There is an unprecedented crisis in our cities, yet most are not aware of it. It does not affect residents nor shoppers in our tony neighborhoods. In working-class neighborhoods some see it as a concern, but they are a minority. What is this crisis? In dioceses across the country, including Boston, Cleveland, Chicago, and New York, we have faced a historic number of church closings. The reasons are due to a lack: of funds, of parishioners, or of priests. Small dioceses are also suffering from this crisis, and they are trying to be good stewards of their finances.

But why is closing church buildings a big issue? Because they are holy places, dedicated to God and His saints, set apart for worship and the reception of the sacraments, paid for by the faithful, and honored as repositories of sacred and devotional art. What the Modernists said about the ethnic churches in many of our cities and towns is often true: they were often not well built and not that beautiful. They were put up quickly on low budgets by poor, uneducated immigrants. Yet for many people these buildings seem like masterpieces in comparison to the worship spaces that we—wealthy, educated, and professional—have built over the past fifty years.

One solution is to sell the church. Not to a Protestant congregation, which usually has limited funds, but to a developer who could retrofit it into some secular use, whether as condominiums, office space, or a community hall. Well-known examples of this are the renovations of the former Los Angeles cathedral, Saint Vibiana, into a wedding and corporate event center, and of Saint John the Baptist Church in Pittsburgh into a brew pub. Often when a sale is proposed, the overly pious are assured that all of the major artistic pieces will be removed, meaning altars, stained glass, and statuary. This is because we have come to believe that the architecture itself is not sacred, the place has not been sanctified by its use, and if we move the furniture out, it is okay for a temple to become a den of thieves.

Another option is to tear down the historic church and sell the land. If the building is no longer slated for sacred purposes then it is better that it no longer exist. In many upper-income neighborhoods the church building itself is worthless and the property is more beneficial being “converted” to high-end condominiums. An added benefit is that the property can go back on the tax rolls and help the city. If the building is pleasant this may be seen as a loss, but if it is ugly or built since the 1960s this solution will sadden few people. The building should be offered up to God, not unlike an Old Testament sacrifice. For those who would mourn it, it is well to remember that this is what the Romans did to the Temple in Jerusalem when the Israelites rebelled.

But what if the building is still beloved by people in the neighborhood, especially the faithful? What are some creative ways to assist them to have a house of prayer that is a light to the city and a locus for the sacraments? What if the people can come up with a financial plan to maintain the church? Some churches, though seldom used, can become satellites of nearby parishes. At the minimum, these churches could be open for special occasions: baptisms, weddings, funerals, and important feast days. In Europe, religious confraternities and guilds own oratories and are responsible for their maintenance and sacred use. They can be opened for as little or as much as they are able. They are responsible for the property, maintaining the building, and finding clergy to celebrate the sacraments.

The option most likely to succeed is to invite a religious order in to run the parish. Opus Dei, the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Peter, and the Institute of Christ the King have a track record in reviving dying parishes and restoring beautiful buildings and artwork. In Chicago, Cardinal George asked the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal to reopen a closed parish in a tough neighborhood (see “A Magnificent Witness: Our Lady of the Angels Mission in Chicago” in the Spring 2017 issue of Sacred Architecture). In Fort Wayne, Indiana, Bishop Kevin Rhoades brought in a new order, the Franciscan Friars Minor, to reopen a shuttered parish church and serve the poor in the neighborhood.

In America, where everything is portable, why not move historic churches from the old ethnic neighborhood out to the suburbs where there is a growing population? Unless it is a small wooden chapel, this is a serious undertaking and is much more difficult than it sounds. The idea of recycling sounds very attractive today, especially if the historic church has a lot of detail work and precious art. While a worthy goal, it should be pointed out that you will need experts in sacred architecture, preservation, and historic construction if you are to carefully conserve works of sacred architecture that otherwise might fall into disrepair.

The best option, of course, is to find a creative way to keep these historic churches open. They are important to their neighborhoods and to the life of the city. They are a significant part of our cities’ history and beacons of faith to modern society. If that cannot be done, why not follow the example of medieval Rome, where the populace fled and many of the churches were unused for long periods of time? Fortunately, most were mothballed or allowed to survive so that in later times they could be reopened, restored, and beautified. Churches that have worthy sacred art and architecture should be treated that way. We should give them a chance to serve the Church and the world in a better future.

Duncan Stroik
Notre Dame, Fall 2017
Sacred Architecture

Issue 32 2017

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Journal of the Institute for Sacred Architecture

Sacred Architecture Journal, a publication of the Institute for Sacred Architecture, is dedicated to a renewal of beauty in contemporary church design. Through scholarly articles on architectural history, principles of design, and contemporary buildings, the Journal seeks to inspire and inform. Sacred Architecture is published twice annually for $9.95.

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Sacred Architecture News

Installation of the Trinity Dome mosaic is underway at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. The design depicts the Trinity, Mary as the Immaculate Conception, angels, eighteen saints and blesseds, and the words of the Nicene Creed, along with the four evangelists in the pendentives below the dome. The dedication of the mosaic will be on December 8, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception.

In November 2016 the National Trust for Historic Preservation and Partners for Sacred Places selected the Basilica of Saint Josephat in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, along with thirteen additional churches across the country, for a grant program in which the churches can each apply for up to $250,000 in capital funding through a $14 million fund. The basilica is still fundraising for its “Renewing a Destination of Inspiration” capital campaign through the Saint Josephat Basilica Foundation.

The Catholic Cathedral Corporation of the East Bay, the incorporated owner of the Cathedral of Christ the Light in Oakland, California, has filed a complaint in the Alameda County Superior Court against organizations involved in the design and construction of the cathedral. The Corporation cites a number of defects and damages, including misaligned walls, ceilings, and pipe hangers; cracking concrete walls and walking surfaces; water intrusion into below-grade parking, chancery offices, parish hall, and facilities; sagging floors; and cracking gypsum board. Originally filed in 2014, the complaint has developed to include testing and inspection, and is tentatively scheduled to go into mediation in late 2017 or early 2018. The $175 million Cathedral of Christ the Light was completed in 2008.

The Fota X International Liturgy Conference took place from July 8 to 10 in Cork, Ireland. Sponsored by Saint Colman’s Society for Catholic Liturgy, the conference featured presentations on the theme “Resourcing the Prayers of the Roman Liturgy: Patristic Sources.” Of special note, His Eminence Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke, Patron of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, opened the conference and presented a paper entitled “Early Sources of the Church’s Liturgical Discipline.”

The Supreme Court of the United States ruled 7-2 in favor of a church applying for a grant to improve its preschool and daycare playground in Trinity Lutheran Church of Columbia, Inc. v. Comer. In 2012, Trinity Lutheran Church in Columbia, Missouri, applied for a grant from a Missouri Department of Natural Resources program, which funds recycling scrap tires into rubberized playground surfaces, and placed fifth out of forty applicants. The director of the program then removed them from consideration, citing a provision of the Missouri state constitution that prohibits directly or indirectly funding any “church, sect, or denomination of religion.” Writing the majority opinion, Chief Justice Roberts stated, “The express discrimination against religious exercise here is not the denial of a grant, but rather the refusal to allow the Church - solely because it is a church - to compete with secular organizations for a grant.”

All Saints Chapel at Carroll College in Helena, Montana, was dedicated on November 1, 2017, the Solemnity of All Saints. The $6.5 million chapel was a renovation of the campus’s “Old North Hall” building from 1917, which had originally been a gymnasium, and most recently a theater.
The Diocese of Las Vegas is building a new parish church in Las Vegas, Nevada. The 28,000-square-foot Church of the Holy Spirit is currently in construction and is projected to be completed in May 2018. Since its foundation in 2007 the parish has had Mass in the cafeteria of a nearby Catholic high school. Designed by JVC Architects of Las Vegas, the new church seats 1,500 people and is being built by Bentar Development of Las Vegas for $12 million. The church will contain tapestries designed by artist John Nava, whose work is also installed at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in Los Angeles, as well as work by Artesanos Don Bosco, a non-profit organization in Peru that teaches manual arts to youths.

The Unity Temple by Frank Lloyd Wright in Chicago, Illinois, post-renovation

Unity Temple in Chicago, Illinois, has completed a two-year, $25 million renovation. The work includes refinishing interior wood trim and plaster, remediation of roof leaks, patching exterior concrete, and the installation of a geothermal-sourced HVAC system. Unity Temple was designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and completed in 1908, two years later than its originally scheduled completion of November 15, 1906.

All fountains in Vatican City were turned off in response to drought, even the famed fountains by Maderino and Bernini in Saint Peter’s Square.

The Vatican City State turned off the water to a hundred of its fountains over the summer. This action was executed in response to drought affecting Italy. Spring 2017 was the second hottest and driest recorded in the past six decades, with twenty-six rainless days between March and May, in comparison with eighty-eight days with rain during the same period in 2016.

The 2017 Palladio Award for New Design and Construction Under 30,000 Square Feet and the 2017 John Russell Pope Award for Ecclesiastical Design Under 3,000 Square Feet were given to O’Brien and Keane Architecture for Mary’s Chapel. The 700-square-foot private chapel located in the Mid-Atlantic was completed in November 2015 and inspired by the Portiuncula, where Saint Francis founded the Order of Friars Minor. The Palladio Awards are given by Traditional Building Magazine, and the John Russell Pope Awards are given by the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the Institute of Classical Architecture & Art.

Mary’s Chapel by O’Brien and Keane Architecture has won both the 2017 Award for New Design and Construction and the John Russell Pope Award for Ecclesiastical Design.
Worshippers at the destroyed Shaungmiao Christian Church in Shangqiu, China

A church under construction in China was destroyed by local police after worshippers were beaten and detained. On May 5, Shaungmiao Christian Church in Shangqiu was demolished after one hundred members of the community were assaulted by police and forty were detained. One of the attacked Christians compared the event to the Imperial Japanese invasion of China in the 1930s and ’40s. The Communist Party named Shaungmiao Christian Church an “illegal structure” and also claimed that the church had not paid a “road usage fee” that residents wanted collected. Persecution of Christians in China varies from province to province, but Henan has seen an increase in recent years. As of June 11, Shaungmiao Christian Church pastor Zhang Di and vice director Lu Yuexia were still in custody and transferred to the Supreme People’s Procuratorate, which will decide whether or not to formally arrest them.

Saint Bernadette Catholic Church in Scottsdale, Arizona, was dedicated on May 25, 2017, by the Most Reverend Thomas J. Olmsted, Bishop of Phoenix. This is the first official home of Saint Bernadette parish since its foundation in 1995. The nearly eight-hundred-seat church designed by HDA Architects of Gilbert, Arizona, was built over a period of twenty months, beginning in December 2014 and finishing in August 2016. Sadly, Father Peter Rossa, pastor of Saint Bernadette since 2007, collapsed during Mass on September 12, 2017, and died the following day. At the inaugural Mass in the new church in August 2016, Father Rossa had said, “God wants [you and I to become saints] more than anything else, and He is going to pour out the Holy Spirit upon you in your lives for just that purpose. If I were to die tomorrow, it would be my sincerest hope not that I be remembered for this church, but that I would be remembered for bringing you closer to Jesus Christ, because that is our mission, that is our hope, that is our longing at the core of our faith.”

Saint Pius X Catholic Church in Lafayette, Louisiana was dedicated on October 5, 2017. Influenced by “the simplicity and elegance of Spanish architecture,” the 34,000-square-foot church designed by Corne-Lemaire Group seats 900 people, an increase from the old church, which seated 520 people. Saint Pius X Church originally started with a small concrete block edifice as a mission of another Lafayette parish, followed by the aforementioned old church completed in 1975. Construction began in March 2016 by JB Mouton of Lafayette, Louisiana, and cost $19 million.

The Diocese of Raleigh has completed a new church in Apex, North Carolina. Saint Mary Magdalene Catholic Church was dedicated by then bishop-elect Bernard (“Ned”) Schlesinger on July 15, 2017. Since 1999, parishioners had assisted at Mass at a nearby middle school, and later at Saint Mary Magdalene School. The 36,000-square-foot church was designed by Cannon Architects of Raleigh and was built by Clancy & Theys Construction Company over approximately eighteen months beginning in January 2016.

The board of directors of the Benedict XVI Institute for Sacred Music and Divine Worship appointed a new executive director earlier this year. Maggie Gallagher, a senior fellow at the American Principles Project, will lead the Benedict XVI Institute in widening its vision from the formation of liturgical ministers and musicians to a broader effort to “reclaim the Catholic imagination” through art, architecture, music, and literature. The Most Reverend Salvatore J. Cordileone, Archbishop of San Francisco, commented that “This is a broadening of the institute’s mission to include the complete beauty of the Church’s rich patrimony.”

Saint Mary Magdalene Catholic Church in Apex, North Carolina, is the first official church building of the twenty-year-old parish.

Artist Timothy Matthew Collins exhibited his work at the Sheen Center for Thought & Culture in New York, in an exhibition entitled Corpus Mysticum: reEncountering the Catholic Church.
A cathedral in Kosovo was dedicated to Saint Teresa of Kolkata on September 5, 2017, one year after her canonization and twenty years after her death in 1997. The cathedral, located in Pristina, Kosovo, has been in use since 2010 and is the only Roman Catholic cathedral in the majority-Muslim nation. Pope Francis appointed Reverend Ernest Troshani Simoni, an Albanian priest and cardinal deacon, to be his envoy and lead the dedication. Simoni was joined by several priests and religious leaders from the region, as well as Kosovo’s Muslim president, Hashim Thaci. With a 230-foot bell tower, the cathedral is one of the tallest buildings in Pristina.

