A Church Space For Saint Henrys
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Design Instructor... Jack W. Wyman
Architecture Critic... Andry Seagar
Henry Eggink
Landscape Architecture
Critic... Joe Casio

Jurors
For a thesis project I wanted to work with a project that would maintain my interest for a year, give me something with a lot of freedom, be close to me personally, allow me to deal with aspects of architecture that I have not dealt with before, and finally, require me to learn through research and dealing with philosophical issues.

Designing a church for the congregation of which I am a member did not stop with these issues. This subject required me to deal with many abstract, philosophical, theological, and spiritual issues in architecture. The depth of the project was overwhelming, and it forced me to learn about designing for abstract feelings, thoughts, and philosophies.

Background
In the following pages, I will recall the procedure that I went through in designing a church space for Saint Henry's parish.

2 The site is located on a heavily traveled street corner in a suburban area in the south-eastern corner of Fort Wayne, Indiana. 3 A 0.25 acre site, once a farm field, presently contains four buildings: an 18 room elementary school with a gymnasium and existing temporary church facility, a two room kindergarten, a convent housing nine nuns, and a rectory with facilities to house three priests and a housekeeper.

4 I chose to design an environment for worship because it allowed for freedom of form along with giving me a chance to express how I feel worshiping should feel about God. 5 A final reason for this project is that I have been a member and a part of this parish since my birth.

6 Along with designing the church spaces, I also chose to develop the outside area between the main school, the kindergarten and convent.
The challenge is designing a Catholic church which encourages personal development and displays a joyous, enthusiastic attitude in group worship.

For many people, church is a place that you have to go once a week for fear of sin, or of what others may think of you. There are others who go simply because they feel an obligation.

Many people go to church and merely occupy space; they sit, they stand, they gaze about, but fail to see; they hear, but they fail to listen.

Church is a community of believers. People make a church; the building cannot evoke the desire for personal development, but it can enhance it. The philosophy of the organization, along with its personnel, must encourage personal development.

The feelings of joy and enthusiasm in worship can begin to be found and evoked through the architecture, but again this enthusiasm must be carried through by interaction of the people and of the service that takes place.

"I rejoiced when they said to me, let us go up to the house of the Lord." Psalm 122:1

While researching, I found that I share two main goals with the Catholic church; that is, to encourage personal development while displaying a joyous and enthusiastic attitude in group worship.

The Deecclesia (on the nature of the church), insisted
strongly on the responsibility. "1
12 "Shout happily in the Lord, 0 righteous people! You good people, for it is beautiful to praise. Praise the Lord with a lyre. Praise him with a ten-stringed lute. Sing to him a new song, play well on the instruments with happy shouting." 2
Psalm 33:1-3
13 Saint Henry's Parish has a 20 room school plus a gymnasium. 14 The present church is under the gymnasium and was built as a temporary church.
15 The school teaches kindergarten thru eighth grade. 16 The school is staffed by seven nuns and eleven lay teachers.
17 Reverend James O'Connor is the pastor, and there is one full time assistant.
18 The school and site for the church are located on a 9.5 acre site at the corner of Paulding and Hessen Cassel Roads. 19 This intersection is heavily traveled by cars and large trucks, and it does have a traffic light.

II.
1 Several architects have left excellent examples which are worthy of mention. 2 I will describe a few and what I feel are their strong points.
3 Sacred Heart Church in Fort Wayne, because of the simplicity in the use of concrete blocks of different color and size, combined to make an interesting composition: the use of colored glass windows and how it brilliantly illuminates the sanctuary. (James McCarron, Architect)
4 Immanuel Baptist Church in Fort Wayne, by Orus Eash, achieves a modern circular plan church working through a conservative Fort Wayne community.
5 Through this church, Orus created a prominent land mark for the south east portion of the city.
6 Eero Saarinen's North Christian Church in Columbus, Indiana is a most outstanding landmark. 7 I especially appreciate the strong feeling of community experienced while in the church along with the handling of the entrance.
8 After the approach, there is the act of entering. There should be awareness of a changing environment, like a decompression chamber from the outside world into the church. 2
9 Buildings by other architects are examined in the building type studies.
III.

