



Dedication



Church of St. Victoria

May 8, 2005

Victoria, Minnesota





Saint Victoria Parish Family

Our Mission:

*“Saint Victoria is a Catholic family
inviting all to celebrate the Eucharist
in the spirit of fellowship and love.
We worship together, seek formation of youth,
provide opportunities for spiritual growth
and community involvement
while reaching out to all
as the face and hands of Jesus Christ.”*



Saint Victoria the Martyr

By Father Elstan Coghill
December 1985

In the church's calendar the Feast of St. Victoria is celebrated on December 23.

I don't know if our church was given the name of St. Victoria because of the name of the town – or the town was called Victoria because of the name of the church. Whatever the case, I thought you might be interested in reading what is known about St. Victoria, as contained in *Butler's Lives of The Saints*.

"The record of the sufferings of St. Anatolia relates that when she refused (because of a vision) to accept her suitor, Aurelius, he went to her sister, Victoria, and asked her to persuade Anatolia to marry him.

"Victoria's efforts were not only unsuccessful, but she herself was converted to her sister's views and broke off her own betrothal with one Eugenius.

"The young men then removed the maidens from Rome to their respective country villas and tried to starve them into a different frame of mind. Anatolia was denounced as a Christian, and her end is thus summarized in the Roman Martyrology on July 9.

"After she had healed many throughout the Province of Picenum who were suffering from various diseases and had brought them to believe in Christ, she was afflicted with several punishments by order of the Judge Faustian, and after she had been freed from a serpent that was set upon her and had converted the executioner Audax to the faith, lifting up her hands in prayer, she was pierced with a sword.

"Victoria met with a similar fate, perhaps at Tribulanon in the Sabine Hills. She refused either to marry Eugenius or to sacrifice and, after working many miracles whereby numerous maidens were gathered to God, she was smitten to the heart by the executioner's sword at the request of her betrothed.

"Both St. Anatolia and St. Victoria had a cultus in various parts of Italy, but the real circumstances of the martyrdom are not known. The sentiments regarding marriage expressed in their record of sufferings are of the exaggerated and unguarded kind which, though often found in Christian documents, approximate more to the heretical doctrines of Encratism than to the teaching of the Catholic Church."

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PRINTS OF A PRIEST by Father Elstan Coghill, OFM
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"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever." Heb. 13:8

Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

Office of the Archbishop

Dear St. Victoria Parishioners,

I write to you today to express to you my heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of the dedication of your new church. After many months of hard work and planning and community prayer, the day has finally arrived for this great celebration. Your community is a living sign of the growth and development in the life of our Archdiocese.

This dedication is a renewal of your own dedication to Christ Jesus. We were incorporated into the Body of Christ at baptism and you can't help but remind yourself of this since you pass the Baptismal Font as you enter St. Victoria Church.

As those who came before you built the previous two churches, today you are providing for those who will come in the future. I pray for continued spiritual growth for your parish and the deepening of life for all as we look to the future of the Church.

Again, I send congratulations to you and my hope and prayer that for years to come the great mission of the Church will continually be accomplished at the Church of St. Victoria in Victoria.

With every good wish, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ

Most Reverend Harry J. Flynn, D.D.
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

Letter from Father Bob

Dear Parishioners and Friends of the St. Victoria Parish Family:

Heartfelt congratulations to you, the parishioners and friends of the St. Victoria Parish Family, who helped make our new Church a reality. Your support of this project, financial and otherwise, has made it all possible.

A special word of thanks to the various leadership groups within our parish who devoted themselves to the variety of tasks that all worked together for the building of the new Church. There were those who helped with the Capital Campaign for the new Church, those who served on committees, the NCBC (New Church Building Committee), the New Church Advisory Group, the Art and Furnishings Committee, and the hard-working Parish Staff along with all the other groups within the Parish who gave of their time and effort. They did so out of love for this Parish. This is a work of which you can be proud. I pray that the fruit of this work be yours to enjoy for years to come.