Two frescoes previously thought to have been executed by students of Raphael have been identified as original works of the Renaissance master himself. A team of conservators working at the Apostolic Palace in the Vatican have determined after extensive restoration work that two allegorical figures in a Room of Constantine fresco depicting the Battle of the Milvian Bridge are “of a much higher quality than what’s around.” The frescoes of the Hall of Constantine were commissioned by Pope Julius II (r. 1503-1513). The figures in question were completed by Raphael before his death at age thirty-seven in 1520, while the remainder of the room was completed by his workshop in 1585.

In June a reliquary containing a fragment of the brain of Saint John Bosco was stolen from the Basilica di San Giovanni Bosco in Castelnuovo. The saint, affectionately referred to as Don Bosco, was born in Castelnuovo in 1815, ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of Torino, and later founded the Society of Saint Francis de Sales. Commonly known as the Salesians of Saint John Bosco, the society practices spiritual and corporal works of mercy among poor and at-risk youths. The basilica was designed by Giovanni Rubatto and built from 1961 to 1966. It was elevated to a minor basilica by Pope Benedict XVI in 2010. Two weeks after the reliquary went missing, the Carabinieri Police of Asti’s Provincial Command recovered the relic. It was returned to its place in the basilica in a ceremony on August 16, the 202nd anniversary of Don Bosco’s birth.

The relic of Don Bosco that was stolen from the basilica in Castelnuovo, Italy, was returned unharmed.

At the Museum of Divine Statues in Lakewood, Ohio, artist Lou McClung acquires statuary and sacred art from closed churches, restores the artwork, and displays the pieces in the former Saint Hedwig Church. Begun in 2011, the collection includes over 200 pieces of art.

The Vatican Museums and the Jewish Museum of Rome presented an exhibition on the history of the menorah entitled “La Menorah: Culto, Storia e Mito.”
The Archdiocese of Detroit released a new coat of arms on June 3, the Vigil of Pentecost. The new design shows Saint Anne, patroness of the Archdiocese, an open door for Blessed Solanus Casey, and aquatic imagery for the Great Lakes. The new coat of arms replaces the archdiocese’s previous coat of arms, which was established eighty years ago. The previous arms included a cross indicating Our Lord Jesus Christ, three stars indicating the Most Holy Trinity, and symbols of regional fauna indicating Michigan. The entire composition of the previous arms was rendered in gold and black, which were used in the coat of arms of Saint Isaac Jogues, who in his missionary zeal is regarded as the spiritual father of Michigan.

The Archdiocese of Detroit’s previous coat of arms on the left and new on the right

In a circular letter to bishops dated June 15, 2017 (the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ), the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments reiterated the guidelines for the bread and wine used in Mass. The letter reminded diocesan bishops that “it falls to them above all to duly provide for all that is required for the celebration of the Lord’s Supper,” including “to watch over the quality of the bread and wine to be used at the Eucharist.” The letter also reiterated the norm, issued in a circular letter in 2003, for persons who cannot consume bread made in the usual manner: “Hosts that are completely gluten-free are invalid matter for the celebration of the Eucharist. Low-gluten hosts (partially gluten-free) are valid matter, provided they contain a sufficient amount of gluten to obtain the confection of bread.”

The religious habit of the Missionaries of Charity is now protected by Indian copyright law. On September 4, 2016 — the same day when their foundress, Saint Teresa of Kolkata, was canonized — the white cotton sari with three blue edge stripes was granted copyright registration by the Trade Marks Registry of India. An intellectual property attorney noted that although the Missionaries of Charity do not participate in publicity initiatives, awareness of the copyright is being promoted in order to stem “unscrupulous and unfair” use of their design in some parts of the world.

The long-unused Oratory of Santa Maria del Sabato was given to the Palermo Jewish community.

The Archdiocese of Palermo transferred ownership of the Oratory of Santa Maria del Sabato to a resurgent Jewish community in the city earlier this year on January 12. The oratory was built over where the Great Synagogue of Palermo stood before Ferdinand II of Aragon and the King of Sicily expelled Jews from Sicily in 1493. Most Reverend Corrado Lorefice, Archbishop of Palermo, decided on the transfer of the long-unused oratory and announced it after the Sicilian Institution of Jewish Studies and Jerusalem-based Shavei Israel approached the archdiocese. In recognition of his gesture the archbishop was awarded the Raoul Wallenberg Medal by the International Raoul Wallenburg Foundation on June 29.

The iconic habit of the Missionaries of Charity
The Museo dell’Opera del Duomo in Florence, Italy, was recently renovated. Located directly behind the apse of the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore on the Piazza del Duomo, it originally opened in 1891. The museum underwent a three-year, $56.7 million expansion project that has increased overall attendance fourfold and the typical length of visit to two hours. The Museo dell’Opera del Duomo houses sculpture and other sacred art and architectural elements originally produced for the adjacent cathedral, dating from the late medieval period through the Renaissance. Works include singing galleries fashioned by Donatello and Luca della Robbia, a penitent Saint Mary Magdalene by Donatello, and Michelangelo’s final Pieta that was originally located inside the Duomo.

A team of archaeologists have uncovered what may have been the ancient village of Bethsaida. Located on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee, the village was the home of the apostles Peter, Andrew, and Philip.
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What Good Can Come Out of Nazareth?

Joel Pidel

“Every chapel, every church in every parish of the diocese is a monument of the Christian faith and the Christian love of those who built it. Necessarily, however, the resources at the disposal of any one parish are limited: at best the monument it builds is only a partial token of the good will of its Catholic people. Therefore, they said, we will, in a united outflow of generosity, build . . . one great temple that, in expressive manner, will symbolize, as no isolated effort can do, our Christian faith and Christian love, and will preach to the world of men around us the grandeur of that faith, the sublime holiness of that love. This is the history of . . . the common monument of the whole people of God to Christ, to the Catholic faith.”

- From the text of Archbishop John Ireland’s first homily at the new Cathedral of Saint Paul in Saint Paul, Minnesota, on Palm Sunday, March 28, 1915.

A History of Stewardship

Can anything good come out of Nazareth?

While the historical and spiritual answer to this question is so well known as to make the asking tongue-in-cheek, the question has remained one of continual renewal and response for a certain property on the outskirts of the city of Raleigh, North Carolina. In the late 1890s, Father Tom Price purchased this large parcel of land to serve as the epicenter for his pastoral ministry, work that could only be described as missionary in character. Together with his sister, Sister Mary Agnes of the Sisters of Mercy, Father Price responded with great trust and foresight to the acute poverty he witnessed in the area by founding the Nazareth Orphanage on the site in 1899.

Over the years, the Nazareth property would undergo changes to its size, occupancy, and function, but never to its role as a vital hub within the diocese. What began as an orphanage for boys from deceased or destitute families soon became coeducational, responsible for feeding, clothing, sheltering, teaching and otherwise forming as many as 250 primary and secondary school children at a time. More than sixty years after its opening, the orphanage would finally close due to social, cultural, and demographic changes, and its buildings were demolished. Thereafter, the site served as the campus of a newly constructed Cardinal Edward Gibbons High School from the late 1960s through the late 1990s. It was subsequently used to house the Diocese of Raleigh Catholic Center, acting as the administrative home of the diocese for a time. After a portion of the property was sold to North Carolina State University for its Centennial Campus, just 39 of the original 400+ acres remained, upon which its story might be continued.

At the same time, elsewhere in Raleigh, a lack of space was proving to be a cause for concern for the diocese, but as with most such constraints it was also to prove the source of opportunity.
To Build a Cathedral

Sacred Heart Cathedral in downtown Raleigh, a parish church that was elevated to cathedral status when the Diocese of Raleigh was established in 1924 (the same year the church was completed), had a seating capacity of only three hundred and was offering up to twelve Sunday Masses, with each filled to capacity. It was an unsustainable situation for a diocese that had become home to over 215,000 Catholics. In 2009, the idea of a new cathedral for Raleigh began to emerge in discussions. The Nazareth property presented a possible solution in the form of a new cathedral campus. Schematic designs were solicited and budgets explored, while ambitions were weighed against resources. In the end, the same spirit of prudential stewardship evidenced by Father Price long ago could be said to animate the discernment of the then Bishop of Raleigh, the Most Reverend Michael Burbidge. Trusting in the ministerial hermeneutic of continuity with the early and in 2013, the architectural firm of O’Brien and Keane from Arlington, Virginia, was hired to complete the project. Over the next two years, incorporating the feedback from parishes around the diocese and from other consultants, designs for the cathedral took shape. On January 3, 2015, a groundbreaking ceremony was held on the site to commence what would amount to two and a half years of construction led by the contractor, Clancy and Theys. On July 21, 2017, the cornerstone of the cathedral, inscribed with a golden Christogram and blessed by Pope Francis, was finally installed, signaling the impending cessation of work and a dedication that was fast approaching.

Just five days later, on July 26, 2017, the din and clamor of construction finally acquiesced to the intonation of prayers and the sounds of heavenly harmonies in liturgical devotion. A veritable cloud of witnesses gathered on the grounds of the former home for orphans to celebrate the adoption of their new spiritual home: Holy Name of Jesus Cathedral. Fittingly, the cathedral shares its namesake with the chapel of the former Nazareth orphanage, a symbolic gesture intending both historical and spiritual continuity that was not lost on those gathered for the rite of dedication—particularly those who had themselves once been residents of the orphanage. A further point which did not go unnoticed was how the immense size of the new cathedral, in comparison to the former, tangibly reflected just how real and significant the growth experienced by the diocese had been over the past few decades, let alone the ninety-three years since the Vicariate of North Carolina had been elevated to the Diocese of Raleigh. Beginning the day with the smallest Catholic cathedral in the continental United States, it had ended the day with one of the largest, covering a gross floor area of 43,000 square feet with seating room for two thousand distributed between its nave (one thousand seats) and transepts (five hundred seats each). Beyond its sheer scale, its traditional character also spoke palpably to the values of the community, for there is something significant in the fact that Holy Name of Jesus Cathedral is the first Catholic cathedral in the United States since the 1950s to be built in what may be called a traditional style.

An Architectural Assessment

Exterior

Outlined against the Carolina-blue sky, Holy Name of Jesus Cathedral cuts both an immense and distinguished figure. Despite its linearity, its dome, tower, and façades provide a vertical anchorage that draws the eyes heavenward, and there is sufficient visual tactility and detail to allow one’s gaze to dwell and even revel over its rising volumes and articulated surfaces. The judicious appointment of cast stone and traditional details at prominent locations provides a sense of hierarchy, nobility, durability, refinement—and no small amount of delight. The wood-molded brickwork invokes a material hermeneutic of continuity with the brick buildings of the former orphan-
age, and its subtle variations, modulations, and textures enliven otherwise inert wall surfaces.

In short, the cathedral is recognizably traditional in appearance, drawing freely from the forms and details found in historical precedents, but without emulating any particular precedent. If pressed, it could be said to exhibit a mixture of Romanesque and Renaissance influences in the elevations affixed to its cruciform armature. Nowhere is this more evident than its front façade, whose southern visage commands the view from within the circular piazza that will serve as the urban center of the completed cathedral complex. Here, two classically articulated registers of cast-stone pilasters, pedestals, and entablatures frame arched windows and openings, and the stacked ensemble is set within a Romanesque frame and punctuated by a large round window in a field of wood-molded brick. It is handsome in itself, and yet it also feels somewhat overlaid against the backgrounded inert wall surfaces.

To the right of the main façade, an attractive side chapel projects from the body of the nave, appointed in wood-molded brick. It is handsome in itself, and yet it also feels somewhat applied to the body of the cathedral rather than integral, due to the way it is overlaid against the backgrounded form—something that is less noticeable in direct elevation rather than in the oblique.

The exterior of the nave, side aisles, transepts, and apse of the cathedral are treated predominantly in wood-molded brick, modulated in low relief to frame and accentuate the window bays, with cast-stone accents applied to the transept elevations. At the intersection or crossing of these forms rises a large dome mounted on a brick base, with its apex measuring 173 feet above the ground and weighing 162 tons. As the most significant architectural component in the cathedral composition, it features a drum of paired Corinthian columns flanking sixteen arched windows, crowned by an entablature and parapet and surmounted by an enormous ribbed copper dome and cross visible for miles. The shape of the copper dome itself successfully prevails against a contemporary problem with “squatness” when such architectural features are only studied in elevation and their perspective from the ground is not accounted for. It could be further augmented by introducing a tall stone plinth or pedestal between the brick platform and the colonnade, and by increasing the size of the cross atop the dome.

Interior

The cathedral’s interior stands equal with and complementary to its exterior. Its impressive volume is given scale and proportion by its classical elements in both plan and elevation, and it is rendered in a pleasing palette of pale hues both warm and cool in tone. In its plan the cathedral delineates a cruciform shape with a relatively traditional distribution and sequence of its main spaces, from the narthex and choir loft to the nave and side aisles, transepts, sanctuary, apse, and sacristies.

The tripartite narthex centers on a large multistory atrium where a perimeter colonnade of Tuscan columns is surmounted by a register of corresponding Ionic pilasters, attic clerestory, and finally a barrel-vaulted ceiling with rose window, all serving to carry the architectural narrative of the façade into the interior. To the side, All Saints Chapel (previously noted) is accessed through the main narthex, as are the public service spaces and choir loft stairs. The endonarthex, located below the organ and choir loft, transitions between the narthex and the nave and houses the confessional. Set on a radial stone pattern, the beginning of the nave is effectively signaled by the baptismal font, whose functional role is commensurate with its sacramental role, effecting and signifying entrance into the body of the church.
The narthex with Tuscan columns and Ionic pilasters above

All Saints Chapel is located off of the narthex.

View of the transept with a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary

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Taken all together, the outsized narthex introduces an unresolved tension by overextending the length of the nave, highlighted by the aforementioned placement of the campanile between the façade and the dome. A more compact narthex could have facilitated a better resolution to this tension in the overall composition.

