

CHURCH OF ST THOMAS MORE
Interior Design Team
Minutes of Meeting of August 20, 2008

Attending: Father Mike Ratajczak, Phil Goscienski, Pat Goscienski, Mary Castle, Sondra Parks, Diana Diaz, Mario Diaz, Charlene Buhlert, Lorraine Doering, Kathy Quinn

Excused: Chris Smith, Douglas Lynn, Ann Ericksson

The meeting opened with the reading of the Prayer of Dedication at 7:10 PM.

Charlene Buhlert mentioned a “note of caution” as she had seen children playing in the font at a church in Escondido after Mass last weekend. Children were seen splashing in the water and trying to climb into the water. We should keep this possibility in mind as we plan our baptismal font.

Phil Goscienski said we have a quorum and he asked if there were any revisions or additions to the minutes of the previous meeting. As there were none, the minutes were accepted.

This meeting is an extension of the meeting of August 12 when we reviewed the 22 page Draft, Version 1 of the Liturgical Program sent to us by Robert Habiger. In the August 12 meeting we completed pages 1-7. As we began the review on page 8, we were reminded of the three questions we are to consider:

- What has been left out of the program?
- What is present that is not correct and is to be removed?
- What is only partially right?

Eucharistic Hall, pages 8 and 9

Under Program Considerations, the first bullet point, add the words “*with silent kneelers*” after “movable chairs and fixed pews”. On the third bullet point regarding floor slope, we are concerned about several matters, especially how this raked floor will affect people who use walkers and/or canes. We have an issue with the aging population of our parish. We need clarification as to the meaning of the ratio “1:16 maximum floor slope”. Are pews designed for raked floors more expensive? One important concern is visibility; can everyone in the congregation see the altar and the priest?

Pat Goscienski expressed concern about the possibility of using concrete floors. We noted problems at churches we visited: chipping, water stains, high maintenance. Other flooring options we discussed include stone and wood,

perhaps bamboo flooring? We must consider expense and have flooring that is non-glare, durable, not slippery.

Under Program Requirements, the first bullet point, “organization as a single room”, we are asking for clarification. We wondered if we can use lighting to appear to “shrink” the space where a small ritual is to be conducted and few people would be in attendance.

In the second bullet point, we question the use of the words “inherent sparseness”. Does this mean “minimalist”? We would like to see examples of what is meant.

While Douglas Lynn was unable to attend this meeting, he had submitted his remarks in writing. He would add the following wording: *“Aisles should allow for intuitive flow of people at communion.”*

All other items on Page 9 were accepted as written, except for additions from Douglas Lynn which he submitted in writing as follows:

There is no discussion of acoustics in this document. See “Built of Living Stones” sections 221 (especially significant), 222, 223, 224. Within this consideration I submit the following as “considerations” or “requirements”:

- See most of recommendations omitted from Liturgical Program submitted in Subcommittee for Acoustics document.
- A design goal that leads to true silence within the hall when “nothing” is going on (that is, no extraneous sounds from, for example, buzzing lights, alarm systems, sound systems, HVAC systems, street noise).
- A design goal that allows for acoustic worship, that is without the need for amplification that allows the piano or organ to “lead” the congregation without further enhancement. Could the piano lead the worship in the case of a power outage?
- A design goal that the acoustics be well-suited to the purpose of a gathered assembly engaged in sung prayer (see “Sing to the Lord” section 102).
- Need to discuss the reverberation goals for the room, and set a target reverberation level.

In addition, the committee had one further point:

- We agreed that our #1 priority was acoustics for the spoken word. (This discussion arose during the Music Ministry requirements.)

Sanctuary, Page 10

Under Program Considerations, the third bullet point, change the wording of the last sentence to read: "... as well as those of the other sacraments *and funerals* celebrated there."

Under Program Requirements, fourth bullet point. We see this requirement as a design challenge. We recalled the pictures we saw of the Dodge City cathedral with its curved ramp for access to the sanctuary platform. We would like further clarification of the design. In Douglas Lynn's notes, he submitted the following:

"In addition to accessibility by people, we need to make sure there is room to allow caskets to enter and exit the hall, as well as space for it to remain during the funeral liturgies."

Daily Mass Chapel/Reservation Chapel:

While plans must be made now for the chapel, we know the chapel will not be part of the first phase of the church and only the "shell" will be constructed. At first, we will have the tabernacle only.

On Page 11, under Program Considerations, the second bullet point: Delete the wording "tabernacle does not need to have easy access from the sanctuary" and substitute wording that reflects the meaning of "*diocesan regulations require easy access from sanctuary to the tabernacle. It should be placed close to the altar.*"

Under the sixth bullet point regarding style of liturgical furniture, add the words "*but harmonious*" after the words "distinctively different". We considered the need to move furniture from the chapel to the Eucharistic Hall for various rituals; therefore the furnishings should be harmonious.