How did the idea for a new Church get started? When I arrived at the Parish in 1996 there already was talk of the day that St. Victoria would need a new Church. But it wasn't until 1998 that the issue was really addressed. In late fall of that year, the Parish met in a series of open meetings to discern our future. With the new growth that awaited Victoria and surrounding areas how were we as a Parish to respond? What was God calling us to do?

At the end of those sessions two important concerns surfaced. First, that the rich heritage of the Parish be preserved. Second, that a spirit of welcome be extended to the many new parishioners who were moving into the area. What was needed to honor both of these values? A solution emerged. We would build a new Church connected to the historic Church.

The challenge of accomplishing that daunting task fell to the capable hands of Dan Gallagher, the Architect for our project. Hired in the fall of 1999, Dan worked tirelessly for the success of the project. His efforts resulted in the beautiful Church we have today. We here at St. Victoria are blessed to have had him part of our Parish family these last six years.

I also want to thank Liturgical Consultant Jim Moudry. From the outset it was my desire that the new Church reflect the spirit of the theological and Liturgical principles laid out by the directives of the Second Vatican Council. Jim was an invaluable resource to us helping us come to a deeper appreciation of the richness of our Catholic Faith Tradition and its Liturgy.

Working with these principles, we set out to design a Church that maximized the full and active participation of all. Very critical to that was the seating configuration for the new Church. We were looking for a design that engaged the worshipper. The proximity we wanted was provided for with an antiphonal seating arrangement. With the pews circled around the Altar and Ambo, which face each other, the Sanctuary is not just a stage to be viewed. Rather, it now becomes the Sacred Space in which we all sit.

In addition, because of the proximity that antiphonal seating allows, the retaining walls that support the Church would not have to extend as far back into the hill behind the Church. In construction costs, this would translate to hundreds of thousands of dollars in savings. When we learned this we figured it must be the Holy Spirit trying to tell us something.

What is our dream now that St. Victoria has a new Church? I think of our Parish Mission Statement – to be a Catholic Parish Family who gathers at the Lord's Table. Nourished there we are sent out to reach out as the face and hands of Jesus Christ. This is the building up of the Church, the body of Christ that we commit to as a Parish. It is a work that exists at two levels. There is the Church physical, the brick and mortar Church. And then there is the Church spiritual, the flesh and blood Church that is the Body of Christ in the world today. The first cannot be separated from the second.

It is my belief that building the Church physical, the brick and mortar of St. Victoria's new Church has awakened among us an even deeper desire to build the Church spiritual, the flesh and blood Church, the Body of Christ here in the Victoria area. As the rich design of a new Church shapes us for generations to come, may that same spirit continue what we have committed to be a Parish Family reaching out as the face and Hands of Jesus Christ. We give thanks to God for our new Church that now provides for us the adequate worship and educational center needed to carry on that awesome work!

Fr. Bob

St. Victoria History

History of the Church

St. Victoria was established as a Parish in 1857 by our early pioneers, and shortly thereafter a small wooden Church was built. Throughout the early years, immigrants from Germany, Switzerland, Holland, Ireland, Austria, Belgium and the Scandinavian countries came in large numbers to this area to find not only a land rich in resources, but for many a newfound freedom for their faith. As the population increased in the area a larger Church was erected in 1870 out of brick, which is the historic Church that you still see today. In 1857 there were perhaps 32 Catholic households in Victoria. By its centennial in 1957, there were 196 registered. In the decades since the area has continued to grow. So once again construction commenced in May of 2003 on another larger Worship Space which is the new Church that you see today complementing the historic Church. As of May 1, 2005, there are now 750 registered households and counting! In 2007 we will celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the founding of St. Victoria Catholic Church. As it has been and will continue to be, the richness of its land, people, and faith continues to draw many from far and near to St. Victoria. As we step forward on this journey of faith, we know that God, the giver of all good gifts, will bless us richly.