The nave and its transepts reveal an impressive barrel-vaulted space nearly eighty feet high and outlined by two main horizontal registers that are divided into a sequence of twenty-two vertical bays, each featuring a bipartite subdivision of major and minor elements. The arcades of the lower register define the nave from the side aisles where the interstitial wall spaces between the perimeter windows are lined with devotional elements such as statuary and Stations of the Cross. The arcade is composed of paired Tuscan columns and pilasters that are interrupted and framed by larger Tuscan pilasters, whose projection carries stacked Ionic pilasters above and defines the bays of the nave and its vaulting. The tall bays of the upper register are each composed of a thin, arced triforium of Ionic columns (contrasting significantly with the depth of the arcade below), above which hovers a single, arched stained-glass window.

Where installed, these windows, designed by Paula Balano, pair with a matching set of stained-glass windows in the bay of the side aisle below, thus retaining a relationship with their original triptych arrangement in the Church of the Ascension, Philadelphia. The most saturated color values of the cathedral’s interior are reserved to these striking, figural stained-glass windows, which glow in a mixture of bold primary and secondary colors within a field of predominantly blues and reds. In themselves, the stained-glass windows are exquisite works of sacred art, though they stand in contrast to the subdued chromaticism of most of the interior. As a result, they highlight the perception that the interiors would be well served by a stenciling program in a second phase, if and when funds permit.

The proportional relationship between the shorter lower register and the taller upper register in the nave and transepts contributes a somewhat Romanesque quality despite its classical details. This relationship is accentuated by the lack of a continuous horizontal datum spanning between the Ionic pilasters in the clerestory area. To its credit this emphasizes the height and verticality of the nave to great effect. As a result, however, the Ionic pilasters also seem to float a little, particularly with their bases occluded by the lower entablature. A vertical emphasis would have been helpful at the crossing, where the entablature of the lower register bisects the crossing piers. Eliminating this would cause the piers to read at a giant scale in relation to the nave and transepts, from which the dome erupts above the sanctuary space. This would also echo the way the major pilasters of the lower register read monumentally against the columns and pilasters spanning between them. Nevertheless, the patterned sequence of horizontal and vertical elements draws the eye ineluctably forward and upward, visually culminating in the sanctuary, as it should.

The raised sanctuary and altar of sacrifice occupy the axis mundi of the cathedral, centering on the nave and crossing beneath the luminous dome. Its liturgical furnishings are predominantly rendered in Bianco Carrara marble with Giallo Siena accents. The altar is positioned to the side and slightly back of the altar to account for lines of sight from the transept, while the bishop’s cathedra is located against the crossing pier. Terminating the primary vista and framing the tabernacle stands the ciborium on its stepped dais. While slightly undersized in relation to its architectural surround, it punches above its weight because of its beauty and the accentuation of its verticality against the horizontal bands and smaller arches of the apsidal background. Its form also recapitulates the general shape of the main façade and thus stands in dialogue with it. While the façade signifies the transition between the profane and sacred realms, the ciborium visually mediates the space of the sanctuary and the apse with its iconographic elements drawing from the Book of Revelation—which is to say that it symbolizes the Eucharistic mediation between the kingdom of God on earth and the kingdom still to come. The apse, perhaps the weakest component in the sanctuary composition, features equally sized and stacked arches framed by paired Corinthian columns floating detachedly from the wall, half of whose bases are concealed.
by a platform fronted by bronze relief panels. Its weakness, however, is compensated for in virtue of being largely backgrounded by the visual gravitas of the ciborium, which arrests and focuses one’s attention on both the crucifix and the tabernacle, performing an act of silent architectural benediction upon the reposed Blessed Sacrament.

Conclusion

A traditional cathedral of this scale, quality, and character represents an ambitious undertaking and a commendable achievement that testifies to the successful collaboration of many parties—from the cathedral staff and diocesan parishioners to the architect, contractor, tradesmen, and craftsmen. Perhaps the greatest indication of its overall success comes in the near unanimous praise from the cathedral parishioners. One can easily see why. In the end, the cathedral stands as a visible sign and efficacious witness to the grandeur of the Christian faith: a monument to the people of God and to the Holy Name of Jesus that memorializes the past and the continued service rendered towards building the kingdom of God within the Diocese of Raleigh and the world. And in this, it succeeds in so many ways. Let the good that can come from Nazareth be proclaimed anew.

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What does it mean to enact religious pluralism, a key component of the American project? One way architects have answered this question is to create one space for multiple religions to worship and coexist, an effort that reached a high-water mark in the 1950s in the United States. Will Herberg in his 1955 book *Protestant, Catholic, Jew* explored the friendly interfaith dialogue among the so-called “big three” religions at midcentury, a major expansion of the religious tent beyond America’s Protestant tradition. Architects went to work in constructing spaces that would accommodate this broadened cooperative understanding of religion among the “big three,” and the fruits of this work are well known: Eero Saarinen’s MIT Chapel of 1955, Harrison and Abramovitz’s chapels at Brandeis University of 1954, and Walter Netsch’s Air Force Academy Cadet Chapel, begun in 1959 and completed in 1962. Bruce Goff’s unrealized 1950 crystal chapel for the University of Oklahoma in Norman imagined a nondenominational space whose crystalline structure unabashedly gestured toward the utopian.

In the immediate postwar period, we can understand these architectural solutions to interfaith space as part of a utopian vision of religious pluralism in America. Today, spaces that are interfaith, nondenominational, pluralistic, or multifaith—descriptors variously given to spaces of religious pluralism—remain a challenge for those seeking to understand and shape sacred spaces, particularly as our understanding of pluralism expands to include Islam, Buddhism, atheism, and more. There are big-picture questions for those wanting to craft understanding across religions: How might architecture provide a means to create tolerance and to honor religious differences? More particularly, how do these questions play out in the context of American culture, where religious freedom is foundational to our national identity?

New work toward these questions has been carried out within the context of multifaith spaces, including airport multifaith chapels and SANAA’s Grace Farms in New Canaan, Connecticut, of 2015. The Manchester Architecture Research Centre’s project on multifaith spaces and a Radcliffe Institute project and website considering multifaith spaces are just two examples of the energies being given to studying such spaces. This attention to multifaith spaces has been true for both architects and scholars for a number of reasons. In focusing on designing one building, or a set of connected spaces, de novo, architects can control the elements and authorship that go into these commissions. They appreciate elemental aspects like light and water, include common-denominator symbols or words like “In the Beginning” in a 2010 Bryant University Interfaith Center by Gwathmey, Siegel, and Associates, and use phenomenological approaches to invoke the numinous in ways that may appeal to people of many different faiths. For scholars, multifaith spaces lend themselves to analysis through conventional means: understanding the architect, the client, the setting, the social and temporal context of a single building. The attempt to craft interfaith accommodation and understanding within one building has occupied the lion’s share in religious pluralism efforts, both in architectural practice and scholarly research.

We seek to turn our attention away from the singular multifaith space toward a larger, messier understanding of what we call cultural landscapes of religious plural-
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ism. Multifaith spaces run the risk of flattening true theological difference. The conundrum of how to preserve difference while promoting a shared understanding persists. How might Americans, who may never specifically seek out a multifaith space, encounter and see religious pluralism while going about their daily lives? How might we retrain our gaze to see anew how interfaith understanding actually operates in the lived experience? We argue here that taking a wider view of cultural landscapes of religious pluralism—as opposed to discrete multifaith spaces—is a more fruitful, realistic way to think about how we can construct interfaith understanding.

Conceptual Problems and Promising Approaches

As cultural landscapes of religious pluralism entail such a broad view, the project we are advocating raises important interdisciplinary and interpretive challenges. A few conceptual remarks may be helpful here. First, we need not settle upon a common definition of religion. What we seek is a better hold upon the diffuse and diverse material-cultural expression of religion. Furthermore, an embrace of religious pluralism that honors real theological difference raises the problem of intractable conflict among worldviews, which calls for a constructive theology of interreligious dialogue. And all of this takes place in a decidedly public arena with political implications, especially so in the American context that enshrines a separation between church and state in the Constitution.

A focus upon material religion entails a focus upon sacrality. There is much to treasure in the long tradition of appropriating phenomenology for interpretations of architecture. As a philosophical method rooted in the conviction that our understanding of reality is marked by its being partially constituted by human intention, it is valuable in its insistence that objects and environments be considered in light of embodied, lived experience in all its intersubjectivity. It resists reduction to form or style or any single factor. But its appropriation for the study of religion, and by extension religious or “sacred” sites, has tended to presume some extrahuman domain of divine reality—“the sacred”—which too readily flattens real religious difference. Phenomenological glosses on religion have been critiqued in many ways, such as historian of religion Jonathan Z. Smith’s demonstration that human agency at least partially constructs sacrality through ritual and rite. But a presumption of “the sacred” is often too handy when confronted with religious difference, and especially interfaith spaces that elide such difference. “The sacred” offers a way out: the differences are human constructs; the reality to which they point is the real deal. Hence, interfaith spaces are about “transcendence” or “the inef-fable.” Lost is Buddhist sacred space, Catholic sacred space, Muslim sacred space, and so on. Furthermore, only particular subsets of Buddhists, Catholics, or Muslims are likely to be moved by such generic “sacred” space. So how “interfaith” is it really?

The recent work of University of California, Santa Barbara, scholar of religion Ann Taves is promising here, as she argues that sacrality occurs through human attribution of sacred status and need not presume a transcendental reality about which we can agree. Markers of religious identity across the spectrum from devotional...
Sacred landscapes are contested land-etc.) sacred on differing terms, and set apart. Regarding conflict, however, involve broader socio-cultural contexts objects. Answers to these questions places, buildings, sites, practices, and peoples attribute sacrality to particular focuses upon how and why particular and conflicting interpretations since it is better suited to addressing diverse territories, and events.

The neuroscience is beyond the object to billboard to building to district offer many opportunities to consider religious pluralism as enacted in public in and through material culture. As attributions of sacrality are a subspecies of marking things as special, this approach can include those who are “spiritual but not religious,” and even atheists. It offers ways to compare experiences deemed sacred among “people who orient around religion differently,” to use InterFaith Youth Core founder Eboo Patel’s phrase. Yet it also retains proper focus on distinct religious identities, and phenomenological analysis of their expression remains worthwhile. Indeed, Taves aims to reconcile the phenomenological tradition (which sees something beyond human construction at work in religious experience) with what neuroscientists can learn about how humans react to (and thereby value) different objects, settings, and events.

The neuroscience is beyond the scope of this commentary and is at any rate only burgeoning, but the promise of this view of sacrality is this: it is better suited to addressing diverse and conflicting interpretations since it focuses upon how and why particular peoples attribute sacrality to particular places, buildings, sites, practices, and objects. Answers to these questions involve broader socio-cultural contexts and are akin to other ways things are set apart. Regarding conflict, however, if those who orient around religion differently deem spaces (and practices, etc.) sacred on differing terms, and sacred landscapes are contested landscapes, how is productive discourse possible? While we may not need (or ever hope to have) a common definition of religion, we do need a theory of religions that can handle conflicting traditions while retaining difference. Conceptions of theological pluralism that minimize difference are markedly unproductive, as in philosopher of religion John Hick’s reduction of theological differences to vagaries of human culture.

One promising alternative is the work of Methodist University theologian J. R. Hustwit, who outlines an approach that stems from philosophical hermeneutics but eschews its tendency toward relativism in favor of an “ontological turn.” All is interpretation since ultimate truth is beyond human comprehension, but not all interpretations are equal. Rather, adehrents in this contested field aim for ever-closer approximation of the truth in and through critical engagement with those of divergent and conflicting views. Drawing upon major strands of American Pragmatism (as does Taves via William James), Hustwit advocates a “fabilist hermeneutics” wherein “certainty and objectivity are unattainable, [yet] movement toward these ideals is possible.” The resulting theology of interreligious dialogue aims at more than getting along: it seeks real theological “mutual enrichment” through a “differential pluralism.” As Hustwit puts it, “a plurality of truth claims is practically useful because more competition drives inquiry closer to the truth.”

Such an interreligious hermeneutics is a program of constructive postmodernism. It is incompatible with fundamentalism but otherwise fits well with a variety of theological traditions as it seeks to move beyond mere deconstruction or suspicion toward metanarratives. Honoring very real limits of human knowledge, it promises a means by which religious adherents can remain true to their own identities yet benefit from genuine interreligious dialogue.

All of this is solidly within the realm of theological discourse, yet the cultural landscapes to which we are drawing your attention are encountered in public, largely extratheological settings. In fact, we should follow here religion scholar Diana Eck’s lead in distinguishing between “theological discourse” and “civic discourse.” Far from a simple private/public distinction, Eck (founding director of Harvard’s Pluralism Project and a leader in studying the phenomenon) insists that both discourses can be quite public but are different in the terms and criteria they employ in debate. For our purposes, the theological discourse of interreligious hermeneutics is important for maintaining a hold on the differences at play, but it is not sufficient: How do we frame our interpretive view upon landscapes of religious pluralism such that substantive civil discourse can thrive in and through such difference and contestation?

The political-philosophical literature of deliberative democracy is helpful here, especially the notion of the public sphere. Metaphorically rooted in the ancient Greek agora as a place of public exchange of ideas, the public sphere is the discursive space in which the shared work of politics occurs. But since its first full statement by Jürgen Habermas, it is also an idea that has received substantive and ongoing critique. For instance, Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor argues against the ideal (and bourgeois) nature of a single public sphere, situating the phenomenon within what he calls “social imaginaries.” Therefore, there are multiple
public spheres, though they are related in a kind of nested hierarchy since some are subsets of other, larger ones. Feminist, subaltern, and other critiques of the idea take this further by insisting that there are not only multiple publics but also counterpublics. These latter are driven by resistance to what the dominant publics deem the common good toward which deliberation is oriented.