1. "The festival is a special time when ordinary chores are set aside while men celebrate some event."

2. Some issues I would like to deal with include extremes from traffic considerations to a knowledge of the importance of God.

3. The church should lend itself to the values of the philosophies of the school. "Different where it counts" is a motto of Catholic schools in the diocese. The desire for personal spiritual enrichment is an important issue of the school.

4. I feel that the heavy traffic is an important site consideration; this is due to the high volume of noise and the risk of a hard edge condition.

5. I feel that this building should make an architectural statement to the community excentuating the sanctuary activities, while at the same time, maintaining a human scale relationship. An atmosphere of celebration and enjoyment of Christian life should reign over fear of punishment.
"Noble beauty" is not "sumptuous display," is laid down as the norm of a true sacred art. This standard for the art and architecture should also be the attitude of the congregation.

Another issue at hand is the church should allow for circulation between the main school building that is protected from the natural elements.

IV.

1. A place to come together with others to praise God;
2. Hear of the perfect life with Christ;
3. Hear how people lived before the coming of Christ;
4. Bring yourself as a sinner before God, and be forgiven your sins;
5. Share in a meal with Jesus Christ and commemorate his suffering, his death, and his triumph over death to eternal life with the Father;
6. Sing for joy because Christ comes bringing eternal life for me-share in the celebration of eternal;
7. Celebrate the union of a man and woman in matrimony;
8. Celebrate the death of a person and their beginning of eternal life;
9. Share in the Baptism of a child;
10. Share in the witnessing of a person asking Christ into their life;
11. Commemorate the birth of Christ;
12. The church is also a place where people go and reconcile themselves with God, go and discuss how they are doing on their walk with God, and some of the things they can be doing to be more Christ-like.

They can find how they can be carrying on their salvation in Christ to people who do not have a life as abundant as theirs.

The structure of the Catholic church is such that the priest is forced to take more responsibility than he should. The responsibility of the priest is to preside over the mass and give a lesson on Christian living; other jobs include administering sacraments and assisting people in finding how they should be drawing nearer to God.

At present, the priest is more an administrative leader than he is a spiritual leader. All administrative-type obligations should be relieved of the priest, and he should be al-
owed to devote the majority of his
time to the spiritual needs of the
parish.

V.

Development of the lots di-
rectly north of the site will have
some influence on my building. 2 Pre-
sently, the only off site view of any
significance is that of a vacant lot;
this is directly east of my site.
Provisions would have to be made if
this site were to be poorly develop-
ed.

The site planning done by James
McCarron, the architect of the ex-
isting building, intended to place
the permanent church facility on the
corner, east of the main school build-
ing. However, the two road lane run-
ning along the east side of the site
is supposed to be changed to four
lanes in five years, which would be
a major distraction.

VI.

Some of the functions which are
put into this section are not part
of the church ritual at the present
time but are coming in the future of
the organization, according to the
Second Vatican Council.

The building is primarily for
the celebration of mass, and sec-
ondarily, for the other sacramental
rites. Services such as Bible Vig-
ils, devotions, blessings and proc-
essions are third in importance. Fin-
ally, forms of private piety that are
expressions of a healthy community
life also should have their place in
the church building. This order of
priorities should have direct bearing
on the designs of a church building.

The entrance

The entrance should be ample
enough to serve as a gathering place
for people. Its design should pro-
mote the mental transition required
for worship. It should include a
place for the blessing of palms and
the lighting of the new fire at Easter.
In addition, provision should
be made for handicapped and aged
persons when designing the steps and en-
tances to the church.
The vestibule in or near one of the entrances is for people to dry off, thaw out, or straighten their tie. A warm, well-lit space could be visually open to the outside.

a place for the rite of reconciliation

A place should be provided that is ample, naturally lit, with adequate heating and ventilation. It should invite the penitent to open up to the mercy of the Lord.