Therefore, be patient, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits patiently for the precious crop from the earth, until it receives the early and late rains. James 5:7

* For those interested in exploring St. Victoria's heritage, "The History of St. Victoria Parish 1857-1957" by John A. Diethelm is available in the Parish Office.

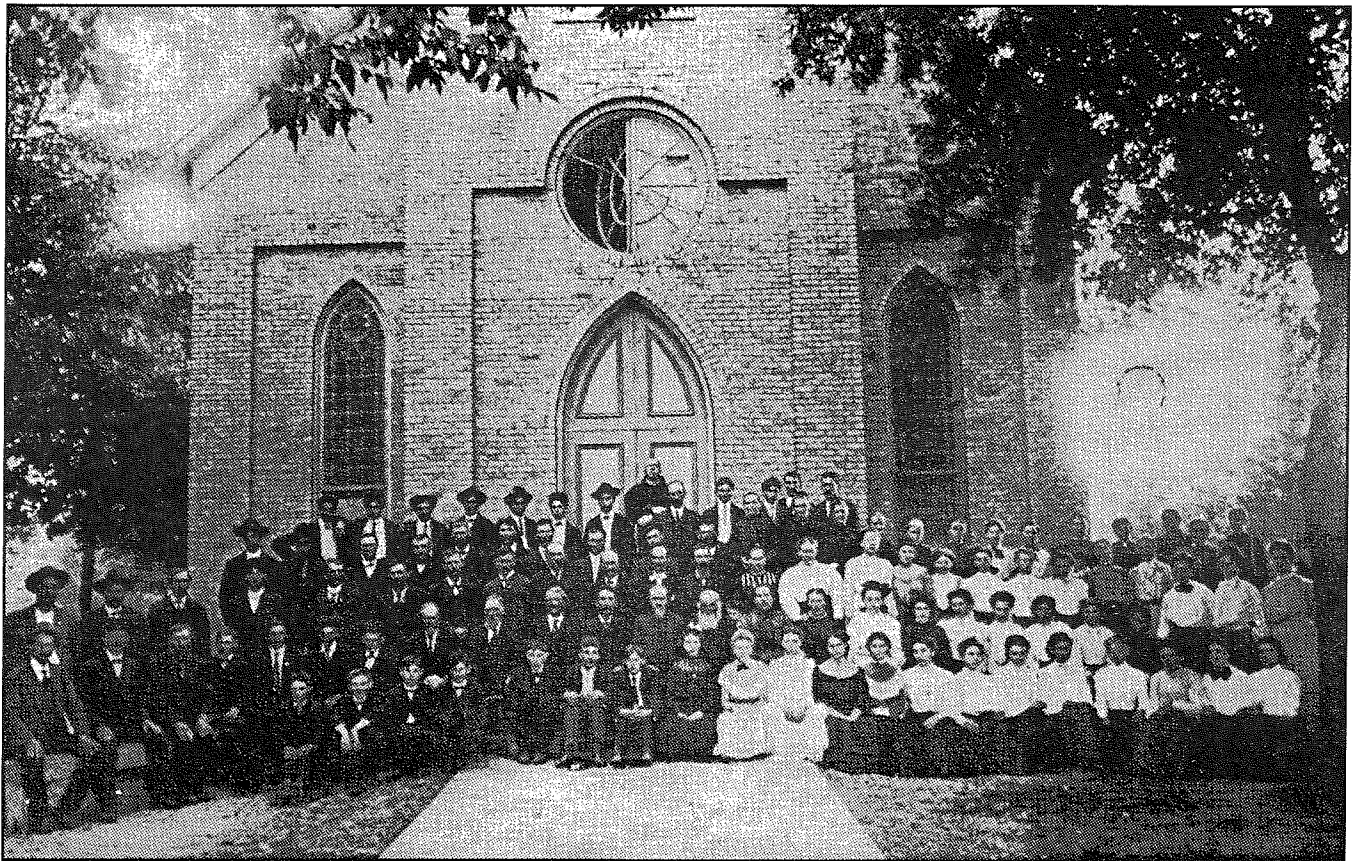
** Just around the corner in 2007 will be St. Victoria's Sesquicentennial Celebration. Look for a comprehensive history at that time which will span the past 150 years.