Perhaps the most promising recent version of such discursive space is that proposed by Yale political philosopher Seyla Benhabib, who outlines an agonistic model of democratic engagement that celebrates not only differing publics and counterpublics but the contest itself among them. In her words, this is an “interlocking net of . . . multiple forms of associations, networks, and organizations . . . a public sphere of mutually interlocking and overlapping networks and associations of deliberation, contestation, and argumentation.”14 It is within and across such networks that the full material manifestation of American religious pluralism is found, its diverse particularity honored, and peaceful, substantive, and productive dialogue nourished.

**Practical Problems and Promising Approaches**

So now that we have outlined how the embrace of religious difference rather than the flattening of that difference leads to richer understanding, and how material culture at different scales and displayed in public makes religious difference real and ripe for engagement, here is how a view of an interfaith landscape might work: Imagine driving down a major thoroughfare and seeing, in succession, a Protestant church, a mosque, and a Greek Orthodox church. As you move through the landscape, you observe multiple instances of situated religion embodied in the architecture that realizes the theological truth claims for each particular tradition. And yet in your own personal movement through real space and time, your gaze also encounters a landscape of religious pluralism knitted together as a whole. Sally Promey at Yale University published a photograph of this experience of successive different houses of worship in a compressed landscape in her co-edited volume *The Visual Culture of American Religions*, arguing that “the visible display of religion allows individuals and groups to approach and to imagine perspectives different from their own. Visible religion takes on an active cultural role: rehearsing diversity, practicing pluralism.”15

The seeing of religious difference in public forces people to make sense of “the other,” often involuntarily, and therefore practice or enact religious pluralism. The reception of the Temple of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (1974) outside of Washington, D.C., is an illustrative case in point of a cultural landscape of religious pluralism. This building emerges dramatically to drivers along D.C.’s Capital Beltway, its six gold spires and white marble gleaming in the daylight and theatrically lit at nighttime. One 1973 assessment of the Mormon Temple noted that the temple “only adds to the architectural, cultural and religious pluralism of our society and our environment.”16 The fact that the temple, which by its very visibil-
ity encourages people to notice it, is nevertheless close to all but “temple-worthy” Mormons has prompted an interfaith give-and-take. This lived landscape forces confrontation with religious difference, and the public here has responded. For over forty years, graffiti over the Beltway in sight of the temple reads “Surrender Dorothy,” a reference to The Wizard of Oz movie and a humorous reframing of the building as something fantastical. But there is also a weightier satirical critique here of the Mormon religion as something fraudulent, akin to the Wizard of Oz, who is revealed as merely “the man behind the curtain.” As this example suggests, in the involuntary confrontation with religion in the everyday landscape, people have found ways to react to religious difference, contest divergent viewpoints, and ultimately begin to integrate themselves within a shared pluralist landscape.

This concept of an interfaith landscape can also encourage us to think of other aspects of the messiness of religious pluralism that are not concerns of de novo multifaith spaces. For example, what of the “afterlife” (to use architectural historian Gretchen Buggeln’s term) of particular denominational buildings as they confront new issues? The Catholic Church’s repurposing of Philip Johnson and John Burgee’s famed Crystal Cathedral (1977–1981) for Reverend Robert Schuller in Garden Grove, California, raises questions about how one theological tradition transforms a space from another theological tradition for its own use. The gutting of the Philip Johnson interior—to the chagrin of preservationists—suggests that a one-size-fits-all approach to denominational space does not work, stressing the real differences in theological perspectives that multifaith spaces obscure.

Theologies conflict in other instances, too. In 2015, Duke University, originally a Methodist institution that now sees itself as nonsectarian, proposed that the Muslim call to prayer be broadcast on Fridays from the Duke University Chapel, constructed as a Methodist space. Outrage over the proposal came...
from outside the campus community, particularly through the ire of Franklin Graham, son of evangelist Billy Graham, who saw the use of a Christian space for Muslim practice as an affront to Christianity. Ultimately, the Duke administration pulled the plan to broadcast the Muslim call to prayer, but thinking about the intersection of a visibly Christian (neo-Gothic) space with an auditory Muslim prayer involves a confrontation of religious pluralism in new ways. Similarly, the College of William and Mary, founded as an Anglican college but made a public institution in 1906, became embroiled in a controversy in 2007 when it removed a cross from its chapel. While conservative critics denounced the removal as bending to political correctness, the college had to confront what to do with a historically Christian space at an institution required to respect religious difference. The solutions here are not easy or perfect—William & Mary decided to put the cross in an acrylic display case in the chapel as a way to honor a Christian past and a multifaith present—but our point is that engaging in theologically specific spaces, and the ways they confront religious change and understanding, is a lived landscape of religious pluralism that deserves attention.

**Toward Many Cultural Landscapes of Religious Pluralism**

An attributional model of sacrality, an interreligious hermeneutic stance, and public networks of difference: these are promising conceptual devices for framing the subject of religious pluralism. And a commitment to consider the many ways religion is manifest in concrete, material form presents many possibilities for further study. The reader can surely call to mind examples to add to those just explored. But to what end? What is needed is a fuller, more comprehensive picture of how Promey’s “rehearsing diversity, practicing pluralism” takes place. We need a way to map the changing nature of these phenomena.

Consider the 1748 Nolli map of Rome: the way it brought to the mind and to the eye a new window upon the city, integrating into the figure-ground clarity of open and closed space the interiors of buildings considered part of the public sphere of the day. We aim to join contemporary mapping technology, such as ArcGIS, to the ever-growing world of data that have geographical implications pertaining to how people orient around religion in material terms—to map the material-cultural embodiment of religious pluralism. The idea is to create new permutations upon the Nolli contribution to visual representation that speak to our current challenges (and opportunity) to engage and enact religious pluralism in the cultural landscapes we inhabit together.

We are just now laying the groundwork for this stage of the project. For now, a few potential topics must suffice as a conclusion. For a given region, city, etc., imagine: How would we visually and spatially compare religious-affiliation demographics with levels of expression in material culture (monumental, memorial, etc.) and thereby map the degrees of divergence between them? How would we map spatial and material patterns of religion-oriented hate speech, vandalism, harassment, and threats? How would we chart special cases of changes in material culture due to political and demographic shifts, such as the current removal of Civil War monuments in New Orleans? Perhaps they relate—in ways yet to be made clear, yet worth clarifying—to the cultural landscapes of religious pluralism rooted in the history of the place (from Muslim slaves to varieties of Christian apologists and opponents of slavery, and so on). What other case studies or ways to frame the subject may be promising? Whatever direction this mapping project takes, our aim remains to achieve a better purchase upon an admittedly complex and fluid phenomenon—cultural landscapes of religious pluralism—all in the service of understanding, engaging, and nourishing the difference that constitutes a vibrant and open democratic society.

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Our family has been dedicating itself to woodcarving since 1556. We enjoy a global reputation for commissioned sacred art and passionate attention to detail, from sketches to hand-carved sculptures and splendid colorings. Our standards require the finest craftsmanship necessary to create unique and timeless sacred art that fits perfectly in its destined liturgical space. Our customers appreciate our full service for commissions in every scale and budget. Please feel free to request our portfolio brochure.
John Anton Mallin was a well-known ecclesiastical artist and decorator in Chicago, whose works are found in more than one hundred churches and chapels, as well as several residences, banks, and theaters. His career spanned almost sixty years, from the time he came to Chicago in 1907 until he retired in 1963. Although he primarily decorated Roman Catholic churches, he also decorated Greek Orthodox and Protestant churches. His work was in high demand and received lavish praise. A 1932 letter from his alderman, James Quinn, to Colonel Isham Randolph, a manager at the Century of Progress, introduced Mallin as “one of the outstanding designers and interior decorators in the City of Chicago. His class of work has been the subject of very high recommendation and many of our leading churches have been the objects of his wonderful efforts.”

In January 1907, he immigrated to Chicago, where his future sister-in-law, Rosalie Vokůc, a native of Prague whom he met in Vienna, joined him in Chicago later that year along with their infant daughter, Angela, who died within a few months of arrival. They subsequently had five additional children: Mildred, John, Louise, Anthony, and Ralph. Mallin’s workers’ timesheets show that he employed a number of workers at any one time, depending on the job. Many of them were of Slavic origin. Other documents show that Mallin sometimes worked on more than one job at the same time. Some jobs took for the Riverview Amusement Park in Chicago. His other contracting jobs between 1907 and 1918 were in banks, theaters, courthouses, homes, and churches in several locations throughout Illinois, Iowa, and Indiana. Little documentation of these earlier works exists except in postcards he sent to his family and some photos. Most of the buildings are no longer standing.

In 1918, he formed his own decorating company, John A. Mallin, Interior Art Decorations, and one of his first contracts was the decoration of the Main Chapel in the Bohemian National Cemetery (BNC) Columbarium in Chicago. According to his contract, he was paid $545 for the job. In 1929 and 1931, Mallin added to the decorations in the chapel. Mallin later changed the name of his company to John A. Mallin and Sons, although his eldest son John was the only son who worked with him on a permanent basis. His daughter Mildred also worked as his secretary until the 1950s.

Mallin’s workers’ timesheets show that he employed a number of workers at any one time, depending on the job. Many of them were of Slavic origin. Other documents show that Mallin sometimes worked on more than one job at the same time. Some jobs took

Saint Joseph Church in Hammond, Indiana

Photo: Noah Vaughn
up to six months or more; others were shorter in duration.

Some of the churches Mallin decorated include Saint Mary of Czestochowa (Cicero, Illinois), Saint Edmund (Oak Park, Illinois), Saint Joseph (Hammond, Indiana), and, in Chicago, Saint Mary of Perpetual Help, Holy Rosary Slovak Church, Saint Mary of the Angels, Saint Hedwig, Saint Hyacinth, Saint Jerome, Saint John of God, Saint Basil, and Saint Procopius. Mallin worked closely with such well-known church architects as Joseph W. McCarthy (Saint Basil, Our Lady of Lourdes, Saint Jerome) and Henry Schlacks (Saint Ignatius, Saint John of God, Saint Mary of the Lake, Saint Ita). Although many of his churches have either been torn down or redecorated, there are still many churches with his original or slightly revised decorations.

Work documents exist for many of his church decorations, which include sketches and details of the decorations that he would provide to the priests based on what they had proposed. The priests would also suggest revisions to his proposals, which could be quite detailed. Many priests also had their own faces painted into the decorations.

Two churches, Saint Joseph in Hammond and Saint Edmund’s in Oak Park, are highlighted here. These church decorations are quite different and highlight the versatility of Mallin as a decorator. Documents for these churches also show how Mallin engaged with the priests whom he was working with.

Saint Joseph’s, 5310 Hohman Ave, Hammond, Indiana

Saint Joseph Church, located in Hammond, Indiana, was founded in 1879. In 1927, Father Francis J. Jansen was appointed pastor of Saint Joseph, which had eight hundred families at that time.

In 1934, Mallin received a copyright for a drawing of the arch above the altar of Saint Joseph Church. The copyright states, “The work of St. Joseph. Composite picture within semi circular arch. Central group at top: The Holy Family at work, four angels around them. Group of modern laborers at work with other men studying plans and model, below at left and right.” However, it wasn’t until several years later that Father Jansen hired Mallin to decorate the church. Many of the parishioners of the church worked in the numerous steel mills in the area, which were hit hard by the Depression. It is likely that the church did not have sufficient funds for the decorations in 1934.

In November of 1942, John Mallin received a letter from Father Jansen asking him to come and see him regarding the decoration of the church. Father Jansen also wrote a detailed description of what was to be included in the frescoes, which included a history of the parish and the industries in the area.

In Father Jensen’s description, he stated that he wanted to show workers of all varieties, including steel workers as well as the artist himself. He wrote, “It would be nice to have steel workers painted as working the glow of the white hot metal of the furnace. Down below, Father Berg showing ... the cartoons, or sketches of the stained glass windows of the church (he had them put in) to the present Bishop John F. Noll. Instead of the two clergymen with the Bishop, we might have a stained glass worker and an artist (yourself).”

An article in the Hammond Times newspaper in February of 1943, entitled “Laborers in the Vineyard,” described the frescoes above the altar. The article stated that Father Jansen wanted Mallin “to carry out the theme that there are no idlers in the kingdom.” It also stated that “another picture presents Bishop John F. Noll, Msgr. Edward Mongovan, chairman of the building committee of the diocese, and Father John Berg, the third pastor, examining a model of the stained glass windows, depicting the life of Christ, which were installed by Father Berg.” The final mural, which was not yet complete at the time the newspaper article was written, includes the artist, John Mallin, wearing his distinctive bow tie, showing the sketch of the arch design to Bishop Noll.

The 1934 Mallin drawing included angels around the Holy Family. However, describing the center-arch picture of the Holy Family, Father Jansen states, “The angels around the Holy Family are out. There should be an open house, the front left out, in which they are working. Father Baumgartner’s head to represent St. Joseph. He was the first pastor.” The Hammond Times stated, “At the highest point and in the most central position the Holy Family is shown engaged in useful occupations as told by sacred records which have it that Joseph was a carpenter, or as many like to term it, a home-builder. As nobody living knows what Joseph looked like, his face in the painting is that of Father Francis X. Baumgartner, the first pastor of the parish. St. Joseph is shown at work on his carpenter bench. The Holy Mother is spinning. With a hammer and chisel the Christ Child is shown putting a hole in a plank, assisting his foster father. (The picture is 16 x 11 feet and
the figure of St. Joseph 6 feet 5 inches tall). Thus the Holy Family is presented as a model for workers.9

Father Jansen described his ideas for the left arch: “On the left side (looking at the picture), Father Henry Plaster, the second pastor, and Father Jensen, the present pastor, discussing plans. Father Jansen to have the purple cincture and also purple Pom-pom on biretta. The architect to have on an ordinary present day business suit.” The Hammond Times further elaborated, “To the left and a little below the Holy Family are shown a brick mason, a stone mason and structural iron workers and to the right and under the level of the main picture are scenes from the steel mills. Under a drawing of a building in course of construction appear Father Henry M. Plaster, who built the church, and Father Jansen, who built the parish school, discussing plans with an architect. To the credit of Father Plaster, who was shepherd of the flock for 33 years, it must be said, the building, dedicated in 1913, was so well constructed there is not a crack in the structure to this day.”

