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**HOW LONELY THE CITY STANDS:
CATHOLIC ARCHITECTURE, RELIGIOUS CULTURE, AND
SUBURBANIZATION IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY CHICAGOLAND**

Scott Szpisjak
18 May 2020

Senior Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Bachelor of Arts in Urban Studies

Adviser, Lindsay Cook

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Introduction:

Catholic church architecture and religious practice in the United States changed dramatically over the course of the twentieth century. The Second Vatican Council, while a major event in the history of the Catholic Church, was not the sole cause of these changes. Many of the architectural developments predate the Council (1962-1965) by decades, and suburbanization had effects on religious practice and architecture that occurred independently of the Council.

This thesis examines the intersection of Catholic architecture, religious practice, and suburbanization in order to demonstrate that the perceived architectural blandness and a decline in religious practice that occurred after Vatican II were both strongly related to suburbanization, potentially to a greater extent than the Council itself.

The primary case study demonstrates that traditionalist tendencies in American Catholicism respond, in part, to changes wrought by suburbanization. Four secondary case studies illustrate changes to Catholic architecture and religious culture over the course of the twentieth century and demonstrate the impact of the urban landscape on these areas.

Chapter I: Architectural Eclecticism and Immigrant Catholicism in the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries

I.1: Victorian Eclecticism and the Foundation of St. John Cantius

St John Cantius (Figure 1-1) is a particularly opulent example of the architectural eclecticism of the turn of the last century. Located in the River West neighborhood, the parish was formed in 1893 as an offshoot of St. Stanislaus Kostka, which may have been the largest parish in the world when St. John Cantius was formed.¹ St. John Cantius itself had over 23,000 parishioners and 3,000 students at the grammar school in the early twenties.² Construction of the church began in 1893, and Masses were celebrated in the basement while the rest of the building was constructed.³ Alphonsus Druiding was the architect, and the resulting structure could seat 2000 parishioners.⁴ The main church was finished and dedicated in 1898.⁵

In an interview conducted for this thesis with Fr. Dennis Kolinski, S.J.C., a priest at the church, he described the architectural style of the building as “very inspired by the Baroque,” with “certain Renaissance elements,” and emphasized that it seems far more European than American.⁶ This fits with the categorization of the church as an example of the “Polish Cathedral Style,” a non-scholarly term used to describe large and elaborate Catholic churches built for Polish immigrant congregations.⁷ A blog post about the “style” cautions against “an absolute

¹ “A History of St. John Cantius Parish,” St. John Cantius Parish, 1994, https://www.cantius.org/go/about_us/another_history. See also Denis R. McNamara, *Heavenly City: The Architectural Tradition of Catholic Chicago* (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2005), 50: “News reports claimed that St. Stanislaus served a parish population approaching 40,000 by the turn of the century.”

² Don Carney (Narrator), in Chris Carney et al., producers, *On Assignment*, “Saint John Cantius: Restoring the Sacred,” Online Streaming, (Omaha: StoryTel Foundation, 2013 [2009]), <https://www.storytel.org/cantius>, 6:13.

³ “A History of St. John Cantius Parish.”

⁴ “A History of St. John Cantius Parish.”

⁵ “A History of St. John Cantius Parish.”

⁶ Dennis Kolinski, Interview with Fr. Dennis Kolinski, S.J.C., interview by D. Scott Szpisjak, Phone Call, March 18, 2020. A transcript of this interview is given in an appendix to this thesis.

⁷ Wikipedia contributors, “Polish Cathedral Style,” in *Wikipedia*, October 29, 2019, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Polish_Cathedral_style&oldid=923654626.

identification with the Baroque, as in many cases it has been heavily strained through 19th century folk-eclecticism and the necessities of using pre-fabricated materials and elements,” and calls out an American tendency “to assume anything remotely ornate is Baroque.”⁸ The writer, Matthew Alderman, also emphasized that these buildings were not merely historicist but also contemporary, with “a certain Victorian clutter” replacing the “original dynamism” of the Baroque forms that were emulated.⁹ However, the emulation of Baroque architecture remained an intention of those designing these structures. The use of informal channels to generate the term “Polish Cathedral Style” demonstrates the enduring popular appeal of these buildings, which Alderman attests to.¹⁰ For example, they are often visited by tourists in Chicago, and a Chicago-based company that provides tours of Catholic churches in Chicago offers itineraries that visit these churches.¹¹

