

CHURCH OF ST THOMAS MORE
INTERIOR DESIGN TEAM
Minutes of Meeting of April 12, 2011

Present:

Rev. Michael Ratajcak, Pastor
Robert Habiger, Liturgical Consultant
Pat & Phil Goscienski, Chairpersons

Members of the Interior Design Team:

Kathy Arciero
Charlene Buhlert
Mary Castle
Diana Diaz
Mario Diaz
Ann Eriksson
Douglas Lynn
Sondra Parks
Kathleen Quinn

Excused:

Lorraine Doering

The meeting came to order at 7:00 PM with the opening prayer.

The minutes of the previous meeting had been reviewed and approved as amended. They were posted on the parish website.

Douglas Lynn asked about a June 1 deadline and whether we can meet it. Robert Habiger said they are working on the floor plan. He told us he is working with the Diocesan Art and Architecture Committee. Areas of discussion include: furnishings, lighting, music, colors and finishes, and the cost of furniture.

With regard to the letter from the Diocese dated March 22, 2011, what are the responsibilities of the Interior Design Team?

It was noted that Robert is our agent, speaking on behalf of the Interior Design Team and the Liturgical Program that we created.

It will be Robert who will deal directly with Renzo Zecchetto and the Diocese on our behalf.

Douglas Lynn raised the concern if we would be ready for the next meeting with the Diocese which is, at this point, scheduled for June 1st.

Fr. Mike reassured Douglas and the rest of the IDT that our work will be issue-driven not time-driven. If we are not ready for the next quarterly meeting of the Diocesan Art and

Architecture Committee on June 1st, we would aim for the next quarterly meeting which will be in September.

The presentation made at our last meeting with the Diocesan Committee was based on drawings created in 2007.

Since that meeting, Renzo has seriously begun work on the floor plan and Robert is reviewing Renzo's plans.

The first item for discussion was the place for the reserved Eucharist. A small chapel for private prayer for 12-20 people in 240-260 sq. ft. is our desire.

We want a tabernacle on a free standing pillar.

Robert asked to verify that we wish to create a place for the tabernacle where people can go for private prayer. The IDT answered that question in the affirmative.

It is the desire of the IDT that we create "a space within a space" that becomes the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, located between the Daily Mass Chapel and the Main Eucharistic Hall.

Pat Goscienski raised the concern of traffic flow through the Blessed Sacrament Chapel between the Daily Mass Chapel and the Main Eucharistic Hall. Robert noted that concern and said it would be taken into consideration.

Pat Goscienski then asked if the diocese allows us to have two altars in the Church. Douglas referred to the GIRM.

As he did so, Father Mike remarked that St Therese of Carmel Parish has two altars on their property, but not in the same building.

GIRM: Sec 303 states: "...it is preferable to have a single altar."

It is the opinion of the IDT that "preferable" does not mean "no," and that it is the preference and desire of St. Thomas More to continue our 25 year tradition of a smaller, more intimate space for daily Mass, and smaller Funerals and Weddings. We have a strong case to make in this regard. From our point of view, it is unacceptable to be celebrating a Mass for 20, 40, 80, or even 100 people in a space that will seat 1,000 to 1,200 people.

Fr. Mike will speak with the Bishop to see how strongly the Diocese is committed to the single altar preference.

Robert told us that, in Renzo's latest plan, the restrooms are in the interior of the Church. The Men's Restroom and the Women's Restroom are in different places in the Church, and the Women's Restroom has its entrance from the Plaza.

Renzo also relocated the place of the Reconciliation Chapel from "under the Tower" to a different place in the Church.

Robert suggested that there be something "significant" at the base of the Tower, and the Reconciliation Chapel would be appropriate. Robert raised this issue with Renzo.

Father Mike stated that something significant should be "under the Tower," if not the Reconciliation Chapel, then possibly one of our shrines.

In a discussion of the location of the choir, Douglas Lynn asked where it will be in relation to the ceiling as he is concerned about acoustics. He needs to present a plan to the acoustic designer and the consultant for the organ installation.

Father Mike again reminded the IDT that our timeline will be issue-driven, not time-driven.

June 1st is the next meeting with the Diocesan Art and Architecture Committee, but if we are not ready by then, we will aim for the September meeting.

Robert reminded us that all spaces, including the music ministry needs handicap access. The accessibility should be incorporated into the design so as to welcome all to the Sacraments without calling attention to people with disabilities.