The construction perhaps also protected the church against three attempts to burn down the church, in 1956, 1960, and 1971. The first attempt in 1956 may have prompted Father Jansen to ask Mallin to add additional decorations and restorations to the church in 1957. In a letter written to Father Jansen dated January 16, 1957, Mallin states, “There will be some new improvements made in the Sanctuary wall, color scheme and design. The wall will be laid in with genuine XX 23 carat gold leaf and worked out in a mosaic effect and symbols. All the mural paintings will appear like new after restoration and you will find all the decoration to come up to all your expectations.” In fact it was common for Mallin to add decorations or restorations to many of the churches he decorated.

Saint Edmund’s, 188 South Oak Park Ave, Oak Park, Illinois

Saint Edmund’s Church was the first Catholic parish established in the village of Oak Park, a town just west of the city of Chicago. Oak Park was predominantly Protestant at that time, and this community opposed the establishment of a Catholic church, believing, among other things, that “a horde of undesirables would rush in upon them with advent of the great Democratic church which draws no line between rich and poor.” The Reverend John J. Code was first appointed by Archbishop James Quigley to organize the church in 1907.8

The first Mass in 1907 was said in a barn, and with the help of a local banker, John Farson, funds were raised to build a church. In 1910, a new church designed by the architect Henry Schlacks was dedicated. The church was built in the English Gothic style of the fourteenth century using blue Bedford stone. Reverend Code chose an English saint for the parish, Edmund Rich of Abington, Archbishop of Canterbury.9

The Saint Edmund Preservation Society website notes that the church was decorated in 1920 by the artist John F. Sturdy, and the decorations were described in the 1920 parish bulletin. Describing the apse, it states, “Amid a wealth of wheat and grape foliations clad in priestly garments . . . is the figure of Christ upon a miniature altar. . . . On either side of him, surrounded by hovering and adoring angels are the kneeling figures . . . of the Jewish high priest, censer in hand, and Melchisedech with bread and wine.”10

Monsignor Code was still at Saint Edmund’s in 1943, celebrating his fiftieth anniversary as pastor. It was in this year that he hired John Mallin to decorate the church. The 1943 decorations are described in detail in the golden jubilee book for Monsignor Code. For example, in the sanctuary, “the decorations are in the Gothic style of ornament in which red, blue, and gold colors predominate. The cobalt blue and vermilion reds are made from expensive minerals and are very durable, while the gold color is real beaten gold leaf over 23 carats fine.”11

The Saint Edmund Preservation Society website indicates that the same three apse figures from the 1920 decorations appear in the 1943 decorations, suggesting that “Mallin was probably instructed by Msgr. Code to keep and restore these figures in the apse.” These include the figure of Christ in the center, with Old Testament priest figures Aaron and Melchisidech on either side.12 The Preservation Society notes:

To judge from the particular motifs of his floral and geometric stenciling, Mallin, like many other decorators and architects, may have owned a copy of the 1849 pattern book of A.W. Pugin, Floriated Ornament, now long out of print. Pugin’s immensely influential pattern book was based on his antiquarian research into medieval Gothic designs. His aesthetic premise that shapes found in nature (such as grape leaves) should be used, not naturalistically, but rather in two-dimensional, geometric patterns had a profound influence on the later Arts and Crafts movement and also on such Prairie...
School architects as George Maher and Frank Lloyd Wright.\(^{13}\)

The 1943 golden jubilee book described the four large murals in the ceiling of the crossing; “the Descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, the Ascension of Christ into Heaven, the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, and the Four Evangelists.” Other noted decorations were also mentioned: “Above the capitols [sic] in the transept where the ribs and arches meet are eight life size figures of angels. Four prophets are depicted on the north and south end of the transepts. In the nave ceiling are depictions of several ‘chief doctors of the church,’ and on the ceiling of the sanctuary are portraits of Peter, Prince of the Apostles, Paul, Apostle of the Gentiles, and Agnes and Aloysius, patrons of youth of both sexes.”\(^{14}\)

In 1951, additional decorations were added by Mallin, which took approximately six months to complete. The “Edmund Echoes” church bulletin from 1951 stated, “Walls and ceilings are covered with beaten pure gold leaf of 23 carats, in mosaic pattern adorned with delicate floral designs and symbols, furnishing a delightful background for more than two score oil paintings, illustrating teachings of the church from scenes in the life of its divine founder.”\(^{15}\) Mr. Don Giannetti, the parish assistant at Saint Edmund’s, remembers the gold leaf being applied to the ceilings in 1951. He described the process whereby the ceiling was painted the same color as the grout, after which stencils were glued to the ceiling. The gold leaf was applied over the stencils, and any excess gold leaf flaked off and fell to the floor.\(^{16}\)

The 1951 church bulletin describes the paintings found in the vaulted ceiling, the transepts, sanctuary ceilings, and the front vestibule. The cost of the decorations was $25,000, and parishioners were asked to help defray the costs by making votive offerings, with the suggested donations of $330 for large paintings and $100 for medallions representing about half the cost of the paintings. Descriptions of the nineteen large paintings and twelve medallions are found in the bulletin and in a handwritten document of Mallin, which describes the placement of each painting and medallion. Of note, the medallion of Saint John the Baptist on the ceiling has the face of Monsignor Code. Monsignor Code also had Mallin paint the face of Saint Thérèse the Little Flower with that of Sister Urban, who was a principal at Saint Edmund’s School at the time.\(^{17}\)

In the late 1990s, some restoration and renovations were done to the church. Major changes in the decorations included painting over the gold stenciling on the sanctuary and church walls.\(^{18}\) One can still see the original stencils in a photo of the sanctuary at the Saint Edmund Preservation Society website.\(^{19}\) The other paintings and decorations are still intact.

Mallin’s Studios, Advertising, and Travels

Mallin advertised his company through word of mouth and through his many brochures that included photos and descriptions of his work. He originally worked out of his Chicago residences but later rented a studio at the Fine Arts Building at 410 South Michigan Avenue in Chicago in the 1920s, and he stayed in the studio at least through the 1940s. In 1929, he had a two-story flat built at 2252 West Devon in Chicago that he also used as his studio. Mallin traveled back and forth to Europe several times for his work and to visit his relatives. He would visit churches and other buildings to get ideas for his work. He also imported oil paintings from European art houses to supplement his church decorations.

In retirement, Mallin painted portraits of his family at his Devon Avenue building. Mallin also purchased a farm property at the corner of Lake Cook and Waukegan Road in Deerfield. He and his family would spend some weekends there when he was not otherwise busy working. It probably reminded him of the farm and wine region where he grew up in Moravia. On January 9, 1973, Mr. Mallin died at the age of eighty-nine years old.

Katherine Mallin is the daughter of Ralph Mallin, the youngest of John Mallin’s children. She has created a website about Mallin’s work based on Mallin’s archival documents, photos, and paintings that were passed down to her from her aunt, Mildred Mallin Fritz. See JohnAMallin.com

Endnotes
3. John Mallin, Copyright of mural decorations received from Library of Congress Copyright office, June 30, 1954. The copyright is included in Catalog of Copyright Entries 29, no. 4 (1954).
4. Letter from Reverend Francis J. Jansen to John A. Mallin, November 12, 1942.
5. Description of decorations from Reverend Francis J. Jansen to John A. Mallin (no date).
9. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
“Urbs Ierusalem Beata”:
THE HYMN FOR EVENING PRAYER FOR THE DEDICATION OF A CHURCH

Rev. Kurt Belsole, O.S.B.

Urbs beata Jerusalem
dicta pacis visio
quae construitur in caelis
vivis ex lapidibus
et angelis coronata
ut sponsata comite.

Nova veniens e coelo
nuptiali thalamo.
Praeparata, ut sponsata,
copuletur Domino.
Plateae et muri ejus
ex auro purissimo.

Portae nitent margaritis,
adytis patentibus,
et virtute meritorum
illuc introducitur
omnis qui ob Christi nomen
hic in mundo premitur.

Tunsionibus, pressuris,
Expoliti lapides,
suis coaptantur locis,
per manus artificis,
Disponuntur permansuri,
sacris aedificiis.

Blessèd City, heavenly Salem,
Vision dear of peace and love,
Who, of living stones upbuilt,
Art the joy of heaven above,
And, with angel cohorts circled,
As a bride to earth dost move!

From celestial realms descending,
Bridal glory round her shed,
To his presence, deck with jewels,
By her Lord shall she be led:
All her streets and all her bulwarks,
Of pure gold are fashionèd.

Bright with pearls her portals glitter,
They are open evermore;
And, by virtue of his merits,
Thither faithful souls may soar.
Who for Christ’s dear name in this world
Pain and tribulation bore.

Many a blow and biting sculpture
Fashioned well those stones elect,
In their places now compacted
By the heavenly Architect,
Who therewith hath willed for ever
That his palace should be decked.
-trans. John Mason Neale

The hymn “Urbs Ierusalem beata” (Blessed city, Jerusalem), by an unknown author, is from the eighth or ninth century at the latest. The Liturgy of the Hours as revised by Pope Paul VI, consistent with the tradition, has assigned it to Evening Prayer for the anniversary of the dedication of a church. In the manuscripts, it is found in the Vatican, Benedictine, Carmelite, Cistercian, Premonstratensian, and Dominican breviaries.

The “Urbs Ierusalem beata” is one of the hymns that were greatly revised in 1632 by a commission under the direction of Pope Urban VIII, a humanist pope, in order for the hymns to reflect the language, forms, and meters of classical Latin rather than Christian Latin. The original versions of this and the other hymns of the Office were restored to the Liturgy of the Hours under the direction of Pope Paul VI after Vatican II.

This hymn is remarkable for its theology of the Church as the Bride of Christ and what it means for the Church to be built of living stones, the Christian faithful. The mystery of being Church is repeated throughout the hymn in a manner that is very much tied to both the sacred scriptures and to the movements of the Christian soul.

The hymn begins with the image of the Church as the new and heavenly Jerusalem, the very vision of peace itself—built of living stones, surrounded by angels, and beautiful as a bride adorned to meet her husband. The whole of chapter 21 of the Book of Revelation is summarized:

I also saw a new Jerusalem, the holy city, coming down out of heaven from God, beautiful as a bride prepared to meet her husband. I heard a loud voice cry out: “This is God’s dwelling among men.” . . . “Come, I will show you the woman who is the bride of the Lamb.” He carried me away in spirit to the top of a very high mountain and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God. It gleamed with the splendor of God. The city had the radiance of a precious jewel that sparkled like a diamond. Its wall, massive and high, had twelve gates at which twelve angels were stationed. . . . I saw no temple in the city. The Lord, God the Almighty, is its temple—he and the Lamb. (Rv 21:2–3a, 9b–12, 22)

The second verse proceeds deeper into the theme of the Church as the mystical bridal chamber of the Son of God. The Church is seen as an intact virgin joined to the Lord and as a New City coming down from heaven whose squares and walls are of the purest gold, again a reference to Revelation 21: “The streets of the city were of pure gold, transparent as glass” (Rv 21:21). One can hardly make all of these references to the Book of Revelation without feeling the great truth of the church building as a place where heaven itself is made present and where the liturgy done there joins us to the very worship of God that takes place in the heavenly Kingdom. Moreover, the entrance antiphon for the Common of the Dedication of a Church, Genesis 28:17, itself comes to mind: “Terribilis est locus iste: hic domus Dei est, et porta caeli: et vocabitur aula Dei” (This is an awesome place. It is the house of God and the gate of heaven and will be called dwelling place of God). Then there is also the psalm verse that follows this antiphon (Ps 84:2): “Quam dilecta tabernacula tua, Domine virtutum! Concupiscit et deficit anima mea in atria Domini” (How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord God of Hosts! My soul longs for the courts of the Lord).

The third verse carries the theme of the New Jerusalem further and speaks of how the pearly gates stand open to those who bore tribulation in this life for the name of Christ—“The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each made of a single pearl” (Rv 21:21). This tribulation, though, leads us on to the strength of the Christian who is judged worthy to serve as a living stone for God’s temple in verse four of the hymn.

There, the living stones have been fitted to their places and polished by nothing less than striking and all that...
accompanies the afflictions of the saints. But this is done by the divine and wise Architect who created them in the first place. As any sculptor knows, the image emerges from the stone only as what does not belong to that image is chipped away. It is quite the same with the image of God emerging in us, and in this manner we are fitted as living stones for the temple in which God is going to dwell. Christ, however, is really the one who is the stone living and precious in God’s eyes—but to whom we are joined—as 1 Peter 2:5–6 teaches: “Come to him, a living stone, rejected by men but approved, nonetheless, and precious in God’s eyes. You too are living stones, built as an edifice of spirit, into a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifice acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”

Fulfilled is what we read in the Letter to the Ephesians:

This means that you are strangers and aliens no longer. No, you are fellow citizens of the saints and members of the household of God. You form a building which rises on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the capstone. Through him the whole structure is fitted together and takes shape as a holy temple in the Lord; in him you are being built into this temple, to become a dwelling place for God in the Spirit. (Eph 2:19–22)

To truly appreciate all that this hymn contains, one final scriptural reference presents itself:

You have not drawn near to an untouchable mountain and a blazing fire, nor gloomy darkness and storm and trumpet blast, nor a voice speaking words such that those who heard begged that they be not addressed to them . . . No, you have drawn near to Mount Zion and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to myriads of angels in festal gathering, to the assembly of the firstborn enrolled in heaven, to God the judge of all, to the spirit of just men made perfect, to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood which speaks more eloquently than that of Abel. (Heb 12:18–19, 22–24)

Finally, the hymn concludes in the customary way with the doxology to the Most Blessed Trinity.

