

DIOCESAN NEWS

Architect: Past sways space style

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

PENFIELD — Father Richard S. Vosko, a diocesan priest from Albany, is also a church architect with a simple question on his mind for designers of liturgical space.

"Would any of us put a bathtub in the dining room?" he said.

He admitted that this was a "silly" question — yet he pointed out that an increasing number of Catholic churches feature their spiritual bathing area — the baptismal font — near their spiritual dining area — the altar.

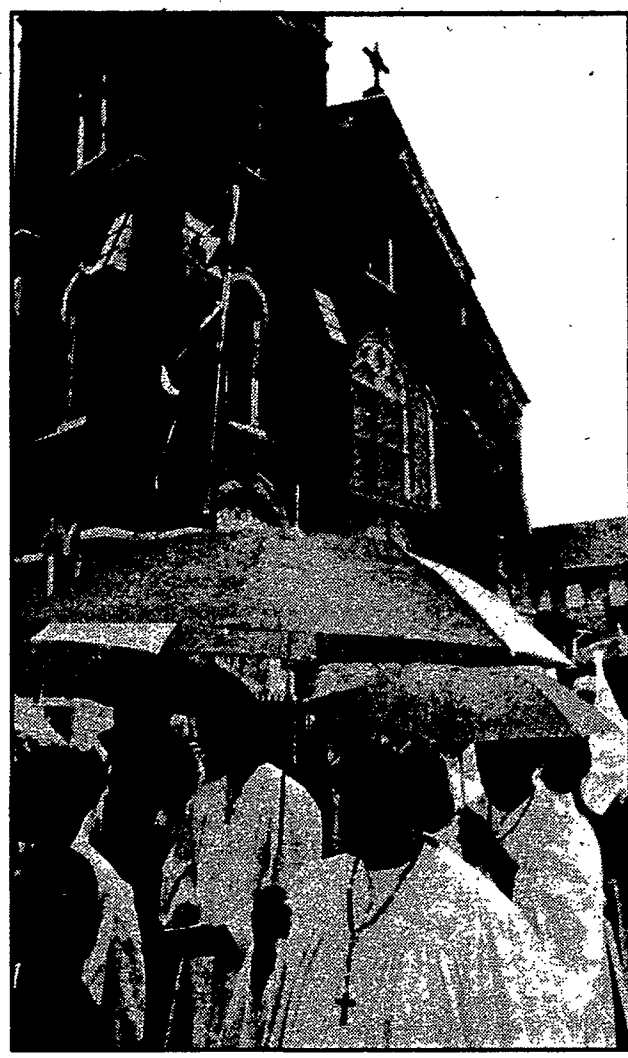
"This is an anomaly in church history," he said, noting the font's traditional location is at the main entrance of a church.

Baptismal fonts symbolize Christian initiation, a washing away of one's old spiritual life, and should be located near the church entrance, he said. On the other hand, the altar represents the table where Christians share Christ's body and blood, and is where Christ's sacrifice is commemorated, said Father Vosko.

"To put them in the same architectural setting is to dilute the power and the purpose of both," said Father Vosko, who has been a designer and consultant on worship space since the 1970s. He recently authored the book *Designing Future Worship Spaces*.

Father Vosko made these points during an interview following his speech before about 40 participants attending a workshop on liturgical space at St. Joseph's Church, 45 Gebhardt Road. The day-long workshop took place Sept. 6, and featured two presentations by Father Vosko along with group discussions.

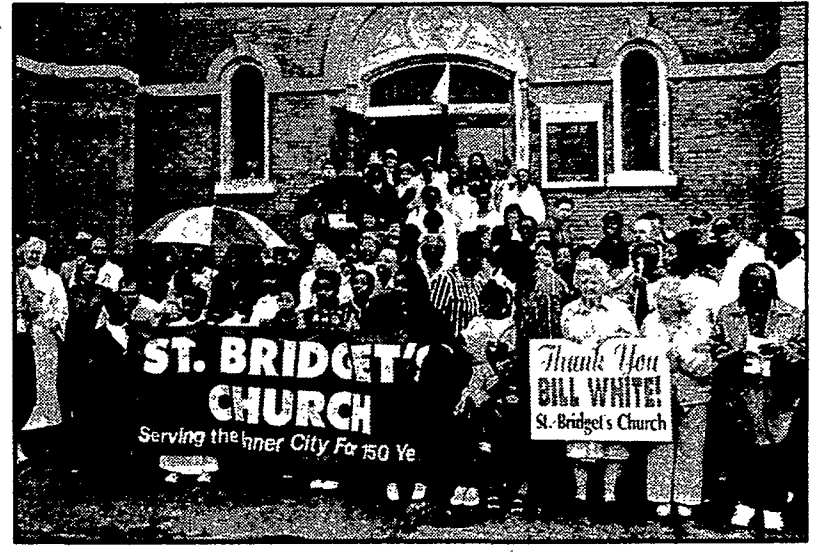
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March to the future

About 150 St. Bridget's parishioners processed from the former St. Bridget's Church, 175 St. Bridget's Drive, Rochester, to their new home, the former St. Theresa's Church, 14 Mark St., Sept. 7. St. Bridget's voted in April to purchase St. Theresa's property rather than invest \$1.25 million to repair its own building. St. Theresa's parishioners had voted to discontinue their parish due to declining membership, and now attend St. Stanislaus Church. (Below) St. Bridget's parishioners pose one last time for each other in front of their old church. (Left, wearing rosary) Mosella Mayo joins marchers departing the Old St. Bridget's Church. The diocese has put the former St. Bridget's building up for sale.