St. Victoria Parochial School Teachers

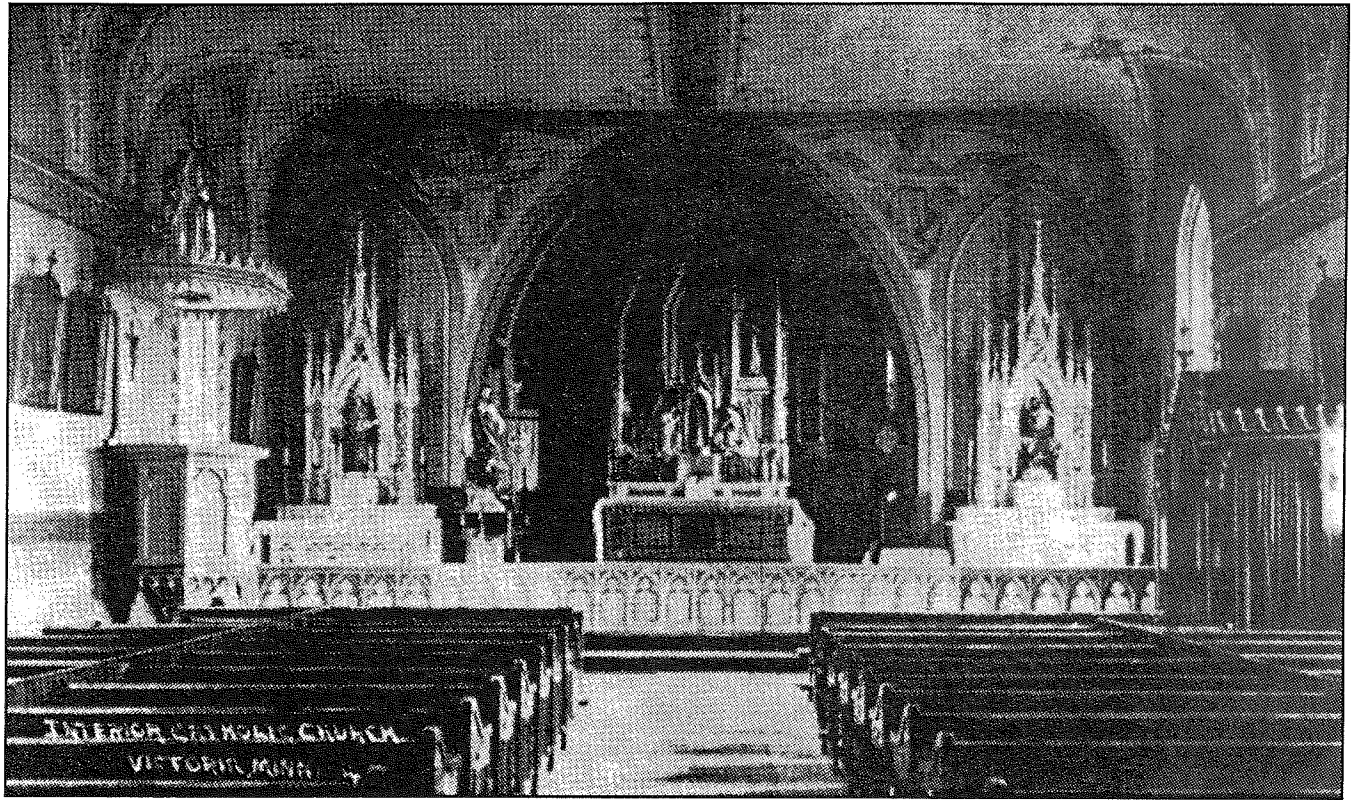
Their contributions were profound—first the Franciscan Sisters, followed by the Sisters of Christian Charity, and finally the Sisters of St. Benedict. For these Sisters, their lives were offered to God, and God sent some of them to St. Victoria's Parochial School. It was here, from 1881-1971, that they were to teach the children in the ways of faith...that is, providing they could maintain a sense of academia in a single classroom that was at times brimming with three grades—certainly an amazing feat! Their lives revolved around the rhythm of the school and Church, and God had a place for each of them. There are many in this faith community who owe much of their early faith to the gifts that these Sisters gave, and to this day we still express our gratitude for their tremendous service.