Provision must be made to give the penitent the option of anonymous or face to face confession, and the place should be decorated and furnished as to promote a spirit of joy and hope in the penitent.*

the baptism

In the construction and ornamentation of the baptism, care shall be taken that the dignity of the sacrament of Baptism is clearly apparent and that the place is suitable for the communal celebration of the sacrament. Since there is an emphasis on the communal celebration of Baptism within the rite of Mass, the baptism should be clearly visible to all and easily accessible from the sanctuary.*

sanctuary

The sanctuary is the place from which the celebrant leads the community in worship and prayer.

Objects in the sanctuary should assist the celebrant and the other ministers in this purpose, and not draw attention away from them.

Decoration and design within the sanctuary should be kept to a minimum, and forms promoted which maintain a unity with the entire church space, focus attention of the community to the altar of sacrifice and create an atmosphere of joyful and dignified celebration.

The chief furnishings in the sanctuary are the chair of the celebrant, the ambo and the altar. Their form, ornamentation and placement should express the unity they have in their function. Although the altar should be the central focal point, the arrangement of furnishings should make it possible for the focus of attention to be shifted to liturgical actions that take place in other parts of the presbytery.*

nave

The place for the faithful shall be arranged with particular care, so that you may participate in the sacred celebrations visually and with proper spirit.

The place of the faithful shall have visible unity with the sanctuary. A wide church is to be preferred to a long, narrow one to achieve this visible unity.

For the celebration of the Eucharist, the chief objects of visual focus are the altar of sacrifice, the presidential chair and the ambo.
24 A space for respectful spiritual dance should be possible in the sanctuary supporting the theme of the Mass, and the aisles should be wide enough to facilitate processions.

25 The floor of the nave might slope down toward the sanctuary to improve sight lines to the altar; the altar should not have an exaggerated elevation.*

26 Two adjacent sacristies, one for the priest and one for the altar boys, should be located near the main entrance to promote the procession and recession of the ministers, and to make the clergy more accessible to the people before and after the liturgical services. 27 Generous consideration should be given to storage facilities in each sacristy.

28 In order to truly foster the principle of active participation by the whole body of the faithful, and since the leader of song, director, organist and choir are a part of the community, the place they occupy should be so located as to be a part of the united community of the faithful.

29 The most satisfactory fulfillment of this directive is to locate the choir, organist and director near the sanctuary and to one side of the nave area. 30 The director and the organist must see the action of both the ministers in the sanctuary and the congregation, so that they can coordinate the music with the actions. 31 The pipe organ enjoys the distinction of being held in high esteem, for it is the traditional musical instrument that adds a wonderful splendor to the Church's ceremonies and powerfully lifts man's mind to God. 32 Consideration should also be made near the choir for other types of instruments, such as horns, guitars, etc.*

the mother and children's room

33 The mother and children's room, an acoustically sealed room from the rest of the congregation, should have visual access from the perspective speaker; this room should have some quiet toys for the children to play with, along with a little sink for possible accidents.

the tabernacle

34 The tabernacle should be kept on an altar or other place in the church that is prominent and properly decorated.

35 The Holy Eucharist is to be reserved in a solid tabernacle... ordinarily, there should be only one tabernacle in a church; this may be placed on an altar or, at the discretion of the local Ordinary, at some other noble and properly ornamented part of the church other than an altar.

36 The presence of the Eucharist in the tabernacle is to be shown by a veil or in another suitable way. According to traditional usage, an oil lamp with a wax candle is to burn constantly near the tabernacle as a sign of the honor which is shown to the Lord.*
images of saints

37 The practice of placing sacred images in churches so that they may be venerated by the faithful is to be firmly maintained. Nevertheless, their number should be moderate and their relative location should reflect right order.

39 "Right order" implies that the sacred images should not be of a size or location which detracts from the space created for public worship. Although the image of Christ should be at the head of the Church, it should not be so large or predominant as to distract the people's attention away from the altar, chair, ambo and the other persons in the sanctuary.