The architecture of these churches made both religious and nationalist statements. This latter point is of especial importance because at the time Poland no longer existed as a country, having been partitioned between Prussia, Russia, and Austria.¹² While the portion controlled by the Austro-Hungarian Empire did not face anti-Catholic religious restrictions, Prussian law placed restrictions on the Church and Russia attempted to replace it with what was functionally a schismatic church.¹³ Economic hardships faced the Polish populations in all three states.¹⁴ While the design philosophy underlying “Polish Cathedral Style” buildings was not categorically different from other eclectic buildings of the period, the term emphasizes that these buildings were

⁸ Matthew Alderman, “Forgotten Architectural Styles II: The American Polish Cathedral Style,” *New Liturgical Movement* (blog), June 10, 2007, <http://www.newliturgicalmovement.org/2007/06/forgotten-architectural-styles-ii.html>.

⁹ Alderman, “Forgotten Architectural Styles.”

¹⁰ Alderman, “Forgotten Architectural Styles.”

¹¹ Wikipedia contributors, “Polish Cathedral Style;” and “Upcoming Tours,” CatholicChurchTours, accessed May 17, 2020, <https://www.catholicchurchtours.com/events>. Upcoming tour options can be seen on this page of its website, but not all tours include this type of churches

¹² “A History of St. John Cantius Parish.”

¹³ “A History of St. John Cantius Parish.”

¹⁴ “A History of St. John Cantius Parish.”

not merely religious edifices, but nationalist statements that used a rhetoric of richness and ostentation, and which are popularly perceived as categorically different as a result.

The facade of St. John Cantius combines a temple front with asymmetrical towers and was seen as a break from typical church design of the period.¹⁵ The facade is made of a pale stone, while the other sides of the building are constructed in dark brick, presumably for reasons of cost. The building looms over the street in front of it, and the entrances are at the top of a high and wide staircase. The three sets of entrance doors are set within heavily rusticated round arches. The two towers are also rusticated and feature small windows. In contrast, the central temple front is faced in smooth ashlar masonry and divided into three units containing large windows. This central volume projects forward, making the facade more dynamic, while also bringing the entrances closer to the sidewalk and, by extension, passerby. Flat pilasters articulate the temple front and the taller of the towers, while the “oddly placed semicircular pediment supported by large brackets over the central door reveal something of a Mannerist sensibility.”¹⁶ The taller tower, which resembles that of St. Mary’s in Krakow,¹⁷ is topped by clocks with scrolls on either side and a large baroque dome, itself topped with a cupola. The smaller cupola that once stood on the lower of the two towers is now missing (see Figure 1-2). Other elements on the facade include a basket weave texture in the pediment which “only adds to the visual activity,”¹⁸ and the phrase *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam* (For the Greater Glory of God) across the entablature below. The facade thus uses elements from Renaissance and Baroque architecture combined with details from other periods to project the power and importance of the church, as well as its purpose: the glorification of God.

¹⁵ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 50.

¹⁶ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 50.

¹⁷ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 50.

¹⁸ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 50.

The church sits between two gothic-revival buildings designed by Henry J. Schlacks and completed in the early twentieth century: a rectory for the parish priests to live in, and a parish school (Figure 1-2).¹⁹ The parish thus takes up the entire frontage of the block along North Carpenter Street, further emphasizing the imposing nature of the buildings, which would have seemed especially large compared to the small-scale residences in the neighborhood, which was mostly residential at the time.²⁰

The three doors lead into a vestibule, which gives onto the nave of the church (Figure 1-3). The church has three aisles: a tall, wide central aisle and surrounded by shorter, narrower side aisles. The space is cruciform in plan, with two transept arms projecting outwards from the center of the church; however, the transept arms are de-emphasized by the presence of balconies above them and their relatively shallow depth. This fact, combined with the thin, widely-spaced columns and soaring vaults gives the overall impression of a large hall wherein the aisles and transept arms are merely incidental. The space is barrel vaulted, with groin vaults in the side aisles and at the crossing, which features a large vent in its center.

The colors in the space are mainly warm golds, browns, and beiges, with bright blue accents on some of the vaults. Faux finishes can be found throughout the space: columns are painted to look like marble, walls are painted to look like stone, and a band painted to simulate a mosaic sits above the wainscotting. Abstract patterns are painted on the undersides of arches and in the vaulting, while figural murals cover lunettes over arches and the undersides of the vaults in the transepts.²¹ Although this seems to exemplify Victorian tastes for faux finishes, much of this interior work actually dates to the last major redecoration of the church, which took place around

¹⁹ “A History of St. John Cantius Parish.”