Confirmands of St. Victoria and pastor, Rev. Cosmas Garman, O.F.M. – 1905



Parishoners of St. Victoria and pastor, Rev. Cosmas Garman, O.F.M. – 1905



Interior of the Church – 1916



Aerial View, circa 1950

Fathers – Past to Present

Fathers who served the St. Victoria mission at intervals of one to three months from August 1860 to October of 1876:

Fr. George Scherer, O.S.B.	August 1860-December 1862
Rev. Cornelius Wittmann, O.S.B.	December 1862-May 1863
Rev. Meinulph Stukenkemper, O.S.B.	May 1863-August 1863
Rev. George Scherer, O.S.B.	August 1863-July 1865
Rev. Magnus Mayr, O.S.B.	July 1865-August 1869
Rev. Matthew Stuerenburg, O.S.B.	August 1869-September 1870
Rev. Valentine Stimmler O.S.B.	September 1870-January 1871
Rev. Magnus Mayr, O.S.B.	January 1871-September 1872
Rev. Valentine Stimmler O.S.B.	September 1872-February 1873
Rev. William Lette (secular)	February 1873-September 1875
Rev. Valentine Stimmler O.S.B.	September 1875-October 1875
Rev. Meinrad Leuthard, O.S.B.	October 1875-November 1875
Rev. Bruno Riess, O.S.B.	November 1875-December 1875
Rev. William Lette (secular)	December 1875-October 1876

Franciscan Priests who served here from 1876 to 1996:

Rev. Sebastian Cebula	October 1876-April 1877
Rev. Aloysius Wiewer	April 1877-August 1877
Rev. Eustacius Vollmer	August 1877-February 1879
Rev. Casimir Hueppe	February 1879-May 1879
Rev. Eustacius Vollmer	May 1879-June 1879
Rev. Suitbert Albermann	June 1879-September 1880
Rev. Ambrose Jansen	September 1880-December 1885
Rev. Aloysius Wiewer	December 1885-April 1892
Rev. Patrick Degraa	August 1892-November 1894
Rev. Cletus Girschewski	November 1894-July 1895
Rev. Raymond Holte	July 1895-August 1899
Rev. Lawrence Pauly	August 1899-September 1899
Rev. Rudolph Horstman	September 1899-September 1900
Rev. Maternus Peutz	September 1900-January 1903
Rev. Didymus Storff	July 1903-August 1903
Rev. Hildebrand Fuchs	August 1903-July 1904
Rev. Cosmas Garman	July 1904-July 1906
Rev. Hubert Pfeil	July 1906-November 1909
Rev. Rufinus Moehle	December 1909-June 1914
Rev. Rudolph Horstmann	July 1914-December 1914
Rev. Heribert Stotter	December 1914-October 1930
Rev. Ives Beu	January 1931-November 1945
Rev. Arnold Schwarz	January 1946-June 1950
Rev. Lucius Hellstern	July 1950-July 1951
Rev. Justinian Kugler	July 1951-July 1952
Rev. Bernardine Hahn	August 1952-August 1954
Rev. Clement Martin	August 1954-June 1958
Rev. Samuel Martin	June 1958-July 1966
Fr. Simon Hartke	August 1966-June 1971
Fr. Ronald Dinn	June 1971-July 1980
Fr. Agnellus Sobolewski	July 1980-June 1985
Fr. Elstan Coghill	June 1985-July 1996

Present Pastor:

Fr. Robert White	July 1996-Present
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*St. Victoria Parish Family
Victoria, Minnesota*

Process and Space Summary

Process

Beginning in November 1999, the Architect met with members of the New Church Building Committee and over the next four years, time was spent in education, formation, discernment and planning. Additional meetings with a larger Advisory Group were held on a quarterly basis to keep the wider Parish informed of the progress. Initial meetings focused on Church history, Church documents and ritual assisted by Liturgical Consultant Jim Moudry. St. Victoria's oral history was related by members of the Building Committee of whom several were third and fourth generation Parishioners dating to the 1850s.