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Bibliography
As you know, what was called “the liturgical movement” in the early twentieth century was the intention of Pope Saint Pius X, expressed in another motu proprio entitled *Tra le sollicitudini* (1903), to restore the liturgy so as to make its treasures more accessible, so that it might also become again the source of authentically Christian life. Hence the definition of the liturgy as “summit and source of the life and mission of the Church” found in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, of Vatican Council II (see n. 10). And it can never be repeated often enough that the liturgy, as summit and source of the Church, has its foundation in Christ Himself. In fact, Our Lord Jesus Christ is the sole and definitive High Priest of the New and Eternal Covenant, since He offered Himself in sacrifice, and “by a single offering He has perfected for all time those whom He sanctifies” (Heb 10:14). Thus, as the *Catechism* of the Catholic Church declares, “It is this mystery of Christ that the Church proclaims and celebrates in her liturgy so that the faithful may live from it and bear witness to it in the world” (n. 1068). This “liturgical movement,” one of the finest fruits of which was the constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, is the context in which we ought to consider the motu proprio *Summorum Pontificum*, dated July 7, 2007; we are happy to celebrate this year with great joy and thanksgiving the tenth anniversary of its promulgation. We can say therefore that the “liturgical movement” initiated by Pope Saint Pius X was never interrupted and that it still continues in our days following the new impetus given to it by Pope Benedict XVI. On this subject we might mention the particular care and personal attention that he showed in celebrating the sacred liturgy as pope, and then the frequent references in his speeches to its centrality in the life of the Church, and finally his two magisterial documents *Sacramentum Caritatis* and *Summorum Pontificum*. In other words, what is called liturgical aggiornamento was in a way completed by the motu proprio *Summorum Pontificum* by Pope Benedict XVI. What was it about? The pope emeritus made the distinction between two forms of the same Roman rite: a so-called “ordinary” form, referring to the liturgical texts of the Roman Missal as revised following the guidelines of Vatican Council II, and a form designated “extraordinary” that corresponds to the liturgy that was in use before the liturgical aggiornamento. Thus, presently, in the Roman or Latin Rite, two missals are in force: that of Blessed Pope Paul VI, the third edition of which is dated 2002, and that of Saint Pius V, the last edition of which, promulgated by Saint John XXIII, goes back to 1962. In his letter to the bishops that accompanied the motu proprio, Pope Benedict XVI clearly explained that the purpose for his decision to have the two missals coexist was not only to satisfy the wishes of certain groups of the faithful who are attached to the liturgical forms prior to the Second Vatican Council, but also to allow for the mutual enrichment of the two forms of the same Roman rite—in other words, not only their peaceful coexistence but also the possibility of perfecting them by emphasizing the best features that characterize them. He wrote in particular that “the two Forms of the usage of the Roman rite can be mutually enriching: new Saints...
and some of the new Prefaces can and should be inserted in the old Missal... The celebration of the Mass according to the Missal of Paul VI will be able to demonstrate, more powerfully than has been the case hitherto, the sacrality which attracts many people to the former usage.” These then are the terms in which the pope emeritus expressed his desire to relaunch the “liturgical movement.” In parishes where it has been possible to implement the motu proprio, pastors testify to the greater fervor both in the faithful and in the priests, as Father Rodheudt himself can bear witness. They have also noted a repercussion and a positive spiritual development in the way of experiencing Eucharistic liturgies, particularly the rediscovery of postures expressing adoration of the Blessed Sacrament: kneeling, genuflection, etc., and also greater recollection characterized by the sacred silence that should mark the important moments of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, so as to allow the priests and the faithful to interiorize the mystery of faith that is being celebrated. It is true also that liturgical and spiritual formation must be encouraged and promoted. Similarly, it will be necessary to promote a thoroughly revised pedagogy in order to get beyond an excessively formal “rubricism” in explaining the rites of the Tridentine Missal to those who are not yet familiar with it, or who are only partly acquainted with it—and sometimes not impartially. To do that, it is urgently necessary to finalize a bilingual Latin-vernacular missal to allow for full, conscious, intimate and more fruitful participation of the lay faithful in Eucharistic celebrations. It is also very important to emphasize the continuity between the two missals by appropriate liturgical catecheses. Many priests testify that this is a stimulating task, because they are conscious of working for the liturgical renewal, of contributing their own efforts to the “liturgical movement” that we were just talking about—in other words, in reality, to this mystical and spiritual renewal that is therefore missionary in character, which was intended by the Second Vatican Council, to which Pope Francis is vigorously calling us. The liturgy must therefore always be reformed so as to be more faithful to its mystical essence. But most of the time, this “reform” that replaced the genuine “restoration” intended by the Second Vatican Council was carried out in a superficial spirit and on the basis of only one criterion: to suppress at all costs a heritage that must be perceived as totally negative and outdated so as to excavate a gulf between the time before and the time after the Council. Now it is enough to pick up the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy again and to read it honestly, without betraying its meaning, to see that the true purpose of the Second Vatican Council was not to start a reform that could become the occasion for a break with Tradition, but quite the contrary, to rediscover and to confirm Tradition in its deepest meaning. In fact, what is called “the reform of the reform,” which perhaps ought to be called more precisely “the mutual enrichment of the rites,” to use an expression from the magisterium of Benedict XVI, is a primarily spiritual necessity. And it quite obviously concerns the two forms of the Roman Rite. The particular care that should be brought to the liturgy, the urgency of holding it in high esteem and working for its beauty, its sacral character, and keeping the right balance between fidelity to Tradition and legitimate development, and therefore rejecting absolutely and radically any hermeneutic of discontinuity or rupture: these essential elements are the heart of all authentic Christian liturgy. Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger tirelessly repeated that the crisis that has shaken the Church for fifty years, chiefly since Vatican Council II, is connected with the crisis of the liturgy, and therefore to the lack of respect, the desacralization and the leveling of the essential elements of divine worship. “I am convinced,” he writes, “that the crisis in the Church that we are experiencing today is to a large extent due to the disintegration of the liturgy.”

The Most Reverend Steven J. Lopes, Bishop of the Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of Saint Peter, celebrates a Solemn Pontifical Mass in Marienkirche, Herzogenrath, during the colloquium “The Source of the Future.”
Certainly, the Second Vatican Council wished to promote greater active participation by the people of God and to bring about progress day by day in the Christian life of the faithful (see Sacrosanctum Concilium, n. 1). Certainly, some fine initiatives were taken along these lines. However we cannot close our eyes to the disaster, the devastation, and the schism that the modern promoters of a living liturgy caused by remodeling the Church’s liturgy according to their ideas. They forgot that the liturgical act is not just a PRAYER, but also and above all a MYSTERY in which something is accomplished for us that we cannot fully understand but that we must accept and receive in faith, love, obedience, and adoring silence. And this is the real meaning of active participation of the faithful. It is not about exclusively external activity, the distribution of roles or of functions in the liturgy, but rather about an intensely active receptivity: this reception is, in Christ and with Christ, the humble offering of oneself in silent prayer and a thoroughly contemplative attitude. The serious crisis of faith, not only at the level of the Christian faithful but also and especially among many priests and bishops, has made us incapable of understanding the Eucharistic liturgy as a sacrifice, as identical to the act performed once and for all by Jesus Christ, making present the sacrifice of the Cross in a nonbloody manner. Jesus Christ, making present the sacrifice of the Cross in a nonbloody manner, was not a diversion. It is the glory and adoration of God, the salvation and sanctification of human beings, since in the liturgy “God is perfectly glorified and men are sanctified” (Sacrosanctum Concilium, n. 7). Most of the faithful—including priests and bishops—do not know this teaching of the Council. Just as they do not know that the true worshippers of God are not those who reform the liturgy according to their own ideas and creativity to make it something pleasing to the world, but rather those who reform the world in depth with the Gospel so as to allow it access to a liturgy that is the reflection of the liturgy that is celebrated from all eternity in the heavenly Jerusalem. As Benedict XVI often emphasized, at the root of the liturgy is adoration, and therefore God. Hence it is necessary to recognize that the serious, profound crisis that has affected the liturgy and the Church itself since the Council is due to the fact that its CENTER is no longer God and the adoration of Him, but rather men and their alleged ability to “do” something to keep themselves busy during the Eucharistic celebrations. Even today, a significant number of Church leaders underestimate the serious crisis that the Church is going through: relativism in doctrinal, moral, and disciplinary teaching, grave abuses, the desecration and trivialization of the sacred liturgy, a merely social and horizontal view of the Church’s mission. Many believe and declare loud and long that Vatican Council II brought about a true springtime in the Church. Nevertheless, a growing number of Church leaders see this “springtime” as a rejection, a renunciation of her centuries-old heritage, or even as a radical questioning of her past and Tradition. Political Europe is rebuked for abandoning or denying its Christian roots. But the first to have abandoned her Christian roots and past is indisputably the postconciliar Catholic Church. Some episcopal conferences even refuse to translate faithfully the original Latin text of the Roman Missal. Some claim that each local Church can translate the Roman Missal, not according to the sacred heritage of the Church, following the methods and principles indicated by Liturgiam authenticam, but according to the fantasies, ideologies and cultural expressions which, they say, can be understood and accepted by the people. But the people desire to be initiated into the sacred language of God. The Gospel and revelation themselves are “reinterpreted,” “contextualized,” and adapted to decadent Western culture. In 1968, the Bishop of Metz, in France, wrote in his diocesan newsletter a horrible, outrageous thing that seemed like the desire for and expression of a complete break with the Church’s past. According to that bishop, today we must rethink the very concept of the salvation brought by Jesus Christ, because the apostolic Church and the Christian communities in the early centuries of Christianity had understood nothing of the Gospel. Only in our era has the plan of salvation brought by Jesus been understood. Here is the audacious,
The transformation of the world (change of civilization) teaches and demands a change in the very concept of the salvation brought by Jesus Christ; this transformation reveals to us that the Church’s thinking about God’s plan was, before the present change, insufficiently evangelical. … No era has been as capable as ours of understanding the evangelical ideal of fraternal life.3

With a vision like that, it is not surprising that devastation, destruction, and wars have followed and persisted these days at the liturgical, doctrinal, and moral level, because they claim that no era has been capable of understanding the “evangelical ideal” as well as ours. Many refuse to face up to the Church’s work of self-destruction through the deliberate demolition of her doctrinal, liturgical, moral, and pastoral foundations. While more and more voices of high-ranking prelates stubbornly affirm obvious doctrinal, moral, and liturgical errors that have been condemned a hundred times and work to demolish the little faith remaining in the people of God, while the barque of the Church furrows the stormy sea of this decadent world and the waves crash down on the ship so that it is already filling with water, a growing number of Church leaders and faithful shout: “Tout va très bien, Madame la Marquise!” (“Everything is just fine, Milady,” the refrain of a popular comic song from the 1930s, in which the employees of a noblewoman report to her a series of catastrophes). But the reality is quite different: in fact, as Cardinal Ratzinger said:

What the Popes and the Council Fathers were expecting was a new Catholic unity, and instead one has encountered a disension which—to use the words of Paul VI—seems to have passed over from self-criticism to self-destruction. There had been the expectation of a new enthusiasm, and instead too often it has ended in boredom and discouragement. There had been the expectation of a step forward, and instead one found oneself facing a progressive process of decadence that to a large measure has been unfolding under the sign of a summons to a presumed “spirit of the Council” and by so doing has actually and increasingly discredited it.4

“No one can seriously deny the critical manifestations” and liturgy wars that Vatican Council II led to.5 Today they have gone on to fragment and demolish the sacred Missale Romanum by abandoning it to experiments in cultural diversity and compilers of liturgical texts. Here I am happy to congratulate the tremendous, marvelous work accomplished, through Vox Clara, by the English-language episcopal conferences, by the Spanish- and Korean-language episcopal conferences, etc., which have faithfully translated the Missale Romanum in perfect conformity with the guidelines and principles of Liturgiam authenticam; and the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments has granted them the recognitio [approval].

Following the publication of my book God or Nothing, people have asked me about the “liturgy wars” which for decades have too often divided Catholics. I stated that that is an aberration, because the liturgy is the field par excellence in which Catholics ought to experience unity in the truth, in faith, and in love, and consequently that it is inconceivable to celebrate the liturgy while having in one’s heart feelings of fratricidal struggle and rancor. Besides, did Jesus not speak very demanding words about the need to go and be reconciled with one’s brother before presenting his own sacrifice at the altar? (See Mt 5:23-24.)

The liturgy in its turn moves the faithful, filled with “the paschal sacraments,” to be “one in holiness”; it prays that “they may hold fast in their lives to what they have grasped by their faith”; the renewal in the Eucharist of the covenant between the Lord and man draws the faithful into the compelling love of Christ and sets them on fire. From the liturgy, therefore, and especially from the Eucharist, as from a font, grace is poured forth upon us; and the sanctification of men in Christ and the glorification of God, to which all other activities of the Church are directed as toward their end, is achieved in the most efficacious possible way. (Sacrosanctum Concilium, n. 10)

In this “face-to-face encounter” with God, which the liturgy is, our heart must be pure of all enmity, which presupposes that everyone must be respected with his own sensibility. This means concretely that, although it must be reaffirmed that Vatican Council II never asked to make tabula rasa of the past and therefore to abandon the Missal said to be of St Pius V—which produced so many saints, not to mention three such admirable priests as Saint John Vianney, the Curé of Ars, Saint Pius of Pietrelcina (Padre Pio), and Saint Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer—at the same time it is essential to promote the liturgical renewal intended by that same Council, and therefore the liturgical books were updated following the constitution Sacrosanctum Concilium, in particular the Missal said to be of Blessed Pope Paul VI. And I added that what is important above all, whether one is celebrating in the Ordinary or the Extraordinary Form, is to bring to the faithful something that they have a right to: the beauty of the liturgy, its sacrality, silence, recollection, the mystical dimension, and adoration. The liturgy should put us face-to-face with God in a personal relationship of intense intimacy. It should plunge us into the inner life of the Most Holy Trinity, Speaking of the usus antiquior (the older form of the Mass) in his letter that accompanies Summorum Pontificum, Pope Benedict XVI said that immediately after the Second Vatican Council it was presumed that requests for the use of the 1962 Missal would be limited to the older generation which had grown up with it, but in the meantime it has clearly been demonstrated that young persons too have discovered this liturgical form, felt its attraction and found in it a form of encounter with the Mystery of the Most Holy Eucharist, particularly suited to them.