Greg Francis/Catholic Courier



Subcommittee of the Diocesan Office of Liturgy, the workshop was designed to help parish building planners with their work, according to Sister Estelle Martin, RSM, the subcommittee's chairwoman.

In his morning speech, Father Vosko used a slide show to trace church architectural history back to Christianity's earliest beginnings, to explain how the modern church arrived at its liturgical space guidelines. He added that the original model for church liturgical space was rooted in the location of the Last Supper.

"The key thing for all of us to appreciate is that all of this started in a dining room," he said.

Through the centuries, church liturgi-

cal space changed greatly because Christianity went from being a persecuted underground religion, to an established faith with imperial power, to an institution attacked by Protestant reformers, he said. Whereas early churches were fairly simple in design, reflecting their origins in Christian homes, churches gradually became more elaborate, becoming by the Middle Ages almost like museums filled with art, he noted.

Meanwhile, through the centuries, the altar became less a dining table and more and more a stage, he said, a fact still reflected in many churches today. He pointed out, for example, that many U.S. churches reflect the European origins of

the U.S. church and that few "American" Catholic churches have been built because no one agrees on exactly what an American-style church should look like.

"Most of our churches today still 'say' that the priest does (the Mass)," he said. "Most churches today still say that the assembly is a congregation — passive."

Vosko — who is designing a cathedral for the Los Angeles Archdiocese — said his solution is to place the altar in the center of the assembly, not in front of it. Worshipers seated in a circle around the altar symbolize unity around Christ, he noted.

"I want to get the maximum number of people closer to the table," he said.

Obituaries

Fr. Scanlon; dedicated OFM Cap

Father Noel Scanlon, OFM Cap, died Aug. 19, 1997, at Lawrence Hospital, Bronxville, N.Y. He was 72.

Born in Middle Village, N.Y., and baptized Edward Scanlon, Father Scanlon was ordained in 1951. He served in several communities, and while dedicated to preaching ministry lived in friaries including Saint Fidelis Friary in Interlaken, N.Y., 1973-1986. He returned to that friary in 1993 for two years.

Father Scanlon also served as a

parochial assistant, assistant novice master, and guardian and rector during his years in ministry in Massachusetts and Maine, as well as New York.

His funeral Mass was celebrated Aug. 23 at the Monastery Church of the Sacred Heart in Yonkers, N.Y. Donations were requested to the Fr. Noel Scanlon Memorial Burse, for the support and education of young friars, in care of the Capuchin Franciscan Office of Development, 210 W. 31st St., New York, NY 10001-2876.

Alice Jones; longtime educator

Dr. Alice Marie Jones, director of graduate elementary education at Nazareth College, died Aug. 31, 1997, after a long illness. She was 53.

Dr. Jones had served at Nazareth since 1990. She was responsible for designing and implementing the college's graduate elementary education program. She previously served for 18 years in the Rochester City School District, and was also associate professor of education at SUNY College at Potsdam.

"I was particularly impressed with her tireless commitment to improving education in urban schools," said Dr. Rose Marie Beston, Nazareth College president.

"As a teacher, school administrator and college professor, Alice impacted hundreds of lives," added Dr. Kay Marshman, dean of graduate studies. "The commu-

nity has lost a dedicated educator."

Dr. Jones is survived by her brothers and sisters, Bobby Jean Thomas, Garland Jones, Joyce Sanders and Patricia Edmonds; and nephews, nieces, aunts and an uncle.

A memorial Mass for Dr. Jones will be held Monday, Sept. 29, at 4 p.m. in the Vasile Alma Mater Chapel at Nazareth's Otto Shults Community Center.

In addition, a celebration of Dr. Jones' life was held Sept. 3 at the New Life Fellowship Church in Rochester. Funeral services and interment took place in her hometown of Sanford, N.C.

A fund is being set up in Dr. Jones' memory. Checks may be made payable to Nazareth College and noted in memory of Dr. Jones. They should be sent to the President's Office, Nazareth College, 4245 East Ave., Rochester, NY 14618.

MISSION NEWS

Three years ago, Cecilia Chen Rui, seeing the deprivation and poverty at the state-run orphanages in her homeland of China, resolved: "I have to do something." And she did.

The 29-year-old rescued 46 neglected children from these orphanages, bringing them to live with her in her home. "For me as a Catholic it was clear: you are only a Christian if that is reflected in your life," Cecilia said.

Like Cecilia, each of us is also called to "do something" — to, as Cecilia did, make sure that our lives reflect our faith. Through our words and our actions, we share our faith in Jesus, the one Savior of all the human family. *Today, won't you offer your support so that those who do not know about Jesus and the salvation He offers — two-thirds of the world's people, in fact — may come to learn about Him through the words and loving witness of missionaries?*



Cecilia Chen Rui (adult, center)

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