The importance of the existing Church from a historical and emotional standpoint was continually stressed. The existing brick Church, with its Gothic flair, was built in 1870. Also on the site, but separate from the historic Church, is a Parish Center, which was built in 1972. This structure housed the fellowship space, kitchen, lower-level classrooms and restrooms. Behind the historic Church, and attached to it, was a wood-frame structure used for the Parish Office.

The Architect's approach was to lay out design concepts on a 30-inch high by 24-foot-long scroll, which each week was rolled out further to show new concepts. The unique thing about this approach was that you could see from week to week the development of the different concepts and how they related to the previous weeks.

The concept arrived at after years of planning and discernment was one that placed all major elements of the new Liturgical Space on an axis with the historic Church. As one enters the historic Church, you pass under a balcony used by the choir and up the center aisle of the nave to the Sanctuary. As you move up the center aisle, you are flanked by stained glass windows. Where the Altar was located in the vaulted apse of the historic Church has Blessed Sacrament Chapel for the new and old Worship Spaces. The rear wall of the original Sanctuary has been opened up with an archway that leads to the historic Church back wall and into the new Church making a visible connection between the two spaces. As you move on the axis into the new Church, you first encounter a large octagon-shaped Baptismal Font specifically designed for Baptism by Immersion. Following along the axis comes the Ambo, the open Ritual Area and the Altar. Continuing the far west wall and still on axis you have the new choir location. The Altar, Ritual Area and Ambo are framed on either side by seating for potentially 1,200 people. The seating is a combination of chairs and pews with the chairs occupying the first three rows. The axis of the new and historic Churches is bracketed on either end by the choir locations.

Procedure

The antiphonal seating arrangement at first was met with some consternation and confusion. How would this work? Will one be too far from the Ambo or Altar depending on where seated? Initially for discussion, seating was arranged in the fellowship hall to give people a feel for this proposal, but the space was not large enough to duplicate the actual size. As the weather warmed, the Architect painted on the existing parking lot and yard area the actual size of the new space with all six banks of seating painted in orange. The Altar and Ambo platforms were also built to the correct height so people could study the visibility from different angles. Also, the back corner of seating furthest from either Altar or Ambo was constructed with the proposed floor slope. This allowed for three rows of chairs per row to be set up to check out visibility of the Altar and Ambo. An Advisory Group of about 125 people came to experience the building layout in the parking lot. Fr. Bob White gathered the folks together and proceeded in by the Baptismal Font and into the Ritual Area and then had everyone disperse to where they thought they would like to sit. The experience was a wonderful validation of the direction the plan was taking. From that point forward, very little discussion centered on pew layout or visibility from the antiphonal seating arrangement.

Implementation

The new Altar, Ambo and Ritual Area are defined spatially by a clerestory above. Windows penetrate all four sides of the clerestory. The structure is defined by large steel trusses with round members spanning 92 feet along the central axis and 32 feet at each end. The large trusses are supported by four large masonry piers. The ceiling above the pews slopes up from the ambulatory to the large trusses at the clerestory that clearly defines the seating and ritual areas.