This is an unavoidable reality, a true sign of our times. When young people are absent from the holy liturgy, we must ask ourselves: Why? We must make sure that the celebrations according to the usus recentior (the newer form of the Mass) facilitate this encounter too, that they lead people on the path of the via pulchritudinis (the way of beauty) that leads through her sacred rites to the living Christ and...
to the work within His Church today. Indeed, the Eucharist is not a sort of “dinner among friends,” a convivial meal of the community, but rather a sacred Mystery, the great Mystery of our faith, the celebration of the Redemption accomplished by Our Lord Jesus Christ, the commemoration of the death of Jesus on the Cross to free us from our sins. It is therefore appropriate to celebrate Holy Mass with the beauty and fervor of the saintly Curé of Ars, of Padre Pio or Saint Josemaría, and this is the sine qua non condition for arriving at a liturgical reconciliation “by the high road,” if I may put it that way.7 I vehemently refuse therefore to waste our time pitting one liturgy against another, or the Missal of Saint Pius V against that of Blessed Paul VI. Rather, it is a question of entering into the great silence of the liturgy, by allowing ourselves to be enriched by all the liturgical forms, whether they are Latin or Eastern. Indeed, without this mystical dimension of silence and without a contemplative spirit, the liturgy will remain an occasion for hateful divisions, ideological confrontations, and the public humiliation of the weak by those who claim to hold some authority, instead of being the place of our unity and communion in the Lord. Thus, instead of being an occasion for confronting and hating each other, the liturgy should bring us all together to unity in the faith and to the true knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ—and, by living in the truth of love, we will grow into Christ so as to be raised up in all things to Him who is the Head (see Eph 4:13–15).8

As you know, the great German liturgist Monsignor Klaus Gamber (1919–1989) used the word Heimat to designate this common home or “little homeland” of Catholics gathered around the altar of the Holy Sacrifice. The sense of the sacred that imbues and irrigates the rites of the Church is the inseparable correlative of the liturgy. Now in recent decades, many, many of the faithful have been ill-treated or profoundly troubled by celebrations marked with a superficial, devastating subjectivism, to the point where they did not recognize their Heimat, their common home, whereas the youngest among them had never known it! How many have tiptoed away, particularly the least significant and the poorest among them! They have become in a way “liturgically stateless persons.” The “liturgical movement,” with which the two forms (of the Latin Rite) are associated, aims therefore to restore to them their Heimat and thus to bring them back into their common home, for we know very well that in his works on sacramental theology, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, well before the publication of Summorum Pontificum, had pointed out that the crisis in the Church and therefore the crisis of the weakening of the faith comes in large measure from the way in which we treat the liturgy, according to the old adage: lex orandi, lex credendi (the law of faith is the law of prayer). In the preface that he wrote for the French edition of the magisterial volume by Monsignor Gamber, La réforme de la liturgie romaine [English edition: The Reform of the Roman Liturgy], the future Pope Benedict XVI said this, and I quote:

A young priest told me recently, “What we need today is a new liturgical movement.” This was an expression of a concern which nowadays only willfully superficial minds could ignore. What mattered to this priest was not winning new, daring liberties: what liberty has not been arrogantly taken already? He thought that we needed a new start coming from within the liturgy, just as the liturgical movement had intended when it was at the height of its true nature, when it was not a matter of fabricating texts or inventing actions and forms, but of rediscovering the living
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Best references in USA:
- Cathedral of Saint Patrick - NYC, NY
- Cathedral of St. Petersburg - St. Petersburg, FL
- Church of the Epiphany - Miami, FL
- Church of Saint Williams - Round Rock, TX
- Church of Saint Catherine of Siena - Wake Forest, NC
center, of penetrating into the tissue, strictly speaking, of the liturgy, so that the celebration thereof might proceed from its very substance. The liturgical reform, in its concrete implementation, has strayed ever farther from this origin. The result was not a revival but devastation. On the one hand, we have a liturgy that has degenerated into a show, in which one attempts to make religion interesting with the help of fashionable innovations and catchy moral platitudes, with short-lived successes within the guild of liturgical craftsmen, and an even more pronounced attitude of retreat from them on the part of those who seek in the liturgy not a spiritual “emcee,” but rather an encounter with the living God before Whom all “making” becomes meaningless, since that encounter alone is capable of giving us access to the true riches of being. On the other hand, there is the conservation of the ritual forms whose grandeur is always moving, but which, taken to the extreme, manifests a stubborn isolation and finally leaves nothing but sadness. Surely, between these two poles there are still all the priests and their parishioners who celebrate the new liturgy with respect and solemnity; but they are called into question by the contradiction between the two extremes, and the lack of internal unity in the Church finally makes their fidelity appear, wrongly in many cases, to be merely a personal brand of neo-conservatism. Because that is the situation, a new spiritual impulse is necessary if the liturgy is to be once more for us a communitarian activity of the Church and to be delivered from arbitrariness. One cannot “fabricate” a liturgical movement of that sort—any more than one can “fabricate” a living thing—but one can contribute to its development by striving to assimilate anew the spirit of the liturgy, and by defending publicly what one has received in this way.

I think that this long citation, which is so accurate and clear, should be of interest to you, at the beginning of this colloquium, and also should help to start off your reflections on “the source of the future” ("die Quelle der Zukunft") of the motu proprio Summorum Pontificum. Indeed, allow me to commu-

nicate to you a conviction that I have held deeply for a long time: the Roman liturgy, reconciled in its two forms, which is itself the “fruit of a development,” as the great German liturgist Joseph Jungmann (1889–1975) put it, can initiate the decisive process of the “liturgical movement” that so many priests and faithful have awaited for so long. Where to begin? I take the liberty of proposing to you the three following paths, which I sum up in the three letters SAF: silence-adoration-formation. First of all, sacred silence, without which we cannot encounter God. In my book The Power of Silence [La Force du silence], I write: “In silence, a human being gains his nobility and his grandeur only if he is on his knees in order to hear and adore God” (n. 66). Next, adoration; in this regard I cite my spiritual experience in the same book, The Power of Silence:

For my part, I know that all the great moments of my day are found in the incomparable hours that I spend on my knees in darkness before the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ. I am so to speak swallowed up in God and surrounded on all sides by His presence. I would like to belong now to God alone and to plunge into the purity of His Love. And yet, I can tell how poor I am, how far from loving the Lord as He loved me to the point of giving Himself up for me. (n. 54)

Finally, liturgical formation based on a proclamation of the faith or catechesis that refers to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which protects us from possible more-or-less learned ravings of some theologians who long for “novelties.” This is what I said in this connection in what is now commonly called, with some humor, the “London Discourse” of July 5, 2016, given during the Third International Conference of Sacra Liturgia:

The liturgical formation that is primary and essential is... one of immersion in the liturgy, in the deep mystery of God our loving Father. It is a question of living the liturgy in all its richness, so that having drunk deeply from its fount we always have a thirst for its delights, its order and beauty, its silence and contemplation, its exultation and adoration, its ability to connect us intimately with He who is at work in and through the Church’s sacred rites.5

In this global context, therefore, and in a spirit of faith and profound communion with Christ’s obedience on the cross, I humbly ask you to apply Summorum Pontificum very carefully: not as a negative, backward measure that looks toward the past, or as something that builds walls and creates a ghetto, but as an important and real contribution to the present and future liturgical life of the Church, and also to the liturgical movement of our era, from which more and more people, and particularly young people, are drawing so many things that are true, good, and beautiful.

I would like to conclude this introduction with the luminous words of Benedict XVI at the end of the homily that he gave in 2008, on the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul: “When the world in all its parts has become a liturgy of God, when, in its reality, it has become adoration, then it will have reached its goal and will be safe and sound.”

I thank you for your kind attention. And may God bless you and fill your lives with His silent Presence!

HIS EMINENCE ROBERT CARDINAL SARAH IS Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments.

Endnotes:
1. “Aggiornamento” is an Italian term that means, literally: “updating.” We celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy of Vatican Council II, Sacrosanctum Concilium, in 2013, since it was promulgated on December 4, 1963.
This is the second edition of a book originally published in 2000 to enthusiastic reviews and which, one may assume from this new version, quite reasonably sold out. The text is only slightly rearranged and remains for the most part what it was: a series of judiciously culled selections from Ruskin’s The Stones of Venice, the sprawling half-million-word work that was published in three volumes between 1851 and 1853. The abridgement was illustrated with Ruskin’s original drawings and printed versions from his book, in addition to many photographs made by Sarah Quill.

Second editions often incorporate material discovered since the appearance of the first, or allow the insertion of thoughts that have occurred to the author in the meantime. In this case there are additions in both categories. In the first, the chance discovery in 2006 of more than 180 daguerreotypes made in Venice for Ruskin as study material dramatically altered what we know of the images at his disposal as he worked. As for the second, the author-editor’s updated thoughts centered on her pictures.

Sarah Quill is a first-rate photographer; she reconsidered the illustrations extensively, and there are many new photographs—both additions and replacements—that improve the visual content of the second edition. There are as well some significant changes to its design, which is now clearer and more appealing; notes that were in the margins have been moved to the end, for example, making pages open and pleasanter to read. And while it is not likely that many people will carry the book around Venice as a tourist guide, that will be easier to do with the new version, for in an added section all the sites referred to in the text are listed by sestiere, the six sections of the city.

Given that the content of Ruskin’s Venice has not been radically altered, the following brief discussion is only secondarily a review of the book as an abridged edition of Ruskin’s great work, a topic covered in write-ups of the first edition. My primary interest here is the second edition as a carefully crafted illustrated book. Nonetheless a word or two is in order about The Stones of Venice and why we need to have it in a shortened and rearranged form.

Ruskin had a great poetic soul, but his perceptive and vastly wide-ranging mind was not very well organized. He worked on many things at once—The Stones of Venice was, along with two editions of The Seven Lamps of Architecture, written between volumes 1 and 2 of Modern Painters. Kenneth Clark suggested that one of the reasons Ruskin is hard to read is his severe inability to concentrate. He tended to write things as they popped into his head, and his ideas on one topic often appear in a book that purports to be on another; Modern Painters contains an extended discussion of the geology of the Alps, and in The Stones of Venice Ruskin wanders off the subject to rail against the evils of the capitalism of his own day. An example of this tendency that bears on Ms. Quill’s book is the text she put on her frontispiece: the justly famous and rapturous description of Venice as “a golden city, paved with emerald... bossed with jasper.” It is in fact not from The Stones of Venice but from volume 2 of Modern Painters. Ruskin penned it after the former was finished, so, too good not to use, it was slipped into the next thing he wrote. To be sure, he smoothed transitions to some degree, but the many changes of direction and unexpected inclusions give to his works at times an almost stream-of-consciousness character. The passage in question fits far better where Ruskin put it than where Ruskin did. To be fair to Ruskin, she could do it easily while he could not, but the reader is still grateful to her for bringing it into the book on Venice.

The glory of the new edition lies in its much-improved photographic illustrations. Ms. Quill is gifted, of course, but she is also fortunate in her publisher; not all houses would allow a photographer to change serviceable pictures merely because they can be improved. One learns a great deal about Ms. Quill as an exacting image maker by carefully comparing pictures in the two editions. As that is not the sort of thing most readers will do (although it is much recommended), I mention it here.

Improvements take the form of images that were remade in more balanced light and from more informative angles. One in particular, which shows the labors of the months from an arch at San Marco, is vastly superior to the illustration in the first edition. A different sort of improvement, one that is striking for its intelligence, is seen in a picture of some houses in Campo Santa Maria Mater Domini. The original showed much more of them than was necessary to make Ruskin’s point, so it was remade and better cropped to focus more on what matters in his context. That saves some space on the page, allowing for an additional picture, and tightens the visual presentation. Nearly every new photograph repays careful looking.

Ruskin had a love-hate relationship with photography. When he first saw a daguerreotype he thought it was a miracle of accuracy and that the new medium would save him a great deal of labor. But later he came to distrust and dismiss camera-made images, preferring to make his own illustrations by hand rather than settling for what the process gave him. Photography could scarcely be more different today from what it was in Ruskin’s time, and although it is risky to guess what an author as crotchety and opinionated as he was would have made of digital images, I am rather sure that he would have been delighted by the illustrations.
Sarah Quill made and selected for her new presentation of *The Stones of Venice*. Feeling as he did about modern industrial means, he might not have been impressed by their technical aspects, more than likely disparaging them as machine made; but he would have recognized instantly that they are deeply respectful of his aims and aspirations.

When he had lingered over them a bit and reread his words, he would surely have acknowledged that, with their deep and palpable respect for the lovingly hand-carved forms they show, many of the Quill photographs serve Ruskin’s ideas every bit as well as—and perhaps even better than—his own drawings.

**In order to help people learn to embrace this boredom, Professor O’Malley offers a series of reflections on every part of the Mass and its significance.** Beginning with the entrance hymn and ending with the concluding rites, he helps the reader to understand what is happening in the Mass and encourages a deeper contemplation of it.

One of the topics that he touches on in chapter 4 is the significance of the altar and why it is fitting that the priest reverences it at the beginning of the Mass. O’Malley acknowledges the pagan symbolism of the altar, a bloody place of sacrifice to angry gods; but he explains how the meaning of the altar is transformed because it is the place of Christ’s sacrifice of love that is the very origin of the Church to begin with. When armed with an understanding of the central importance of the altar to the celebration of the Mass, it becomes easy to understand why the altar is the center and focal point in church architecture. “(The priest) kisses the altar because it stands among us as a sign of Christ’s total act of love.”

