

# Cathedral ambo to be refurbished

Rob Cullivan/Catholic Courier

In the renovated Sacred Heart Cathedral, the Word of God will be proclaimed from a refurbished oak ambo.

The ambo, a prominent element of altar furnishing, is sometimes called a pulpit, although ambo is the correct word used in church documents, according to Father Richard S. Vosko, an Albany priest who is serving as design consultant for the cathedral renovation.

The word "pulpit" actually means the area where a preacher stands, Father Vosko said, noting that "ambo" comes from the Greek infinitive *am-bein* meaning "to mount," alluding to the fact that the furnishing was once elevated above a congregation to help project a speaker's voice. However, with the advent of modern sound systems, such elevation is no longer necessary, he said.

Sacred Heart's ambo has been in use for about 100 years. It originally graced the altar of the former St. Patrick's Cathedral and was moved to Sacred Heart in the 1930s, according to Father John M. Mulligan, pastor of Sacred Heart and diocesan vicar general.



Second in a series  
Cathedral Renaissance

The ambo has borne silent witness to the installation of seven diocesan bishops, Father Mulligan said, also noting that the ambo originally had a large shell behind it to project a speaker's voice toward the congregation.

tion before microphones and public-address systems came into use.

Now, Father Vosko said, the ambo is being refurbished because its current size is not conducive to "appropriate ritual use."

"It will be modified to fit into its new location, nestled into the steps between the altar table and choir area," he explained. "It will be ex-



Mike Crupi/Catholic Courier

Father Joseph Marcoux, parochial vicar at Rochester's Sacred Heart Cathedral, removes a protective wrapping April 15 from the church's ambo, which is being stored at Rochester's Most Precious Blood Church during the cathedral's renovation. The ambo will be refurbished by Oakwood Classic and Custom Woodworks LTD in Henrietta.

panded to allow better movement within it. A new lectern for Scripture books, etc., on top of the ambo will replace the old one, which was too small."

Father Vosko said the refurbished ambo will retain its current ornamentation, and will be located on the same central axis as the baptismal font and the altar table.

"The new location will reduce the distance between standing in the ambo and the rest of the assembly," Fa-

ther Vosko said. "The physical relationship with the altar table will point out the important connection of the two parts of the Mass — the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Sacrament."

Annie Yetter, chief executive officer at Oakwood Classic and Custom Woodworks LTD in Henrietta, said her company is pleased to have been selected for the ambo project.

"We are excited to be refurbishing rather than making anew," she said.

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