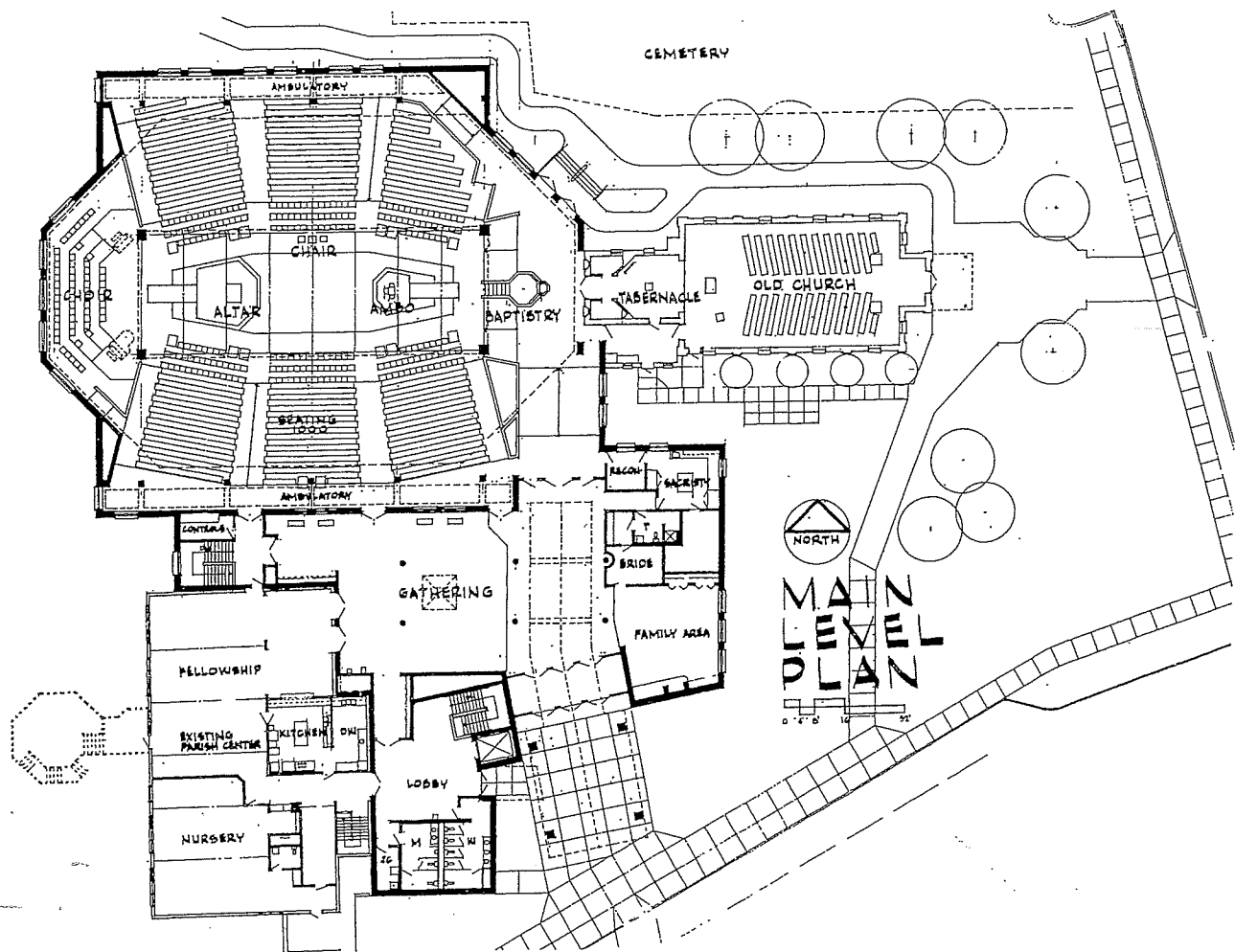
The new building is situated on a hillside, between the historic Church and the Parish Center. Access is from the south where parking for 230 cars is provided. As you enter under the canopy and into the gathering space, a long skylight leads

the way to the main Worship Space doors. The large gathering space spreads out along the Worship Space wall with four large windows. Off the gathering space is a family area with a fireplace for a more relaxed setting. The brides' room also opens off this area.