51 Provision should be made for the Stations of the Cross, which is a devotion that affords the faithful a means of private prayer.

lighting

42 The lighting should enable everyone in the sanctuary or the pew to read easily from a prayerbook or hymnal. Skillful use should be made of natural lighting, especially in the sanctuary area.

acoustics

43 The acoustics should be such as to enable everyone to participate in the liturgical celebration as minister, singer, or congregation. The sound system should be designed to provide the desirable level of sound distribution and flexibility which cannot otherwise be achieved.

*Much of the basic program is taken from: DIOCESAN LITURGICAL COMMISSION MANDATED BY THE MOST REVEREND ORDINARY JANUARY 24, 1977.
Building Type Study
Amiens
ARCHITECTS: ROBERT DE LUZARCHES
THOMAS DE LERMONT
RENAUD CERMONT

ADDITION BY: VIOLET LE DUC

FACTS:
139 FEET VAULTS
Fresco painting of Christ holding Bible
Space used for religious and non religious meetings simultaneously
Labyrinthine maze (right) once on the paving of the nave, in the center recorded the names of the Bishop Priest Architects and Master-Masons
Finest Nave in the world
Slender columns allowed for ideal flooding of light
Concordia Theological Seminary

ARCHITECT: EERO SAARINEN

FACTS: Tranquil atmosphere - village concept - a group of buildings with a unified environment.

Lighting of the nave - full length skylight dramatizes the sanctuary skylights in the apex and eaves continue from front to back. At night, artificial light is provided from apex and eave fixtures. Lighting is an effective agent in creating a spiritual atmosphere.

Symbolically placed church in the center of the campus on a high spot - dominate over the other buildings.

Adjacent free standing bell tower.

Acoustics excellent for organ lacking for speech.

Diamond shaped brick.

Nave

Vestibule

Choir

Transept

Sanctuary
ARCHITECTS  :  FELIX CANDELA  
GUILLERMO ROSELL  
MANUEL LAROASA

FACTS  :  GIVES A FEELING OF FREEDOM, A LIGHT STRUCTURE THAT REACHES UP TOWARD HEAVEN
THERE ARE NO TRADITIONAL CHURCHLY DETAILS OR TRINKETS, JUST A SIMPLE SHELL TO SHADE AND PROTECT PEOPLE FROM THE HOT SUN
THE STARKNESS OF THE SITING MAKES THE CHURCH A LANDMARK TO THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

Las Lomas
Newman Center

Architect: Anthony Costello

Facts:

A glazed wall facing a courtyard provides a natural back for the altar. Opposite this wall lies a smooth white wall that allows for the showing of films while enhancing banners and canopies hung in front of it.

The two-way ceiling grid provides lighting along with a grid for hanging banners and canopies.

Moveable platforms are used for the mobil sanctuary easily distinguished by the canopy above it.

Varied lighting can be achieved through utilization of natural, incandescent, or fluorescent lighting available.
North Christian Church

Architect: Eero Saarinen

Facts: Primary light source is the oculus in the spire. Secondary is from the eyes natural and artificial.

192 feet spire.
Sanctuary: Center of church - communion table center of sanctuary.

Philosophy:
should have to make effort to get to church by going up and down stairs. Climb to sanctuary.
Church should stand above the neighborhood.
The approach to a church should be a changing environment making people aware of the fact they are entering a special space.
Spire is a symbol of reaching up to God.
Congregation should have positive feeling of being within a church.
Ronchamp

Architect : Le Corbusier

Facts : We were ever our walks around the exterior or interior, all elements resolve themselves into perfect proportioned composition.

