

Conference for Catholic Facility Management

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Liturgical Requirements for Newly Constructed or Renovated Catholic Worship Spaces

Course Number: SAV1502

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Course Description

This presentation includes a review of the various liturgical documents to consider, and what these documents require, in the design of a new Catholic Church or renovation of an existing Catholic worship space. These documents will include the most recent, “General Instruction of the Roman Missal”, and the guidelines of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “Built of Living Stones: Art, Architecture and Worship”, plus any other pertinent documents.

Learning Objectives

At the end of the this course, participants will be able to:

1. recognize the theological differences between a Church building and other buildings, using examples and theological concepts.
2. read architecturally, through the lens of theology, the difference between a well-constructed sacred place and a poorly constructed sacred place, using examples and theological concepts.
3. discuss design ideas for the new construction of church buildings in line with the teaching of the Catholic Church, using examples and theological concepts.
4. discuss design ideas for the renovation of church buildings in line with the teaching of the Catholic Church, using examples and theological concepts.

Mediator Dei

(20 November 1947)

Pope Pius XII

1. Mediator between God and men and High Priest who has gone before us into heaven, Jesus the Son of God quite clearly had one aim in view when He undertook the mission of mercy which was to endow mankind with the rich blessings of supernatural grace. Sin had disturbed the right relationship between man and

his Creator; the Son of God would restore it. The children of Adam were wretched heirs to the infection of original sin; He would bring them back to their heavenly Father, the primal source and final destiny of all things. For this reason He was not content, while He dwelt with us on earth, merely to give notice that redemption had begun, and to proclaim the long-awaited Kingdom of God, but gave Himself besides in prayer and sacrifice to the task of saving souls, even to the point of offering Himself,

as He hung from the cross, a Victim unspotted unto God, to purify our conscience of dead works, to serve the living God. Thus happily were all men summoned back from the byways leading them down to ruin and disaster, to be set squarely once again upon the path that leads to God. Thanks to the shedding of the blood of the Immaculate Lamb, now each might set about the personal task of achieving his own sanctification, so rendering to God the glory due to Him.

2. But what is more, the divine Redeemer has so willed it that the priestly life begun with the supplication and sacrifice of His mortal body should continue without intermission down the ages in His Mystical Body which is the Church. That is why He established a visible priesthood to offer everywhere the clean oblation which would enable men from East to West, freed from the shackles of sin, to offer God that unconstrained and voluntary homage which their conscience dictates.

3. In obedience, therefore, to her Founder's behest, the Church prolongs the priestly mission of Jesus Christ mainly by means of the sacred liturgy. She does this in the first place at the altar, where constantly the sacrifice of the cross is represented and with a single difference in the manner of its offering, renewed. She does it next by means of the sacraments, those special channels through which men are made partakers in the supernatural life. She does it, finally, by offering to God, all Good

and Great, the daily tribute of her prayer of praise. "What a spectacle for heaven and earth," observes Our predecessor of happy memory, Pius XI, "is not the Church at prayer! For centuries without interruption, from midnight to midnight, the divine psalmody of the inspired canticles is repeated on earth; there is no hour of the day that is not hallowed by its special liturgy; there is no state of human life that has not its part in the thanksgiving, praise, supplication and reparation of this

common prayer of the Mystical Body of Christ which is His Church!“

The full document can be found on the Vatican website:

http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_20111947_mediator-dei.html

Starting Point

Salvation

SACRAMENT

Mysterion (Greek)

Mysterium (Latin)

Sacramentum

“S”acrament vs. “s”acrament

TRUTH

Truth

- The conformity of the intellect with what the thing perceived actually is.

BEAUTY

Beauty

- The revelation of ontological reality.
- An object can be said to be beautiful when it most clearly and fully reveals its ontological reality – as understood in the mind of God.
- Beauty is OBJECTIVE!!!!

Beauty (cont.)

- Three things are necessary if something is to be classified as beautiful:

1. *Integritas*

2. *Claritas*

3. *Consonantia*

Integritas

- Wholeness
- Completeness

- A church without an altar would lack *integritas* – it is incomplete.

Consonantia

- Proportionality
- Harmony
- Order
 - Eschatological Reality

- Adam and Eve lacked *consonantia* because they ordered themselves towards something other than God.