²⁰ Kolinski, Interview.

²¹ “A History of St. John Cantius Parish.”

1940.²² The church has many of the characteristics of what Richard Kieckhefer has termed “the *classic sacramental church*,” such as the long nave with a sanctuary in the chancel at the end, an altar as “[t]he focal point... to which the longitudinal space leads,” and an abundance of “symbolic forms and decorations.”²³

While the color scheme and some of the interior decoration post-date the Victorian period, the overall sense of abundance and the proliferation of objects do not. Miles Orvell has pointed out that “an aesthetic of abundance” “is visible virtually everywhere that one looks in the material culture of Victorian America, the result of an industrial capacity that could indeed supply a seemingly limitless amount of things.”²⁴ Middle-class domestic spaces in the latter half of the nineteenth century “featured a densely decorative style, an interior stuffed with things.”²⁵ While the almost overwhelming abundance of colors, decorations, statues, and furniture items can be related to the requirements of devotional practices of the time and potentially to precedents in Poland, and would not have been an imitation of bourgeois domestic spaces, it is worth noting that these trends overlapped. The transept features smaller devotional altars and statuary, but originally contained larger side altars which were removed because they took up too much space.²⁶ Here, industrial workers could bask in the abundance made possible by the society in which they lived and made possible by their labor.

The windows contain stained glass, and despite the church’s imposing presence in the urban landscape, the lack of a visual connection to the surrounding area, like the fact that the main

²² Kolinski, Interview. According to “A History of St. John Cantius Parish,” some of the paintings and murals date from 1902-1909.

²³ Richard Kieckhefer, *Theology in Stone: Church Architecture from Byzantium to Berkeley* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 11. Kieckhefer also mentions the frequent inclusion of the choir in the sanctuary (11), but that is not seen here.

²⁴ Miles Orvell, *The Real Thing: Imitation and Authenticity in American Culture, 1880-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 42.

²⁵ Orvell, *Real Thing*, 48.

²⁶ Kolinski, Interview.

floor is raised high off the ground, pull the space out of that same landscape. As a site for highly ritualized activities and a sacramental meeting of the human and divine worlds, this fact can perhaps be related to late nineteenth-century “tendency to enclose reality in manageable forms,” creating frames where “[i]f the world outside of the frame was beyond control, the world inside of it could at least offer the illusion of mastery and comprehension.”²⁷ The church thus offered a place in a chaotic industrial city, being newly rebuilt after a fire, that was a site of routine, control, and stability.

The sanctuary takes up the entire width of the church, and features a central high altar and a smaller, but still imposing, side altar on each side (Figure 1-4). The altars are of stained and gilded wood and include Baroque flourishes such as prominent volutes. The sanctuary is separated from the nave by an altar rail, at which people would kneel when receiving communion. The Gothic Revival altar rail displays a pattern of trefoil-topped lancets paired beneath quatrefoils. Similar quatrefoil patterns can be seen in the rose windows over the transept balconies. The large painting incorporated into the altarpiece of St. John Cantius, and the smaller painting above it probably depicts St. Anne and the Virgin Mary, as St. Anne is the secondary patron of the parish.²⁸ Several statues are also incorporated into the high altar: two angels at the top, a saint on either side of the large painting, and statues of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Immaculate Heart of Mary on the lowest level. These last two statues replaced large Baroque scrolls that were removed during the redecoration around 1940 because they were inconvenient and got in the way.²⁹ The mural of the Resurrected Christ above the high altar dates from this same time, as does the refinishing of the altars, which had previously been painted black with gilded accents in imitation of black marble

²⁷ Orvell, *Real Thing*, 35.

²⁸ Kolinski, Interview.

²⁹ Kolinski, Interview.

altars from Poland.³⁰ The mural above the high altar especially has some Art Deco or possibly Beuronese influences, with highly stylized poses and flatter coloring, especially compared to the earlier, more naturalistic murals. The altarpieces, with elements such as neoclassical columns, scrolls, and broken pediments are some of the most explicitly Baroque elements of the interior, which otherwise is an spacious hall that leans closer to Victorian eclecticism than a more academic Baroque revival style. A 1933 photograph on the parish website shows that the patterned bands on the undersides of arches even contained rows of lightbulbs at one point, which would have emphasized the modernity and contemporaneity of the building when they were installed.³¹ While the building makes use of historic architectural forms, it also revels in its newness.