Progresses in size from rear to front side walls splay out floor slopes slightly down roof lifts gently up

South wall splays out with its small hand painted glass windows exploding light and color into the space

Three towers allow natural light for auxiliary chapels

Center hinge coloristic door allows for procession entrances

Outdoor place of worship for 19,000 people inside nave will hold 200 people

Colors used on windows and doors fuschia, fiery red, soft pink green golden yellow
Site Analysis

West Edge

North East Corner
South Elevation of School

Convent
Busy South East Intersection

School Buildings
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<th>Average daily minimum °F</th>
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<th>Record lowest °F</th>
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<th>Average total In.</th>
<th>Maximum In.</th>
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<th>Average speed Miles/hr</th>
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Soils are of two types: having similar characteristics. PWAMOA on the northern and Blount on the southern. Both are deep, poorly drained, high-moisture-capacity soils, suitable for building. (More information provided.)

The area south of the site is fronted with commercial and backed by residential. Middle class who enjoy their privacy.

Residential Site

Commercial Site

Church

Soil + Environment

Residential - Conservative

No Nahen and Blount on the northern and Blount (more information provided) on the southern.
North side of site along with the south portion of the east side of the site are both undeveloped and subject to change. The south side; the south portion of the east side are plagued with heavy auto + truck traffic along with a noisy intersection. No exceptional views from site.
Design Development

I. Following the program, building type study and site analysis, I embarked upon the design of my project. Beginning with schematic sketches, I began to establish functional priorities.

I was encouraged to get into three dimensions, as a result of staying away during this early stage.

As I continued to develop my schemes, I found that the preliminary location of my building on the site was not developing a desirable relationship with the existing...
buildings on the site. At this point, I back tracked and reevaluated my building location on the site. Both location one and two had strong points and weak points. Even though a compromise between one and two was inevitable, I was reluctant to give up the prominent corner area.

At this time, another problem arose; rereading my program, it became difficult for me to translate those abstract terms into understanding design language. Example: Joy-bright colors, careful use of light, singing, smiling faces, banners, balloons, children being themselves, Christmas and Easter. Emotions—past to present, music, good friends, touching, song, personal relevance.

The key is light, and light illuminates shapes, and shapes have an emotional power.

II. The worship space configuration was generated on the basis of: 10% slope was chosen to accommodate sight lines; a near semi-circular configuration was adopted so that the people in the sanctuary can visually...
relate to all people in the congregation without stretching their necks; the semi-circular configuration allows for the parishioners to be no farther back than fourteen pews, the distance being sixty feet from the sanctuary. The sloped floor combined with the near semi-circular plan configuration allow the members of the congregation to relate to the sanctuary and to the other members of the congregation. This is of paramount importance for people to truly feel that they are a part of a group relating to God, (church) rather than an individual in a crowd.

The plan of the worship space dictated the organization of spaces throughout the whole building. The reconciliation spaces were placed in a position of receiving the best of site view.

At this point, the vestibule was becoming important as a fellowship, conversation and social interaction space.

After establishing a reasonable organization in plan, I began investigating the building spaces.

II.

"Heaven is my throne and earth is my footstool of my feet; "What kind of house will you build for me?" says the Lord. "Or what place for my repose?"" (Acts 7:40)

The first model suggested church accentuated the sanctuary by the meeting of the structural members. The low ceiling gives people scale
One

to the worship space; it presented problems in walking down the side isles; it does not make a strong exterior church statement.

The second model is a fragment taken from a larger model. The significance of this model is the way it plays with light.

This dynamic light display immediately became a significant design element for the sanctuary wall for my worship space.

The third model and drawing maintain a reasonable scale in the worship space, while it has an even lower ceiling height for the vestibule and support spaces.

It also gave elevation implications that the elevations are extremely weak requiring further investigation.

Two

Light Projection in Space
THREE
Models four and five were a search to solve the problem of how the roof coordinates with the rest of the building. Attempting to use the hyperbolic paraboloid geometry which came out of the second model, I found that an aesthetically great roof geometries were resulting, but in going back and evaluating, I found that they were not good solutions to the problem.