Claritas

- Radiant Clarity
- Power of reality to reveal itself to the mind
 - Communicability
 - Knowable
 - Perceivable
- Does it have “dogliness” or “catliness” or “churchliness”?

Beauty

- Three things are necessary if something is to be classified as beautiful:

1. *Integritas*

2. *Claritas*

3. *Consonantia*

ARCHITECTURE

VS

CHURCH ARCHITECTURE

Architecture:

- The built form of an idea.

Church Architecture:

- The built form of theology.

Lex Orandi - Lex Credendi

(The law of prayer is the law of belief.)

Form Follows Function

1. Sacred Liturgy – at the Altar (Holy Mass)
2. Sacraments
3. Divine Office – Liturgy of the Hours

Example

Oratory of St. Paul

Diocese of Covington, Curia



Oratory of St. Paul



Main Entrance

Oratory of St. Paul



Oratory of St. Paul



Oratory of St. Paul



Oratory of St. Paul



Oratory of St. Paul



Oratory of St. Paul



St. Peter



St. Paul

Oratory of St. Paul



Holy Spirit

Oratory of St. Paul



Blessed Mother



St. Joseph

Oratory of St. Paul



Documents

Sacrosanctum Concilium

(Second Vatican Council)

General Instruction on the Roman Missal

Built of Living Stones

(USCCB)

Sacrosanctum Concilium

– Chapter 8

- 123 – “The Church has not adopted any particular style of art as her very own; she has admitted styles from every period according to the natural talents and circumstances of peoples, and the needs of the various rites.”
- 124 – “And when churches are to be built, let great care be taken that they be suitable for the celebration of liturgical services and for the active participation of the faithful.”

Sacrosanctum Concilium

– Chapter 8

- 127 – “All artists who, prompted by their talents, desire to serve God’s glory in holy Church, should ever bear in mind that they are engaged in a kind of sacred imitation of God the Creator, and are concerned with works destined to be used in Catholic worship, to edify the faithful, and to foster their piety and their religious formation.”

General Instruction on the Roman Missal

– Chapter 5 – Part I

- 288 – “worthy of so great a mystery”
- 288 – “suitable for carrying out the sacred action and for ensuring the active participation of the faithful”
- 288 – “truly worthy and beautiful and be signs and symbols of heavenly realities.”
- 289 – “new works of art that are in harmony with the character of each successive age”

General Instruction on the Roman Missal

– Chapter 5 – Part I

- 289 – “true excellence in art which *nourishes faith and devotion* and accords *authentically with both the meaning and the purpose for which it is intended.*”
- 292 – “The ornamentation of a church should contribute toward its noble simplicity rather than to ostentation.”
- 293 – “The suitable arrangement of a church, and of what goes with it, in such a way as to meet appropriately the needs of our own age...”

General Instruction on the Roman Missal

– Chapter 5 – Part I

- 294 – “The People of God which is gathered for Mass is coherently and *hierarchically* ordered, and this finds its expression in the variety of ministries and the variety of actions according to the different parts of the celebration. Hence the general arrangement of the sacred building must be such that in some way it conveys the image of the assembled congregation and allows the appropriate ordering of all the participants, as well as facilitating each in the proper carrying out of his function.”

General Instruction on the Roman Missal

– Chapter 5 – Part I

- 294 – “... bring about a close and coherent unity that is clearly expressive of the unity of the entire holy people.”
- 294 – “Indeed, the nature and beauty of the place and all its furnishings should foster devotion and express visually the holiness of the mysteries celebrated there.”

General Instruction on the Roman Missal

– Chapter 5 – Part II

- 298 – “It is desirable that in every church there be a fixed altar, since this more clearly and permanently signifies Christ Jesus, the Living Stone (1 Pt 2:4; cf. Eph. 2:20)
- 299 - “The Altar should occupy a place where it is truly the center toward which the attention of the whole congregation of the faithful naturally turns.”
- 301 – “In keeping with the Church’s traditional practice and with what the altar signifies, the table (mensa) of a fixed altar should be of stone and indeed of natural stone.”

