

The Sanctuary and Nave

... building for our future!

Our Church building is a living sign of the reality of our faith community. In his first pastoral letter, Saint Peter, encourages the early Christians to, "come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 2.4-5)

The whole church building reflects the great beauty of the people who gather to offer this sacrifice of praise in the Mass. The building teaches about our faith and it gives witness to our faith. Our new Holy Cross Church will be a strong witness to the vibrancy of our parish's faith and an important sign of the Catholic Church's presence in Georgetown.

The church building is a *house for the people of God*. A sign of God's presence and a beacon for those who are searching for God's truth.

Our new church building will also be a gathering place for our faith community to be strengthened in knowledge and mutual support. It will include *administrative offices* as well as our *parish life center*.

Message from Father Dave ...

God's peace to you all. We had an excellent response to our "open house" on Sunday, January 27th. More than 200 people had an opportunity to view the plans, meet the architects, and learn about our project. When the final plans and artists' renderings are completed in the next several weeks they will be mounted on the walls near the baptismal font at the entrance of our church. This month's theme is the Sanctuary and Nave - I hope this information is helpful.



"You have established the Church as your holy city, founded on the apostles, with Jesus Christ its cornerstone. You continue to build your Church with chosen stones, enlivened by the Spirit, and cemented together by love."

Preface for the Dedication of a New Church

The term "sanctuary" can refer to the entire worship space or simply to the area that has the Altar Table, Ambo (pulpit) and other furnishings necessary for the celebration of Mass. For our purposes, we will refer to the *sanctuary* as that part of the Nave that is the area reserved for the Altar, Ambo, Tabernacle and chair. The reverse side of this insert will discuss some of the vocabulary used to describe the church building.

Sacred space is important in our lives. Having a building that is set aside for the worship of God is an important sign in our society. Our way of behaving is different in sacred space than it is in other public spaces. We gather in sacred space for the specific purpose of offering our worship to the Father, through Jesus the Son, in the unity of the Holy Spirit. Our church building is dedicated for this purpose and all the elements of the space have a rich ritual tradition and importance.

The *sanctuary* is related to the rest of the nave - not only in design but also in purpose. It is not a stage, but it is the focal point of our communal action - particularly during the celebration of Mass. The *sanctuary* is simply furnished with an Altar (Table of the Lord) and an Ambo (Table of God's Word). God's people gather around these Tables to be fed and nourished by God's loving grace. A chair is set aside for the presiding priest. The Tabernacle (in which we reserve the Blessed Sacrament) will also be in the Sanctuary. It will be located on the back wall in a worthy position which will allow for easy access during the liturgy and at other times for private prayer.

The sanctuary also contains the principal work of sacred art. This piece calls us to prayer, reflection and devotion. It will be located on the reredos.

God's people enter the *sanctuary* from their place in the assembly when they are exercising a ministry.

Church vocabulary ...

Nave - the area of the church building which contains the seating for the Assembly and the Sanctuary.

Reredos - decorative back wall of the sanctuary which often contains some work of sacred art.

Ambo - also called a pulpit or lectern. The Ambo is the *Table of God's Word*. It is the place from which the Scripture readings are proclaimed during the liturgy.

Altar Table - a free standing table made of wood or stone. It may be permanent or movable. A permanent altar contains the relics of saints.

Altar of Repose - a table on which the Tabernacle rests.

Tabernacle - the receptacle (often house shaped) in which the Blessed Sacrament is reserved.

Narthex - large gathering space that one enters before entering the Nave. From the Narthex of our new church one can access the *Parish Life Centre* and the *Administration Centre*. The *sacristy* will be located off the Narthex. This is the room in which the ministers gather prior to the start of the liturgy.

Parish Life Centre - this area of our new facility will house the parish hall (with a capacity of 200 persons); three meeting rooms - two of which can open up into the hall. Some classroom spaces for the *Catechesis of the Good Shepherd* and *Children's Liturgy*. We will also have a choir room in which the choirs can rehearse during the week and before Mass on Sundays.

Administration Centre - the parish offices for the secretary, pastor, pastoral associates will be housed in this area. We will also have record storage facilities and room for office equipment.

Lord, may our prayer ascend as incense in your sight. As this building is filled with fragrance so may your Church fill the world with the fragrance of Christ.

Rite of Dedication, #66

Prayer for the building of our new Church

God and Father of us all,
you have created all things through your Son, Jesus Christ,
the cornerstone of your Church.

Through the gift of your eternal wisdom
guide and direct us as we build our new church:
a temple dedicated to your eternal glory
and a home for all who seek to worship you
in spirit and in truth.

Grant that our work may progress day by day
to its successful completion.
Shaped anew by your grace may we, like living stones,
be built into a spiritual house
to offer you our sacrifice of praise.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