This combination of styles and influences is typical of revival-style architecture of the period, wherein “certain historical forms (whether the Corinthian order or the Gothic arch) were permanently valid and normative,” and which could be chosen and used to create buildings that were assemblages of these forms.³² This can be seen as a part of what Miles Orvell has called a “culture of imitation” wherein “the arts revolve around various kinds of replications of nature within the vocabulary of convention and types governing current notions of ‘realism.’”³³

Significantly, Orvell posits the Chicago World’s Fair of 1893, with its temporary Beaux-Arts White City as “the climax of this aesthetic of replication.” St. John Cantius was dedicated that same year. However, while American revivalism more generally can be at least in part attributed to the “imitation of European traditions” by the American elite and in turn by the middle class,³⁴ the use of European forms in Catholic churches from this period can probably be tied more directly

³⁰ Kolinski, Interview; and “A History of St. John Cantius Parish.”

³¹ “A Short History of St. John Cantius Parish,” St. John Cantius Parish, 2010, https://www.cantius.org/go/about_us/category/parish_history/. There is no title or photographer listed on the page.

³² Catherine R. Osborne, *American Catholics and the Church of Tomorrow: Building Churches for the Future, 1925-1975* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), 8.

³³ Orvell, *Real Thing*, xx.

³⁴ Orvell, *Real Thing*, 59.

to their status as immigrant churches made up of parishioners from Europe, rather than a self-conscious affectation of European architectural styles by the Protestant elite. While the middle class and elites sought the distinction of association with Europe through the borrowing of architectural and decorative forms, working-class immigrants attempted to recreate elements of the places they had left.

Another factor in the architecture of Catholic churches of this period is the influence of Romanticism, which was not limited to architecture or the Catholic church and involved a reaction against Enlightenment rationalism, puritanism, and “the destruction of medieval monuments in the French Revolution,”³⁵ all of which are tendencies with clear applications within the Catholic Church. Art historian Denis McNamara argues that while some effects of Romanticism were positive, its major failing was a reliance on creating architecture designed to effect an emotional response, rather than architecture designed to embody the Church’s theological understanding of what churches are.³⁶ It is in this romantic, revivalist atmosphere that Catholic Church architecture in Chicago emerged.

1.2: Immigrant Catholic Culture in Turn-of-the-Century Chicago

Saint John Cantius and the Catholic Church in Chicago more generally must be understood within the immigrant culture in which they arose. Catholicism’s history in the United States developed in tandem with patterns of immigration; such immigrants “do not simply bring with them an abstract Catholicity,” but rather Catholicism as “part of an ethnic identity and culture, and

³⁵ Denis R. McNamara, *Catholic Church Architecture and the Spirit of the Liturgy* (Chicago: Hillenbrand Books, 2009), 173-4.

³⁶ McNamara, *Catholic Church Architecture*, 174-175.

thus carried with it specific customs, festivals, devotions, favoured saints, music styles,” &c.³⁷ Most Catholics in Chicago attended “national” parishes associated with their ethnic background well into the twentieth century.³⁸ These parishes were served by clergy who generally had the same ethnic background as their parishioners; in 1936 “over 80 percent of the clergy (100 percent of the Poles and Lithuanians) received assignments in parishes matching their own national background.”³⁹ Sixty-five percent of Chicago Catholics attended national parishes in 1916, and this only decreased to fifty-five percent by 1936.⁴⁰ St. John Cantius is named after an obscure Polish Saint, and its neighborhood was referred to as the Polish Patch.⁴¹

These churches were present in very high densities in Chicago and other Northern cities. For example, Chicago’s Back of the Yards neighborhood contained “eleven Catholic churches in the space of little more than a square mile—two Polish, one Lithuanian, one Italian, two German, one Slovak, one Croatian, two Irish, and one Bohemian.”⁴² Similarly, St Bridget’s parish in the neighborhood of Bridgeport was formed in 1850, and by 1910 this area contained an additional ten parishes within an area of approximately one square mile.⁴³ Immigrant churches “soared over the frame houses and muddy streets of the impoverished neighborhood in a triumphant display of architectural and theological certitude.”⁴⁴ These churches were not empty but constructed to meet the demand of the large Catholic populations in these areas. Churches were such an ingrained part

³⁷ Stephen Bullivant, *Mass Exodus: Catholic Disaffiliation in Britain and America since Vatican II* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 47.