At this point, I, once again, began to seek out the solution. One evening I discussed the problem with several of my colleagues, and through our questioning and suggesting, we came up with a form that solved most problems.
Six

3 I translated this form to a simple, meaningful structure in model six.

4 Model seven is a continued development of the structure and its coordination with the other building parts.
IV. At this point, I side tracked the church design and began to design the space between the buildings; starting with the pedestrian circulation, I found what areas I had to work with. Examining the needs of the complex, I decided to work with three areas: an amphitheater or outside classroom, a main transition activity area, and a confined play area with a participatory sculpture for kindergarten students. The sculpture also works as a focal point or reference point for people entering the cloister.
V.  
In choosing the material for my church building, I examined the buildings surrounding mine. Most of the non-residential buildings in the area are concrete structure with masonry infill. I chose to use post-tensioned concrete for my main structural members. I also chose to use a beige brick veneer and infill on the exterior. Noticing that the branch library across the street from the site, the main school building, the kindergarten building, and the convent are also made of the same beige brick, I relate all of these buildings as being education or learning buildings. I chose to use this brick in all of my learning areas: in the sanctuary, in the worship space under the pews, in the conversation area, in the vestibule, for the seating for the amphitheater space, and any benches along the walk ways in the cloister. The door, pews, ceiling in the worship space, coat racks and other areas. Stained glass in colors, varying with warm and cool colors.  
9Grasscrete will be used to break up the large paved areas. 
10Tinted glass spandrels are used to give a visual separation between the walls and the swooping roof. 
11Small flowering trees would be used along walkways to front buildings. Oak trees would be placed in areas for shade and where tall trees are shown.

VI.  
1The amount of information required to explain the duration of the design is beyond verbalization; thus the information will have to be acquired from the photographs of models and drawings.
Final Drawings
Passive Solar System

Structure

Wall Sections

Worship Space
The Experience

The sun shines as you leave the house and load the kids into the car; you and your spouse get into the car, back out of the driveway, and drive down the street. You come to a stop at the stop sign and glance both ways; as you glance to the right, you can see the pinnacle of the church out of the corner of your eye, and a slight smile crosses your face. Up to this point, you have not thought of what you are about to experience—your enthusiasm is beginning to build. The glare from the car bumpers as they speed down the street diverts your attention for a moment as you become involved with the driving.

Once again, the pinnacle is in view. As you draw closer you can
one more of the church and your excitement begins to build. Upon entering the parking lot, the glare from turning cars temporarily blinds you. The heat radiating off the parking lot is felt as the family is unloaded from the car. Walking towards the entry, you begin to feel anticipation as a child on Christmas does.

As you enter under the massive beam into the cloister, the shade of the canopy immediately lures you. Friends are gathered and their children are playing on the sculpture. The sweet fragrance of the flowering trees is noticed, as you and your family walk over to join them. You shake hands and feel welcome, while continuing to chat for a few minutes. It is then time to go in and prepare for Mass; walking towards the entry, your enthusiasm builds as you greet friends of the community. The well-tuned organ sounds, and the room is filled with joyous singing as the priest enters. You feel content, jubilant, and overwhelmed with joy as you realize how special it is to be in communion with God and the worshipping community. Again, you thank God and think of how much you love God, and you feel great.
There are still refinements that can be made, but overall, I look at the project and am pleased with the outcome.

The thesis program as it is set up is too confining; I feel that much could be gained by the students if they were allowed and encouraged to depart from functionalist architecture stressed by this school, and work with a less building orientated architecture. Some alternatives to this are: doing a thesis on what may only deal with the investigation of a structural system, doing a thesis on the formal approach, or possibly spending a year trying to understand the philosophies of contemporary architects.

I will admit that I have learned a lot by doing my project in the specified manner.

I will encourage anyone to choose a religious space design for a thesis project, because in trying to understand the philosophies of the Catholic Church, I have grown to understand more fully, God, and our relationship to God in the community of believers or church.

What God has taught me about life through architecture

At the point I was giving my all,
You asked for more.
Did I give it?
You smiled when I worked and played for you.
You scolded me when I neglected you.
Are you jealous?
The best of me, You took; in return,
You gave better.
How did you know?
I came to you as a lost child-
I return a man with a direction.
Is thank-you enough?


Evans, Peter, Church Buildings, the Architect's Journal: editor.