Phil Goscienski asked how much space is needed for the various choirs, the musicians and their musical instruments.

Douglas Lynn said that, at Easter Vigil, all the choirs will be present. This includes the Sanctuary Choir, Bell Choir, Children's Choir, and the Praise Team. This indicates how much space will be needed in the new Church.

Robert then mentioned the use of monitors for the choir and other musical groups. He explained that the word "monitor" refers to a small loudspeaker that is installed to coordinate the sounds from various groups.

It was also mentioned that our present Eucharistic Lamp in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel is fueled by oil. We hope to continue this practice in the new Church.

We then discussed the question of the Narthex. In Renzo's latest plan, he has created an "outdoor Narthex" rather than an "indoor Narthex" which was in the original plan and is in our Liturgical Program. Robert has raised this issue with Renzo.

With regard to the rest rooms Robert explained the most recent changes in the code in regard to restrooms. The latest code calls for one toilet for every 150 men and one toilet for every 75 women.

We talked about traffic flow as people enter the Main Eucharistic Hall, in particular for Palm Sunday and Easter Vigil when only one door is used.

It is our desire to have a main ceremonial door which will be used regularly, not reserved for just special occasions.

All the side doors will be operational as well.

We discussed whether we will have a Crucifix and whether it should be a permanent, wall-mounted cross, or possibly a free-standing cross that would have the ability to hold the Processional Cross with Corpus.

The Processional Cross with Corpus must be light weight, perhaps made of aluminum. If we have a wall-mounted Crucifix, then the Processional Cross with Corpus would be placed out of sight during Mass after the Entrance Procession.

If we have a free standing Cross, then the Processional Cross with Corpus would be held on the free-standing Cross during Mass.

What we will have in this regard continues to be open for discussion dependent upon Renzo's design of the interior Eucharistic Hall

In a discussion of the placement of the Ambo, we were reminded of the importance of the Word.

The priest or deacon should be able to see the reader.

Robert is not overly concerned that a segment of the Assembly may not be able to see the face of the Reader. The importance is in the proclamation by the Reader.

Discussion on this issue will continue with the Diocesan Art and Architecture Committee by Robert.

The letter from the Diocesan Art and Architecture Committee suggests that we have a "cry room."

We do not wish to have such a space but rather continue our practice of encouraging parents to take unhappy children outdoors on the Plaza to hear the Mass with the outdoor speaker provided and with the ability to watch the Mass through the large segment of glass wall that will be facing the Plaza.

We discussed the orientation of the altar and main center aisle.

Robert, based on the floor plan that was provided to the Diocese at the meeting of the Diocesan Art and Architecture Committee meeting, provided a series of different floor plans which were given to Renzo. We viewed those various layouts, one, of which included an antiphonal setting similar to many Monastery Chapels.

Robert has also reviewed and critiqued Renzo's latest floor plan and Robert is waiting to hear from Renzo.

No firm decision has been made at this time regarding this issue.

Father Mike announced that T.B. Penick has been chosen as the General Contractor. They are already beginning to meet with Renzo.

They will participate in the Design Assist with Renzo.

When the construction documents are completed, the Parish then has the choice of choosing them for the actual construction, or, if we are unhappy for whatever reasons, we can choose a new General Contractor.

Phil Goscienski asked for further comments.

The only comments were from Robert who told us that the present plans show a garden on the north side of the church that is not handicap accessible.

We were not aware of a garden in that area and concluded it may be only landscaping, as this is where the slope appears.

IDT felt that this area is only a landscaped area, and not open to pedestrian traffic.

Robert urged us to view the website of his company: DPSDesign.org where we can go to the portfolio/religious area to see his comments on accessibility in the sanctuary.

Phil & Pat Goscienski will prepare an update for the Parish website to describe our recent progress.

Father Mike said that we may have a flyer in an upcoming Parish Bulletin to inform parishioners of our progress.

Chris Smith suggested that we have something ready for the Easter Bulletin.

Robert suggested that we ask people to pray for our efforts.

Father Mike reminded us that Robert is acting as our agent with Renzo Zecchetto.

The most recent floor plan reflects our Liturgical Program, but it needs more "tweaking."

Robert will continue to work with Renzo in order that the interior floor plan reflects our Liturgical Program.

Next meeting is scheduled for May 10.

We closed with prayer at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Quinn