

Parish dedicates renovated church

Mike Latona/Catholic Courier

SPENCERPORT — St. John the Evangelist Parish celebrated the completion of its \$400,000 renovation project with rededication festivities on Sunday, Nov. 17.

Bishop Matthew H. Clark consecrated the new baptismal font and altar during the 11:30 a.m. Mass. An open house of the church followed during the afternoon.

Renovation of St. John the Evangelist took place over a four-month period ending in October, with Sean Moran of SWBR Architects & Engineers PC serving as senior project manager and J.C. Pilato Inc. as general contractor. Father William Michatek, St. John's pastor, said that \$378,000 has already been raised to cover renovation costs, and that the remaining \$22,000 expense will be met by additional donations and a large bequest from a parishioner.

Numerous changes have been

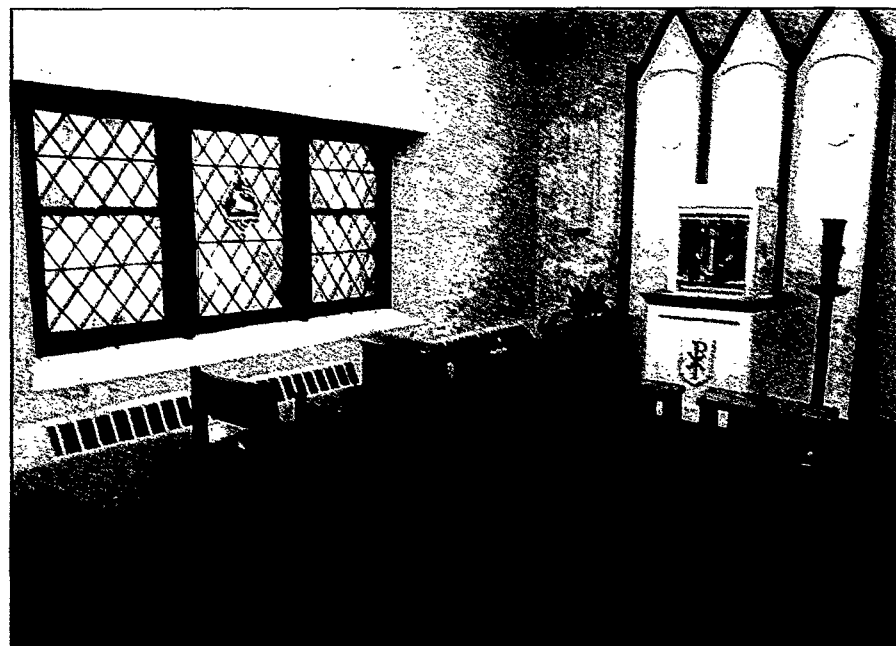
made to St. John's interior. Among the more notable alterations is the tabernacle's relocation from the sanctuary to a private adoration chapel near the church's side entrance. Father Michatek said that the tabernacle is "generally visible from a good part of the church." Portable chairs have been set up for adoration in the tabernacle room, which was formerly a sacristy.

Just across the adoration chapel's entranceway is the new baptismal font. Another eye-catcher is the arrangement of the church's pews, which have been refinished and are now slanted inward.

"As you're sitting in the pew, the idea is you're not sitting like ducks in a row," Father Michatek remarked. Some pews have been replaced by portable seating, especially near the main entrance, where a small gathering area can now be formed when the seats are removed.

The new altar is situated approximately six feet closer to the congregation. Other updates in the altar area include a new ambo (pulpit), presider's chair, processional cross and candle stands.

On the church's walls, parishioners and visitors can view a new statue of the Holy Family as well as refurbished Stations of the Cross and stained-glass windows that have been cleaned.



Karin von Voigtlander/Catholic Courier

The creation of this adoration chapel was part of a \$400,000 renovation project recently completed at St. John the Evangelist Church, Spencerport.

Father Michatek made special note of the lighting that has been added, saying, "It just brightens things up. It was really very dark."

Other components of the renovation include a new vestry, remodeled confessional, new spiral staircase to the choir loft, new carpeting, new bathroom, updated electrical wiring and sound system, and new emergency lighting and fire alarms. And, on the outside, access for the handicapped has been improved.

The church was built in 1915. Father Michatek said St. John's last major renovation had taken place in 1967, and that subsequent changes had been done in a "piecemeal" fashion. "This (renovation) tied the whole place together," he said.

The pastor acknowledged that a small percentage of St. John the Evangelist parishioners have campaigned vigorously against the renovation, particularly in relation to moving the tabernacle. In fact, a group of protesters demonstrated across the street from the church during the dedication Mass Nov. 17.

Yet Father Michatek said the completed project has generally been applauded, even by some who were initially against it. He believes that parishioners who haven't yet donated toward the renovation may



This new statue of the Holy Family graces one wall of the renovated church.

change their minds now that they've seen the finished work.

"They were holding back because they were told we were going to ruin the church," he remarked.

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CORRECTION

A photo caption on page 15 of the Nov. 14 *Catholic Courier* incorrectly identified the school reunion attended by Marie McDonell. The reunion was for Holy Rosary School in Rochester.

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