³⁸ John T. McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries: The Catholic Encounter with Race in the Twentieth Century Urban North* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 13.

³⁹ McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*, 13.

⁴⁰ McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*, 13.

⁴¹ Fr. Frank Phillips, C.R., in Carney et al., *On Assignment*, 5:15, 5:31. St. John Cantius (1350-1473) was a priest and professor in Krakow known for his generosity and care for his students and the poor; see “About St. John Cantius - the Saint’s Story,” St. John Cantius Parish, accessed May 15, 2020, https://www.cantius.org/go/about_us/category/st_john_cantius_saints_story/.

⁴² McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*, 10.

⁴³ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 91.

⁴⁴ McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*, 10.

of the neighborhood fabric that “through the 1950s, advertisements in Philadelphia, Buffalo, and Chicago newspapers often listed available apartments and homes by *parish*... instead of using community names;” this occurred in both secular and Catholic papers.⁴⁵

The “national” parishes were designated as such in contrast to “territorial” parishes, although the (English-speaking) territorial parishes often functioned as Irish national parishes.⁴⁶ Since the Council of Trent in 1545, territorial parishes have been responsible for serving everyone within their geographic boundaries; however, the Council also allowed for the existence of national parishes to serve the needs of large groups of people with the same racial, ethnic, or national background.⁴⁷ Because of patterns of immigration to the United States, the overlapping sets of territorial and national parishes were a common feature in areas of the United States with large Catholic populations, with national parishes existing within geographic space that was technically under the authority of the territorial parish.⁴⁸

High rates of homeownership were used to maintain these neighborhoods and communities. A desire to live near their own national parishes encouraged people to purchase homes nearby, solidifying the ethnic enclaves in the neighborhood.⁴⁹ During this period, “Catholic immigrant groups invested an inordinate amount of their savings in property,” and “Working-class immigrants were often more likely than” American-born members of the middle class “to own their homes in the urban North.”⁵⁰ Priests often urged their parishioners to purchase homes in the parish.⁵¹

⁴⁵ McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*, 21.

⁴⁶ McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*, 10.

⁴⁷ McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*, 11. Ethnicity as a category separate from race did not exist in this time and place; various European ethnic groups were considered racially distinct from each other, to the point that a parish for African-Americans could be included in a list of non-English speaking Detroit parishes, (30).

⁴⁸ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 91

⁴⁹ McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*, 10.

⁵⁰ McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*, 18.

⁵¹ McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*, 19.

As exemplified by St John Cantius, these churches were often large and elaborate, and a given parish complex would typically include other structures such as a school, rectory, and convent (for nuns teaching at the school).⁵² Masses were held in “any available building” while these complexes were being built, but once complete the use of materials like stone and forms such as towers and spires on churches communicated an intention of permanence to those in the neighborhood.⁵³ Parishioners were personally involved with their construction, and it was not unusual for members of immigrant Catholic parishes during the period to construct their own churches, or even provide volunteer labor.⁵⁴ These churches were the centers of Catholic immigrant neighborhoods wherein “a person could scarcely step onto the street without encountering fellow parishioners,” as well as priests and nuns, reinforcing one’s relationship with one’s church and ensuring that a failure to attend Mass would not go unnoticed.⁵⁵

Ethnic tensions still ran high in these neighborhoods, with inter-ethnic animosity being common despite the shared religion between groups.⁵⁶ A 1918 study of the Polish St Michael’s parish in Chicago found that the parishioners used the word “Jew” to refer to any non-Poles, and did not allow parishioners who married non-Poles to attend the parish.⁵⁷ Priests were also fiercely loyal to their parishes, often “refusing to cooperate with (or even visit) neighboring parishes.”⁵⁸ Despite the high levels of religious practice and near-monopoly Catholics had on the religious

⁵² McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*, 15.

⁵³ McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*, 17.

⁵⁴ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 2.

⁵⁵ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 92-3.

⁵⁶ McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*, 10-11.

⁵⁷ McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*, 26.