General Instruction on the Roman Missal

– Chapter 5 – Part II

- 301 – in the USA, “wood which is dignified, solid, and well-crafted may be used, provided that the altar is structurally immobile.”
- 309 – “The dignity of the Word of God requires that in the church there be a suitable place from which it may be proclaimed and toward which the attention of the faithful naturally turns during the Liturgy of the Word.”

General Instruction on the Roman Missal

– Chapter 5 – Part II

- 312 – Choir – “should be so positioned with respect to the arrangement of each church that its nature may be clearly evident, *namely as part of the assembled community of the faithful* undertaking a specific function...”
- 314 – “the Most Blessed Sacrament should be reserved in a tabernacle in a part of the church that is truly noble, prominent, conspicuous, worthily decorated, and suitable for prayer.”

General Instruction on the Roman Missal

– Chapter 5 – Part II

- 318 – “In the earthly liturgy, the Church participates, by a foretaste, in that heavenly liturgy which is celebrated in the holy city of Jerusalem, toward which she journeys as a pilgrim, and where Christ is seated at the right hand of God; and by venerating the memory of the Saints, she hopes one day to have some share and fellowship with them.”
- 318 – “Images of the Lord, BVM, and Saints... should be displayed for veneration by the faithful and should be arranged so as to lead the faithful towards the mysteries of faith celebrated there.”

Built of Living Stones

– Chapter 1

- 18 – “Churches, therefore must be places ‘suited to sacred celebrations,’ ‘dignified,’ and beautiful”...
(quoting the Rite for the Dedication of Churches and Altars)
- 28 – “The liturgical books are the foundational source for those who wish to plan a building well suited for the liturgy.”
- 44 – “The church building should be beautiful.”
- 44 – “Art or architecture that draws more attention to its own shape, form, texture, or color than to the sacred realities it seeks to disclose is unworthy of the church building.”

Built of Living Stones

– Preface

- 10 – “*Built of Living Stones* contains many of the provisions of universal law governing liturgical art and architecture and offers pastoral suggestions based upon the experience of the last thirty-five years.”
 - **Note:** The Document was not passed unanimously by the US Bishops, nor did it receive a *Recognitio* – therefore as a whole, it is not binding on any particular Church.

Other Thoughts

- “The church [building] is ‘heaven on earth’, where the presence of God becomes somehow visible in the beauty of the rituals and the symbolism of the building.”
- “The beauty of the house of God should give the faithful a foretaste of the beauty of heaven.”
- “Beauty, then, is the natural ambience of someone who, while praying, understands the full spiritual wealth of the Church.”
- The church building is not simply a meeting house for people.

Other Thoughts

- “...the tendency of the modern liturgical movement is to concentrate upon the actual altar, to remove the superstructure back from the altar or to dispense with it altogether, so that the altar may stand out from it, with its dominating feature of the Cross, as the place of Sacrifice and the table of the Lord’s Supper, and that, with its tabernacle, it may stand out as the throne upon which Christ reigns as King and from which He dispenses the bounteous largesse of Divine grace.” (M.S. MacMahon’s *Liturgical Catechism*)

Other Thoughts

- “A church edifice is not simply a place for the convenient exercise of prayer and instruction and for the enactment of the liturgy. The church edifice itself is a part of the liturgy, a sacred thing, made holy by a divine presence through solemn consecration: it is a sacramental object, an outward sign of an invisible spiritual reality.” William Busch

Other Thoughts

- “One does not know what you are saying. Frequently you yourselves do not know, and the language of Babel, of confusion, is the result. Then where is art?”

- Pope Paul VI

Primary Sources

- *Mediator Dei* – Pope Pius XII
 - Available on the Vatican Website
- *Sacrosanctum Concilium* – Vatican II
 - Available on the Vatican Website
- *General Instruction on the Roman Missal (GIRM)*
 - Available on the Vatican Website
- *Built of Living Stones* - USCCB
- *Catholic Church Architecture and the Spirit of the Liturgy*
by Dr. Denis R. McNamara
- The Institute for Sacred Architecture
 - www.sacredarchitecture.org -- Various Articles

At this time, the Course Participants are
free to ask questions.

This concludes The American Institute of Architects
Continuing Education Systems Course

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