The new lower level consists of 18 classrooms for Religious Education, two for Adult Education and one for Youth Activities.

The existing Parish Center was revised by relocating the kitchen to allow connection between the existing fellowship area and the new gathering space. The south end of the fellowship area now houses a new, spacious nursery. The Parish Offices are located in the lower level of the Parish Center.

Because of the massiveness of the new structure, its expression can best be judged by its ability to enhance the integrity of the historic 1870 Church structure. The brick used for the new Church matches the existing brick and the color of the wall cap flashing, etc., match the painted color on the historic Church.



Liturgical Perspectives on the Design of the New Church

The design of our new Church flows from a careful study of the values and directives laid out by the Church in the years following Vatican Council II for building a Worship Space. The general plan of the Church, which is barrier free and devoid of partitioned spaces, is to convey the image of a gathered assembly. It expresses the unity of the entire people, the Body of Christ. The Church teaches that in the celebration of the Liturgy the highest aim is that the faithful be led to full, conscious and active participation in the Liturgy because it is through active participation that they are united to Christ. This means that in Liturgical Celebration there is no audience, only active participants.

Sloped floor seating arranges people around the Eucharistic Table and the Table of the Word so that they feel connected to the action of the Liturgy. They not only can see and hear what happens at those two Tables but also see and hear each other. For one of the key teachings of the Vatican Council is that in the celebration of the Eucharist, Christ's presence is manifest in the assembly itself as well as in the person of the ordained priest, in the Proclaimed Word and in the Consecrated Bread and Wine, the Body and Blood of Christ.

The chair of the priest celebrant is a symbol of his office of presiding over the assembly and directing prayer. Its design distinguishes it from other seating. The placement reinforces the presider's unity with the assembly. The location of the music ministry shows they are clearly a part of the Liturgical Assembly. Their position allows them to sing and play in a way that elicits the assembly's participation.

The pathway into the Church prepares the faithful for what they are about to do. Moving from the gathering space through the great doors (Christ, the door of the sheep fold) people arrive at the Baptismal Font. They bless themselves with water from the Font recalling the Baptism that made them a priestly people united with Christ. They come into the central ritual area created by the raised Altar at one end and the Ambo, the place of proclamation of the Word, at the other. This central area is set off by special wood flooring and is bathed in natural light from the clerestory windows high above. Suspended over the Altar will be the cross bearing the figure of the Crucified and Risen Lord whose saving mystery of death and resurrection is celebrated on the Eucharistic Table beneath it. After making a reverent bow to the Altar, the people turn and join the welcoming circle of fellow worshipers. They are ready for the Liturgy to begin.

On an axis with the Altar table and Table of the Word and the Baptismal Font, in a separate room that bridges to the historic Church, is the Tabernacle where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved, visible from the main Church as well as from the historic Church. It is furnished with chairs and kneelers for people wishing to pray privately before the Blessed Sacrament.

Everything about the design of the new Church supports its primary purpose, namely, suitability for the communal celebration of the Eucharist, the Sacraments, other Liturgical Rites of the Church and the Liturgical Feasts and seasons. It only looks finished and "like a Church" when it is filled with worshipers actively engaged in Liturgy. Then it truly is a place of sacred beauty.

James Moudry, Liturgical Consultant
February 21, 2005



Volunteer Thanks

New Church Building Leadership

Fr. Robert White
Jeff Charlton
Gene Ochocki
Jerry Schmieg
Louise Lehner
Tom Bogaard
Robert Dahlin
Robert Diethelm
Tony Haddad
Dan Gallagher
Jim Moudry
Gina Holman
Lyle Oddan
Jim Moore

Trustees

Margaret Hanson
Jerry Schmieg

The time, talent and treasure of many others were offered in the building of our new Church. We wish to especially thank those who served on the Building on Our Heritage Capital Campaign, Space Needs Task Force, Development Task Force, Community Life Task Force, Parish Advisory Group, Art and Furnishings Committee, and members of St. Victoria Parish Family.

