to invite people to come and pray? Does the communion rail suggest that this is restricted space?

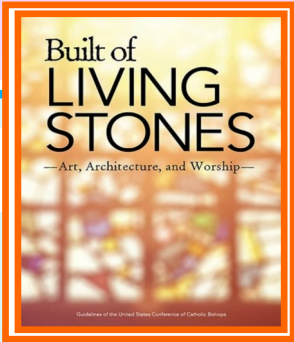


Regarding the Seating

- Pillars can’t be moved but can seating arrangements be made so that people aren’t blocked by them?
- Can certain liturgical actions be taken farther out into the nave where assembly is seated?
- Very limited space. Could back rows be removed and all pews spaced out better? A cross aisle for more access during communion? Spaces to accommodate wheelchairs and walkers in main nave.
- Can more room under choir loft be created, especially for funeral wakes taking place in the church or when people gather after Mass?
- TV monitors and/or speakers could be used in back on special occasions when the church is full and when parents need to go to vestibule to calm down a baby or child?
- Cushions on pews may make them more comfortable.
- A section with chairs (with arms) may be considered.
- The music number board can’t be seen by everyone. Would a second one be helpful?

June - Next Steps

For June we will continue with paragraphs 88-115. Topics include: Place for Pastoral Musicians, Ritual Furnishings, The Gathering Space (Narthex), Areas Surrounding the Church, and the Role of the Church Building in Liturgical Rites.



Summary of April 26th Parish Discussion

On April 26 approximately 35 parishioners gathered to reflect on the Building of Living Stones - Art, Architecture, and Worship document written by the USCCB. Fr. Gurnick shared a summary of comments offered by various groups since January. Although this is not a strategic planning initiative, the year-long study affords the parish an opportunity to reflect upon our church building's relationship to how we gather and worship in the 21st-Century

What is most inspiring about our sacred worship space? What features are especially cherished? What works well? What challenges are inherent to the building? What can be improved? These are samples of the questions presented since we've begun our study. Take a look inside this edition and check out the summary of responses.



- 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 3 previous Summary pages visit our parish website, specifically: www.stpatrickbridge.org/book-study-to-begin/



Why have this conversation?

- The people of Saint Patrick Parish have a deep appreciation for its history and the dedication of those who have come before them.
- We have inherited this treasure of Faith from past generations and are called to pass it on to future ones. There can be room for improvement without destroying the beauty of this historic building.
- The people, our Living Stones, are at the heart of our discussions. Individuals come from different perspectives and with different priorities.
- While the building enjoys admiration and awe, it is meant to serve the parishioners' needs. This sacred space has served the parish since 1871. A number of modifications have occurred over time to address the needs of the worshipping community and during periods of liturgical reform.
- The 1977 book Environment and Art in Catholic Worship was a Post-Vatican II guide for liturgical spaces in the United States.
- In 2000 the bishops of the United States presented Built of Living Stones to replace Environment and Art and address the needs of the next generations as they renovate and build churches.
- What are the 21st Century demands on worship, gathering and social needs?
- Accessibility by way of effective sound, good lighting, and mobility for everyone are priorities.
- Liturgical space and actions are based on theological principles, not an individual's preferences.

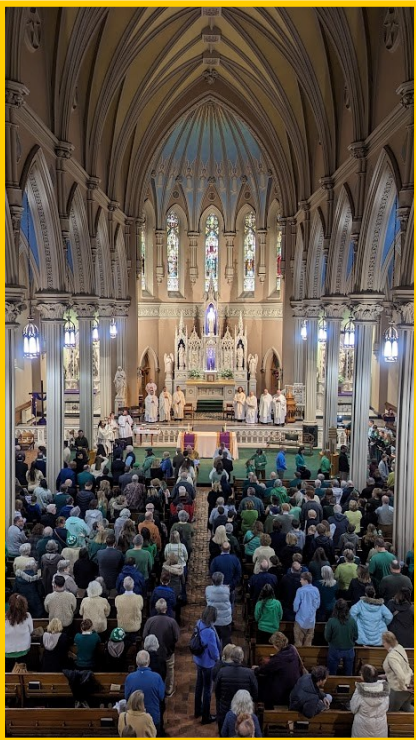
WHAT THIS YEAR OF STUDY IS AND IS NOT

- This IS a Formative Experience, an integration of education, experience, reflection, and discussion.
- This IS about Art, Architecture, and Worship.
- This IS NOT Strategic Planning or making decisions on structural or funding changes.
- This IS NOT about one person's vision.

January - Preface & Chapter 1
Parishioner Feedback from January

Things that appeal to us about our church:

- Beauty and awe of the building
- Love of arches and high ceiling, yet intimate
- The ability to sit near others
- The overall spirit of the building
- Stained glass serves meditation and reflection (themes)
- Clearly a building to worship God
- The beautiful use of stones and wood (craftsmanship)
- The organ and that it functions
- The organ and other music group location (both have their appeal)
- The proximity of the altar to the assembly
- There's a charm to the old pews and kneelers
- It clearly looks and feels like a Catholic church.
- The tabernacle's location
- Other churches can be somewhat plain. Ours is inspiring / beautiful / colorful.
- Our bells are real and are beautiful.



February -The Building & Sacred Rites

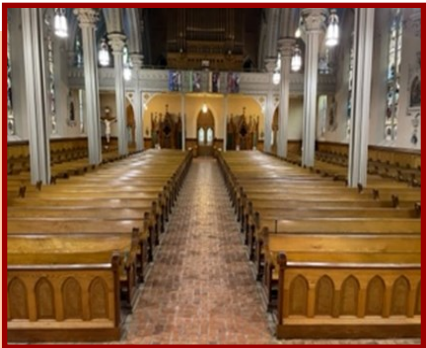
Summary

- The celebration of the Eucharist is the center of the entire Christian life – both for the universal Church and the local faith community. All sacraments/ministries are linked to the Holy Eucharist.
- Sunday Eucharist is the starting point for understanding the demands of the space, sound, and visibility made upon a church building.
- Priorities: space for the congregation, the proclamation and preaching of the Word, and the actual celebration of the Eucharist.

Parishioner Feedback from February

Regarding the Nave

- Although it is a large space, it still feels intimate.
- Pews are spaced too closely.
- Music section looks cluttered and can be distracting.
- Floor is beautiful but uneven. Can be dangerous.
- Appreciation of seeing/hearing musicians (up front and loft).
- The close feeling of sitting among others and surrounded by the large colorful windows.
- Immovable kneelers create risk and difficulty for people to pass in order to be seated or when someone remains back during Communion.
- Communion lines/stations are sometimes confusing and congested.
- Sound system needs to be replaced. Hard to hear in some spots.



Regarding the Altars and Ambo

- The altars are beautiful, especially where the tabernacle is located.
- The ambo used for Mass is too low. Cannot always see, especially when people are standing.
- Strong preference for location of Main Altar but is too low and not everybody can see.
- Why are the three marble altars better quality than the Main Altar?
- Main altar doesn't appear to be permanent.
- Ambo has a small surface, nowhere to place liturgical books, and doesn't match the altar.



Regarding Accessibility for Those in Wheelchairs or with Mobility Issues

- Create space in main nave to accommodate wheelchairs, walkers, or crutches. Can they be more connected to assembly?
- How can a person with mobility issues access the Ambo or Altar?
- Can there be flexible seating for similar reasons?
- ADA compliant restroom(s)?
- Could a new sound system accommodate special devices for the hearing impaired?