

CHURCH OF ST THOMAS MORE  
Interior Design Team Meeting  
February 27, 2013

Present: Rev. Michael Ratajczak, Pastor; Kathy Arciero, Charlene Buhlert, Mary Castle, Diana Diaz, Lorraine Doering, Ann Eriksson, Pat Goscienski, Phil Goscienski, Robert Habiger, Brian Leahey, Douglas Lynn, Kathleen Quinn, Chris Smith

Absent, Excused: Mario Diaz, Sondra Parks

Guest: John Nava

The meeting opened with prayer at 7:15 PM.

- **Review of Diocesan Architectural Committee Meeting of February 27**

There were eight people at the Diocesan meeting today, two of whom were from Renzo Zecchetto. Our presentation was well received.

Douglas Lynn was especially pleased to see the renderings of the sanctuary ceiling. Pat Goscienski remarked on how light the interior will appear.

- **Presentation from John Nava, Artist**

Robert Habiger introduced our guest, John Nava, a painter who makes tapestries. Mr. Nava created the tapestries for Our Lady of the Angels Cathedral in Los Angeles. Robert Habiger asked Mr. Nava what he had in mind and asked the committee members to give their thoughts as well. The space for our tapestry will be ten feet high and fifteen feet wide. The cathedral tapestries hang on walls that are covered with sound absorption tiles which help with acoustics.

John Nava is thinking of creating a tapestry that is ten feet high with a standing figure of St. Thomas More. The background will show items that are relevant to his story. He would like to know our thoughts on the content of these images. Discussion centered around the idea of "A Man for All Seasons".

John Nava showed us a booklet with images from the USC Library that he created. He mentioned Thomas More's book *Utopia* and Giotto's image of St. Francis. He showed us examples of facial expressions and we discussed Holbein's painting of St. Thomas More. In a discussion of the wall background color for the shrine, he told us the Cathedral in Los Angeles has concrete walls that have soft color pigments that offer good contrast to the colors in the tapestries. Our shrine will be 100 feet from the main entrance of the sanctuary. We discussed scale. In the Cathedral the ceiling

is 100 feet high and the sanctuary is 100 feet wide. He made the figures in the tapestries ten feet high.

In a discussion of words that might be included in the background, for example “the King’s good servant...” Keep in mind how the light changes with the seasons. Phil Goscienski asked if we could include quotations about families. In addition, St. Thomas More’s many roles in his lifetime. John Nava asked us to submit our suggestions for these words. He mentioned that he likes the Holbein image very much and would like to use it. He also prefers to have the background somewhat “sparse”, not too cluttered.

The tapestry will be designed for the large space of the sanctuary but it can be seen in a different manner when one approaches it. That is when one can read the text up close along with the secondary images.

Brian Leahey asked Mr. Nava if he makes a painting of the entire image. We were told that he makes all the components separately and it all comes together when it is woven on the loom. He explained how the digital code for the tapestry is created in his studio and sent by e-mail to the company in Belgium that will weave the tapestry. The machine reads the code and the tapestry is completed in about eight hours. He wants to use local colors which are seen near our parish campus.

In a discussion of natural light and electric light, we must consider the possibility of colors fading. For that reason, no direct light should fall directly on the tapestry. Nearby windows should be glazed to minimize glare.

The question was raised as to whether we should include candles in the shrine. Mr. Nava told us that is not a good idea. The possibility of fire is a consideration and since the tapestry is considered to be a work of art, the authorities will not demand that it be made fireproof. Brian Leahey was concerned about the lighting of the shrine and Mr. Nava told us there should be no “hot spots”, rather a gentle “wash” of light is preferable; wash the wall with soft light.

Discussion also took place in regard to the possibility of fireproofing the tapestry. John Nava said this is possible but there is the question of shrinkage. He will be fireproofing a tapestry for the first time in the near future and he will be able to give us more information then.

We asked if we should plan to insure the tapestry. We were told that for the Cathedral tapestries, a second complete set was woven and is kept in safe storage. This is better insurance than attempting to duplicate the tapestry at some future date when the original loom may not be available. We should expect that once the design of the tapestry is approved and completed, there will be a three month period for production. The finished tapestry will be ten feet wide and weigh about 200 pounds. It should be hung, without finials, three inches off the wall.

The design proposal will be prepared over the summer of 2013. Mr. Nava will begin work in early June and plans to submit the design proposal in September. Another item to be considered: the value of the Euro which may change and loom rates.

- **Additional Remarks**

Douglas Lynn and Brian Leahey and a number of others attended a demonstration of a speaker system today. They were very pleased and hope to incorporate the system in the new sanctuary.

The next meeting of the Interior Design Team will be held on April 9. The meeting closed with prayer at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Kathleen Quinn*