Under the seventh bullet point, regarding our "dream" of having curved walls, Douglas Lynn said in his written remarks that curved walls present an acoustical problem; there may be "dead spaces" in the sounds. We would like further discussion with Robert and Renzo on this matter.

In the last bullet point, we had a brief discussion of light fixtures for the chapel and the ease of changing light bulbs. We need some ideas of how the light fixtures would function in a room with high ceilings and how the light bulbs would be changed.

On Page 11 Program Requirements, the third bullet point, we would change the capacity of the chapel from 150-200 to "100 people."

Reconciliation Chapel, page 12

Under Program Considerations we would add wording to the effect that: “some accommodation for visibility should be incorporated”. We feel that a window in the door would accomplish this goal.

Under Program Requirements we would eliminate the fourth bullet point “door into reconciliation chapel shall not have a door closure.” The third bullet point regarding “handicap/wheelchair accessible” is sufficient.

We would add one more requirement: “*A separate heating/cooling system for the Reconciliation Chapel*”.

Music Ministry Spaces, page 12

Change the wording of the first sentence to eliminate the words “music ministers” and substitute the word “*presider*”.

Under Program Considerations Page 13, bullet point 10, add the words “*and accessible*” after “....space needs to be available”.

Under Program Requirements Page 14, the last bullet point. Wording should be changed to reflect the requirement as follows: “Cantors sing individually, but there are occasional needs for two *or three* cantors at the cantor stand to alternate during the singing of litanies (Easter Vigil, All Saints and the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ.)

Art

Under Program Considerations Page 15, the first bullet point, substitute the words “sense of” for “quiet” so the wording is “*having a sense of mystery*”. Correct minor typos: “depth and understanding” and at end of this paragraph “artist too” in place of “artist top”.

Under Program Requirements substitute the word “space” for “shrine in the first bullet point. In the second bullet point, substitute the word “sculptor” for the word “sculpture”.

In the third bullet point, substitute the word “one” for “a”, changing the wording to “Provide *one* dedicated shrine or statue to Blessed Mother...”

On Page 16, delete the paragraph regarding a dedicated shrine to Our Lady of Guadalupe. We want only one shrine to the Blessed Mother.

Under Listing of Potential Art, delete the reference to Our Lady of Guadalupe and under the listing to “Blessed Mother” add the wording that reflects our desire to have this matter “to be determined”. We are open to all forms of art including a stained glass window, a statue (wood, marble?), or tapestry.

Under the bullet point regarding the Stations of the Cross, we want to have one set at church interior in the Eucharistic Hall. The matter of a second set outdoors is to be considered at a later date.

Furnishings

On page 17, bullet point for “kneeler” change the wording to “*kneelers, as many four*”. For Ossuary, add the words “*and two tables*”. Add one more item: “*gifts table*”.

Under the Altar paragraph, delete the words in the last sentence: “with seating surrounding the altar”.

On Page 18, regarding the program requirement in the fourth bullet point “table top of stone”, we would like clarification. Is this a requirement? In this discussion, Father Mike mentioned that a parishioner had suggested that we incorporate our present wooden altar somehow into the design of the new church. We agreed that this would be a good idea, something for further consideration.

Under the Ambo paragraph, we would substitute the word “*including*” for the word “and” so that the sentence reads as follows “The ambo is the place of proclamation of scripture *including* the responsorial psalm.”

Under Program Considerations page 18, Douglas Lynn suggests we add one further bullet point to reflect the meaning of “*Ambo area should be designed to accommodate three cantors. We could have two complementary stands for special readings as needed for Palm Sunday and Good Friday.*”

Baptismal Font

Page 20. Change the spelling (and meaning) of the word “emersion” to “immersion”.

Douglas Lynn asks where the paschal candle will be displayed during the Easter season and suggests we add a bullet point under Program Requirements as follows:

“*Consideration of placement of paschal candle during the Easter season.*”

Tabernacle

Under Program Requirements, page 20 delete the word “fairly” before “indestructible” as the tabernacle must be as secure as possible.

Appointments

Further discussion is needed regarding the design of the Ambry. Most likely it will be wall-mounted. On page 21, add “*votive candles*” to the list after Advent Wreath. We need to know more about fire code requirements for candles left burning. We do not want “electric” votive candles.

Equipment

We discussed the water and equipment used in the baptismal font. We wish to avoid the problem of corrosion and the odor of chlorine. We believe there are chemicals that mimic sea water which can be added to the water to avoid algae and the like. We want further information on this matter.

In closing remarks Father Mike told us that Robert Habiger will meet with us at our September 9 meeting. The meeting closed with prayer led by Father Mike at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Quinn