## **Geature**

Courier photos by Linda Dow Hayes



The new organ graces the balcony of the recently remodeled Holy Family Church in Auburn.



Phil Schlueter, shop coordinator for Schlicker Organ Company of Buffalo, completes final adjustments to one of the new organ's pipes. Bishop Matthew H. Clark dedicated the organ and blessed the newly redecorated Holy Family Church on Saturday, June 24.





A view from above shows Phil Schlueter testing the sound of the new organ.

## Auburnians enjoy new organ's voice

At Holy Family Parish in Auburn, the phrase "pipe dreams" has taken on a new meaning these days.

The parish is enjoying the music of a new organ, installed as part of a \$500,000 renovation of the church.

The new organ replaces an instrument that was a hodgepodge of components taken from different organs. Some parts were more than 120 years old. According to Father Conrad Sundholm, the parish's pastor, "It was more economical to buy a new organ than to take the old and try to repair it."

Weighing more than two tons, with 1,136 pipes and standing 21 feet tall, the new organ took nearly two weeks to install. Then workmen from the Schlicker Organ Company of Buffalo, from

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Phil Schlueter checks the tone of the organ by hammering on individual pipes. The 1989 Schlicker organ replaces one that had been built from parts of three organs Holy Family has had in the past.

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which the parish bought the organ, spent additional weeks voicing balancing the sound and synchronizing the speed of the pipes — and tuning the instrument.

The parish also enjoyed a bargain price for the new organ. Father Sundholm said that the Schlicker company had undergone corporate restructuring after the parish had made initial contacts about purchasing an electric organ. Company officials decided to market pipe organs rather than electric organs, and said they would give Holy Family the pipe organ for the same price as the electric. Thus the parish got a \$250,000 instrument for \$125,000. The decision to replace the organ was made in conjunction with plans to renovate the interior of the 155-year-old church. Last May, more than \$220,000 in pledges were raised to help finance the project. The rest of the money was raised through loans and grants.

In June, 1988, the church was gutted, with the pews and stained-glass windows temporarily removed. Carpeting was installed, walls plastered and repainted, and the altar was redesigned and rebuilt using the original marble.

The year-long project culminated Saturday, June 24, with a 5 p.m. organ recital, followed by a Mass celebrated by Bishop Matthew H. Clark. Bishop Clark blessed the organ and dedicated the reconstructed altar.

Father Sundholm said he was pleased with not only the organ, but with the overall renovation of the church. "More important, all the people who paid their money are pleased," he said.

- Lee Strong

**Catholic Courier** 

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