

CHURCH OF ST THOMAS MORE
Interior Design Team Meeting
Discussion of Baptismal Font, Artists
February 28, 2012

Present: Rev. Michael Ratajczak, Pastor; Robert Habiger, Liturgical Consultant; Kathy Arciero, Mary Castle, Diana Diaz, Mario Diaz, Lorraine Doering, Pat Goscienski, Phil Goscienski, Douglas Lynn, Sondra Parks, Chris Smith, Kathleen Quinn

Absent: Charlene Buhlert, Ann Eriksson

The meeting opened with the Prayer of Dedication at 7:05 PM.

A). Phil Goscienski asked if there were any comments regarding the minutes of the meeting of February 14. Father Mike was unable to attend that meeting and he offered these comments in light of the minutes of the last meeting:

1). There will be no candles in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel. Candles will be placed at the Marian Shrine and the St. Thomas More Shrine. We will only be using real, wax candles. We will not be using electric candles.

2). On Holy Thursday, the Eucharist will be transported to the Daily Chapel for adoration until midnight. This will continue our present practice. On Holy Thursdays, adoration will not take place in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel.

3). Father Mike prefers the use of an oculus in an interior door of the tabernacle to display the consecrated host. This creates greater safety. A monstrance placed on the tabernacle could easily be stolen if not "bolted down" when in use.

4). Although the Parish has two monstrances at the present time, Fr. Mike suggested that it would be a worthy gesture to have a new one designed and created for our new Church.

5). Father Mike questioned the timeliness of discussing the concepts of "nobleness and beauty" as suggested for the agenda of today's meeting. We have discussed this in the past and prefer "noble simplicity" in all our designs. This seemed to be the consensus of our team since the beginning. There is no need to take up this discussion again at this time.

Robert Habiger remarked that it was his idea for this discussion so that we, the IDT, have the language, and are on the same page, as parishioners ask us to "explain" our new Church to them. It was agreed that this discussion could take place near the end of the work of the IDT, but now is not the time. There is too much to do in choosing artists, and moving forward with the interior of the Church.

6). Fr. Mike is in agreement that Stephen Hirt should be hired to design/create the baptismal font, altar, ambo and tabernacle. Robert Habiger will be in touch with Stephen Hirt so that the processes can begin.

7). Concern was raised about concrete walls in the church. Rather than discussing our likes and dislikes about what may be in the architect's design, Fr. Mike has asked us to wait to see Renzo Zecchetto's renderings and then critique them at the time they are presented to us.

8). After consultation with Bishop Brom, Father Mike informed us that Bishop Brom has agreed to our request that the chairs in the Daily Mass Chapel will not be required to have kneelers.

B). Robert Habiger reminded us that the most important item for our discussion this evening is the selection of the stained glass artist. We have two in mind: Elizabeth Devereaux (with whom we met earlier) and Claire Wing.

1). Discussion quickly centered upon how the IDT will arrive at selecting an artist. The IDT came to the conclusion that as we discuss various items we will have a sense of what is needed and how to proceed.

The example was mentioned regarding Robert Habiger's second design of the altar. There was an immediate and clear "no" from most of the IDT members and Robert Habiger went back to his original design.

2). Robert Habiger considers that he is the designer, and Stephen Hirt is the fabricator. Father Mike told us that this will be handled "step by step". Stephen Hirt will present his ideas to Robert Habiger and will collaborate with him.

3). Regarding costs, Robert Habiger has reminded us that it is his responsibility to make sure that the work of the artists stay within our budget. He feels that all of the artists with whom we are dealing will do so. Also it is Robert Habiger's responsibility to ensure that what we are paying for is indeed worth the cost for which we are paying.

4). Some of the considerations regarding the font include: sound of the water, lights, appearance of the water flow (perhaps a dark background is best), sound of the pump and apparatus. Robert Habiger told us he has designed such fonts in the past where the electrical apparatus is hidden under large removable decorative stones. There are companies that specialize in fonts such as Roman Fountains in Albuquerque and Southern California.

C). We next viewed two Power Point presentations: one for the work of Elizabeth Devereaux and the other for Claire Wing, both glass artists. In addition we reviewed Renzo Zecchetto's renderings indicating where the stained glass could be installed in the church.