This book is especially directed towards O’Malley’s undergraduate students, whom he observes struggling to remain engaged with the Mass. However, with brief chapters and an engaging writing style, it is a book that any audience can read to gain a more thoughtful appreciation of the Mass. Professor O’Malley exhorts his readers to allow themselves to be bored by the Mass, but in a good way. He encourages a boredom that opens our thoughts to contemplation of God and the Sacrifice of the Mass—to be fruitfully “bored again.”

Reviewed by Therese Madigan

“Boredom at Mass is not something that should be eliminated. The moment in which we find ourselves bored while listening to the readings and the homily, bored while hearing the same Eucharistic Prayer offered once again, and bored while singing this same hymn we chant every Advent, is also the moment in which we are invited to participate more fully in the love of God poured out in Christ. . . . To lose our attention during the praying of the Eucharistic Prayer and find ourselves fascinated by the crucifix is not something that should be stopped but is instead our own particular way of participating in the Mass this day.” (*Bored Again Catholic*, p. 9)

In our contemporary culture, boredom is a state of being that ought to be avoided at all costs. Liturgical celebrations are tailored to eliminate boredom by stimulating people with upbeat hymns and funny, engaging homilies. However, this attention to removing boredom from the Mass and making it more “fun” ultimately has the disastrous effect of distracting people from the real meaning of the Mass.

In *Bored Again Catholic: How the Mass Could Save Your Life*, Professor Timothy O’Malley of the University of Notre Dame asserts that boredom is something we should embrace, that it is essential to spiritual growth and gaining spiritual insight. Distracting ourselves when boredom encroaches inhibits our ability to receive this insight, or even to pray at all.

**RALPH LIEBERMAN is an architectural historian and photographer who has published on Renaissance architecture in Venice, Michelangelo, perspective, and the Crystal Palace. He has taught at Williams College, Smith College, Amherst College, Harvard University, and the Rhode Island School of Design, and is now at work on a book on photography and art history.**

**Therese Madigan is on the staff of Sacred Architecture and is studying architecture at the University of Notre Dame.**

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**EMBRACING BOREDOM**

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Every Part Had To Be Sanctified


Reviewed by Robin Jensen

Gittos opens her study of Anglo-Saxon church architecture with a personal recollection. Returning to the town in which she grew up, she considers an “unremarkable nineteenth-century building” that may be the successor to an early Anglo-Saxon chapel. As it lies within the precinct of the minster in Yeovil, Somerset, she wonders why ecclesiastical sites of this era commonly included more than one church. Thinking that an answer might lie in an examination of extant, contemporary liturgical manuscripts, she proposes that such a study might answer other puzzling questions as well, like why multiple churches were often laid out end to end or what function raised exterior balconies or internal upper chapels served.

Gittos recognizes that the dearth of surviving major Anglo-Saxon churches poses a challenge. Moreover, surviving minor structures’ function is less likely to be explained by relevant textual remains, which typically are produced for cathedrals and monasteries. An additional hurdle is that most of the relevant liturgical manuscripts date to the tenth century, while the physical evidence comes mostly from the seventh to ninth centuries. Gittos is cautious about precise coordination of texts and monuments and about making unjustified generalizations. Yet, she reasonably and necessarily makes use of the sources she has available while being conscious of potential problems.

Despite these complications, and while the extant documents clearly cannot provide answers to all her questions, Gittos believes that analysis of available texts holds keys to better comprehension of these spaces and, in so doing, charts a method for integrating analysis of ancient liturgical manuals with the spaces that hosted the kinds of rituals they describe. Even here she acknowledges an additional concern that liturgical scholars will recognize: written liturgical manuals describe ideal or model ritual practices and as such are not absolutely reliable sources for reconstructing actual activities. Nonetheless, Gittos carefully coordinates evidence for liturgical practices with the existing structures that could have housed them, which provides a rich and illuminating study in spite of the caveats.

Throughout, Gittos poses questions that liturgical historians sometimes overlook when considering textual evidence alone. For example, how many people would have attended church services, and how often would they have done so? Was weekly attendance expected, or were most Christians likely to show up only on the major feasts? Did people travel significant distances to major churches, or were they more likely to congregate at local shrines? How widespread were pilgrimages, and to what degree were they a basis for urban and ecclesiastical competition?

Chapter 5 explores the ways the forms of Anglo-Saxon churches reveal their function and how those forms (and functions) developed over time. This includes particularly interesting sections on the placement of altars, the purposes of west chapels, the display of relics, gendered divisions of space, and the design of baptisteries and fonts.

Chapter 6 shifts attention to ritual practices. Here Gittos offers a detailed study of Anglo-Saxon dedicatory rituals, attending to the steps of the rite as it unfolded in both time and space, and explaining how participants experienced these ceremonies as typologically linked both to sacred (biblical) stories and the narrative of individual salvation. In her words, “Every part of a church had to be sanctified: foundations, floors, walls, roof, and altar. It was also symbolically a person who was catechized, baptized, and took first communion” (p. 244). The last chapter draws this idea out even further, borrowing Mary Carruthers’s idea of a building as a “machine for thinking” and justifying Gittos’s brief conclusion that, despite all the possible problems in bringing together disparate kinds of evidence, her results were “likely to be worthwhile” (p. 278). This modest statement underestimates the rich contribution of this study, which this reviewer enthusiastically recommends to historians of both liturgy and church architecture.

Robin M. Jensen is the Patrick O’Brien Professor of Theology at the University of Notre Dame. She holds a concurrent appointment in the Department of Art, Design, and Art History and is a Fellow of the Medieval Institute and the Notre Dame Institute for Advanced Study. Her research and writing focuses on the history of Christian art and architecture in light of its theological and liturgical significance.

Reviewed by Roberta G. Ahmanson

W as there an art committee for San Vitale in Ravenna in the sixth century? An emperor was coming—Justinian, who had recaptured this capital city from the Arian Ostrogoths in 540. An orthodox church, faithful to the Nicene Creed, was needed—one to match the brand new Hagia Sophia. Justinian had built in the Byzantine capital, Constantinople. This Western building had to send two messages: first, Christ has two natures, fully God and fully man. Second, an emperor takes second place to Jesus Christ, Lord of all.

Standing in that church today, one wonders just who figured it all out. The architecture is clearly modeled on Hagia Sophia. (Scholars agree the builders came from Constantinople.) The mosaic in the apse shows a young Christ in Glory (fully man) seated over the rainbow, presiding over the New Jerusalem, over all creation (fully God). Justinian and his wife Theodora—on a lower level—process toward Christ with the appropriate gifts. Side mosaics tell the story of salvation and the Trinity. All messages clear. In AD 547.

In her book Visual Arts in the Worshipping Church, Westmont College art history professor Lisa J. DeBoer takes us inside the workings of today’s congregations as they make similar decisions about spaces where they worship. Of course, Christianity today is no longer one body in one Church as it was in Justinian’s time. So, DeBoer begins by outlining how the three major divisions of Christian believers approach the role of art in their worship—Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant.

Describing the Orthodox, DeBoer focuses on their covenant with icons—icons being not art but what Russian scholar Alexei Lidov of Moscow State University calls “mediating images,” meaning that through them the savior is present to the faithful. DeBoer is also clear that when the Orthodox worship they understand themselves to be in the New Jerusalem that is both coming and already present. What is missing is that the Orthodox understand their church buildings to be three-dimensional icons of the Holy City to come, as Lidov has shown. Further, there is evidence that churches in Western Europe shared that understanding. According to urban historian Lewis Mumford, Augustine’s City of God shaped the design of European cities into the thirteenth century. 1 Christians were understood to be pilgrims on earth with their ultimate citizenship in the City of God, and they modeled their cities on that perfect city. One other issue DeBoer does not address is the meaning of architecture to the Orthodox. For example, Orthodox churches insist on having a dome. Why? Ask their theology.

For the Roman Catholic Church, DeBoer looks mainly at the findings of the Second Vatican Council and subsequent documents. She concludes that for Catholics the focus is on the liturgy and the Eucharist and the consequent importance of the congregation as the Body of Christ. Communal worship is, therefore, more important than individual devotion, one of the pre-Vatican II practices that drew particular criticism. What that means for the arts, according to DeBoer, is that the focus is on worship spaces and liturgical furnishings, things essential for communal worship. Paintings and sculpture can distract from corporate worship. The need to apply these guidelines has given birth to the profession of liturgical consulting, something DeBoer laments because it often leaves local artists out of the equation.

For Protestants, she argues, the arts take cues from the art world in which we live—drawing from the post-Enlightenment idea that Art is “non-utilitarian, disinterested, and autonomous.” Training available in our public arts education programs and the workings of the art market economy embed that notion in our thinking. With Protestant diversity ranging from old mainline churches to warehouse post-Seeker congregations, there are no other norms or guidelines to be found, especially in traditions stretching to Reformation iconoclasm. Unlike Catholic and Orthodox traditions, where artists working in the church are working in service of the Church, in Protestant churches the artist is autonomous and answers to his or her own standards—the artist leads the church, rather than serving it. DeBoer closes this section with a startling but, regrettably, probably true observation: “To the extent that Art in our current art system is believed by many [in Protestant churches] to both represent and call forth true humanity, it parallels the Catholic and Orthodox understandings of the Divine Liturgy.”

Throughout, DeBoer makes it clear that her goal is to map the present geography of how the arts function in churches in order to help congregations think through the needs of their own meeting places. In that goal, she certainly succeeds. The second section of her book deals with how questions of ecclesiology and of the contemporary art market impinge on local congregations. For example, how do the arts function in a church called to be both local and universal? Or, looking at the art world, are artists to be servants of the congregation or autonomous consultants working according to their own vision? Beyond that, do the arts shape the church or do the teachings of the church shape the arts? Carefully, DeBoer compares and contrasts responses in each tradition. All of this is aimed at the contemporary church.

This approach is helpful and no doubt needed, but a deeper consideration of the first two traditions—art history and history—is a crucial dimension. Architecture is touched upon, but not in depth and not with a historical or theological perspective. Art historian Elizabeth Lev has pointed out that the first churches built after Christianity became legal in 313 were designed with a clear theological message about the Nicene teaching of the two consubstantial natures of Christ. The outside was common Roman red brick—fully man; the inside was glorious with mosaics of gold, red, green, and blue—fully God.

Whoever was on Bishop Maximianus’s design committee in 540s Ravenna, San Vitale conformed to that idea.

Roberta Green Ahmanson is a writer, speaker, and philanthropist who focuses on art, culture, history, and Christianity. She lives in Southern California.

Endnotes:
1. Lewis Mumford, The City in History.
Book Review

From the Publishing Houses


This book meets the reader at the intersection of image and script, offering an analysis of the relationship between image and letter from antiquity all the way to the modern age. Examples are analyzed from the ancient and medieval Near East, Europe, Byzantium, and Latin America, as well as within Jewish, polytheistic, Christian, and Muslim cultures. By examining a combination of paintings, texts, sculpture, and architectural elements, the reader gains an understanding of the pictorial dimension of writing through time and across multidisciplinary perspectives.


The question of whether modern art is compatible with Christianity, or even religion, is one that has been widely debated, especially after the publishing of Hans Rookmaaker’s Modern Art and the Death of a Culture. Anderson and Dyrness present Modern Art and the Life of a Culture as a response and counterargument to Rookmaaker. They argue that, indeed, aspects of modern art have been influenced by strong religious impulses, and that modern art and religion are not incompatible with each other. The book is divided geographically, exploring the worlds portrayed by Fra Angelico, da Vinci, and more. The reader in reflection on masterpiece images, a short description, and a meditation or prayer to accompany the artwork. The authors thereby offer a thoughtful history of and reflection on the church, providing to parishioners and nonparishioners alike the meaning and symbolism of the abundant iconography.


The years from 1918 to 1988 were a turbulent time in Russia’s history, and they were full of uncertainties for Russia’s churches. In this book Kelly examines how the role of Russia’s churches changed and continued to evolve during this time. They were caught between the aims of three groups: preservationists, who valued the churches merely for their artistic value; believers, who fought for use of the churches by their religious communities; and the Communist state, which was suspicious of religion, regarding it as the “opium of the people” and working to eventually eliminate it altogether—while still stating an official position of pluralism and equality of all faiths before the law. During this time period, churches became state property and began to seek protection under historic preservation laws or by being repurposed for secular use. Kelly provides an insightful description of the history of Russia’s churches over seven decades, relating how preservationists and believers alike fought for the survival of the structures.

As Saint Joan of Arc Catholic Church in Indianapolis, Indiana, draws near to its parish centennial in 2021, two parishioners have issued a book on the rich iconography of the historic 1920s church designed by noted Chicago ecclesiologist Henry J. Schlacks. In Every Heart an Altar, Zander and Henry document the statues, stained glass, mosaics, paintings, and architecture of the church. But they mean it to be more than just a guidebook: Every Heart an Altar takes the reader on a contemplative tour around Saint Joan of Arc, supplying images, a short description, and a meditation or prayer to accompany the artwork. The authors thereby offer a thoughtful history of and reflection on the church, providing to parishioners and nonparishioners alike the meaning and symbolism of the abundant iconography.


Stebbins provides in this book a series of thoughtful essays that guide the reader in reflection on masterpiece paintings. By providing the historical context of each painting and the universal truths that are expressed in them, she invites the reader into contemplation that results in a deeper understanding of the works of art. The book is richly illustrated with photos of the paintings, and her analysis of the masterpieces is accessible enough to appeal even to those who lack any knowledge about art. It is an essential text for any art lover who wants to gain knowledge about the worlds portrayed by Fra Angelico, Caravaggio, da Vinci, and more.
St. Turibius Chapel
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