1).The Stations of the Cross as currently planned may be entirely in the garden, rather than starting inside and moving to the exterior. However, Robert Habiger mentioned that the design

for that section of the Eucharistic Hall is not finished, and that the final location of the Stations is yet to be determined.

2). The work of both glass artists was shown to us. Lorraine Doering offered to have the two Power Point presentations placed on a special website that all of us on the committee can review for further consideration.

D). After a break at 8:15 PM, we discussed the two glass artists.

1). Sondra Parks remarked that the work of Claire Wing is remarkable but we did not see her cast or carved glass on the presentation. Her stained glass is similar to that of Elizabeth Devereaux whose examples on her Power Point presentation were wonderful as well.

Mary Castle remarked that she prefers the work of Devereaux.

Diana Diaz agreed.

Chris Smith said she was especially drawn to Devereaux's "day to night" designs wherein the windows have completely different appearances according to the interior or exterior light that falls on the windows.

The committee agreed that this was especially desirable.

2). Robert Habiger suggested that we may choose to use Devereaux for the windows and Claire Wing for Mary's shrine where a three dimensional carved glass image would be desirable.

We looked at a picture of such an image that Claire Wing created for St. Peter's Church in Fallbrook.

Robert Habiger reminded us that the area for Mary's shrine is somewhat limited and an image that is placed on the wall would be appropriate rather than a full statue. It is to be noted that we have not yet chosen which image of Mary we prefer. That decision will be made later.

3). Douglas Lynn reminded us of the Easter Vigil rituals and the Saturday evening Mass. The windows that glow from reflective interior light would be especially desirable.

4). We considered both artists with Elizabeth Devereaux as our first choice and Claire Wing as the second choice.

5). The IDT decided to hire Elizabeth Devereaux.

We will discuss Mary's shrine at our March 27 meeting.

The IDT will continue to review the work of Claire Wing and to see in what way we may be able to utilize her artistic talents.

6). Robert Habiger asked us to consider the artist Linda Dabeau whose work we viewed on her website.

She works in bronze and in cast glass.

We will review her work on March 27.

We will decide which material we prefer for the St. Thomas More shrine later.

7). Will all the shrines and windows be finished at the time of the dedication of the sanctuary? Father Mike told us that it is not necessary; many of the items can and will be installed after the Dedication as funds are available.

8). Douglas Lynn asked about how the lamp in the Reservation Chapel will be visible in the main sanctuary. There will be an interior opening for which the design is not yet complete. Douglas Lynn mentioned that initial renderings seemed to have a window between the Eucharistic Hall and the Blessed Sacrament Chapel that was not mentioned in Robert's earlier presentation on the stained glass windows options. Robert indicated that this is likely to be some sort of screen.

9). We talked about the artist for the crucifix/corpus. Two were recommended by Robert Habiger: Linda Dabeau and Jerzy Kinard. We wish to review their portfolios at the March 13 meeting. We must decide whether we prefer bronze or wood.

10). Father Mike told us that the matter of the organ pipes is under consideration. We thought they would be split between opposing walls. The organ builder prefers them to be in the same area on the north side of the sanctuary. Some of the biggest pipes would be 25 to 27 feet high, too tall for the space available. There is a way to handle the problem; it is being worked on. In a side note, Douglas told us the exterior finish of the pipes can be any finish or color we desire. In the process of accommodating the pipes, Renzo has decided to move the bells from the north exterior to the bell tower.

D). We have discussed the pews and chairs. One manufacturer that could be considered is Larry Vaughan of the Wood and Iron Factory in Tijuana.

But Renzo has chosen the pews that he prefers and fits in best with his design.

The pews will not have end caps nor will they have pamphlet racks.

We must take into consideration the California Building Code that requires wheel chair access and side transfer access.

We talked about silent kneelers and Robert Habiger told us the "pneumatic" ones have been troublesome as they are easily damaged.

The matter of silence is best handled in other ways.

We will not have kneelers in the chapels or in the chairs that will be in the front rows of the church.

The next meetings of the Interior Design Team are scheduled as follows: March 13, March 27, April 10 and April 17. Robert Habiger will be on vacation in mid-March and cannot attend the March 13 meeting. We will discuss the Stations of the Cross on April 10.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Quinn