⁵⁸ McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*, 15. The use of the word Jew in this manner is both anti-Semitic and bizarre, as it also decontextualizes the term from any use as a meaningful descriptor. Its derogatory use demonstrates a negative view of Jewish people, but the fact that it could be applied even to co-religionists shows that this usage quickly becomes incoherent. Above all it demonstrates that loyalty to (Catholic) national or ethnic origins trumped any sense of inter-ethnic Catholic solidarity, at least at this particular parish at this point in time.

makeup of their neighborhoods, these neighborhoods hardly modelled inter-ethnic collaboration or harmony among co-religionists.

Parishes were not only centers for religious life, but social hubs as well.⁵⁹ Parishes hosted organizations including various clubs, youth groups, sports teams, and societies; and events such as dances and bazaars.⁶⁰ Some might have a devotional element, but many did not.⁶¹ At St. John Cantius there were twenty-three parish societies, including “chapters of the Polish Roman Catholic Union, the Polish Union of America, the Polish Alma Mater and many sodalities and confraternities.”⁶² Groups were established before the church’s construction was even completed, and there were eventually over fifty such groups at the parish.⁶³

This social separation was part of a deliberate “cultural project,” and stemmed from “[t]he assumption... that the Catholic faith could not flourish independent of a Catholic milieu.”⁶⁴ This also took place during the rise of the “social congregation” in America, a term which refers to religious congregations that also served as centers for social organization.⁶⁵ Because the experiences of many a Catholic resident of Chicago was filtered through their parish, they would experience their neighborhood as one which was entirely Catholic.⁶⁶ Ethnically-based voluntary associations also proliferated among immigrant groups more generally, including those of other religions, and they were not always associated with a specific congregation.⁶⁷

⁵⁹ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 89.

⁶⁰ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 93; and McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*, 15.

⁶¹ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 93.

⁶² “A History of St. John Cantius Parish.”

⁶³ “A History of St. John Cantius Parish.”

⁶⁴ McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*, 24.

⁶⁵ Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000), 391.

⁶⁶ McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*, 20.

⁶⁷ Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 390.

These churches and neighborhoods were also home to a wide variety of devotional practices.⁶⁸ One of the most visible in a given neighborhood would have been parish-run processions or parades, which functioned to mark “both the parish and its inhabitants as sacred ground,” and blurred the lines between religious and secular space.⁶⁹ Another common practice was frequent, often weekly, confession. Early in the twentieth century, Pope Pius X encouraged Catholics to receive communion more frequently, which thus necessitated more frequent confession; while confession is private, the lines to do so were not and parishioners would have seen each other there.⁷⁰ At the previously mentioned St Michael’s parish, the “priests required weekly confession and devised an elaborate system of tickets to ensure compliance. Laggards risked hearing their names from the pulpit.”⁷¹ Another devotional practice that also served as a cultural marker was abstention from eating meat on Fridays, and further limiting its consumption during Lent.⁷² The proliferation of devotional practices ensured that one’s Catholicism was not confined to Sunday Mass but directed many elements of a given week. It was for people in this culture that churches such as St John Cantius were built.

Clearly, a navigable urban area was necessary for this sort of culture to exist. St John Cantius’s first period of decline came in the 1920s, when a trucking road was built nearby. Ogden Avenue, which runs in front of the church, was built in the 1920s and formed part of Route 66.⁷³ The road’s construction required the demolition of several homes in the parish, and the heavy

⁶⁸ For examples see Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 105-107.

⁶⁹ McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*, 22. McGreevy mentions a “186-float parade through the parish boundaries to celebrate a parish carnival” at St. Sabina’s in Chicago as well as “an elaborate procession in honor of the Blessed Sacrament” organized by multiple Portuguese parishes in New Bedford, Massachusetts, where “As the eucharistic host was carried through the streets of the neighborhood, parishioners fell on their knees. Tourists who failed to genuflect received glares and caustic remarks,” (22).

⁷⁰ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 110.

⁷¹ McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*, 26

⁷² Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 111-112.

⁷³ “A History of St. John Cantius Parish.”

traffic led parishioners to pull their children out of the parish school and begin attending other nearby parishes.⁷⁴ Enrollment at the school declined from 3,000 students to 400.⁷⁵ More changes to the urban fabric would come later, but first would come more developments in Catholic sacred architecture.

⁷⁴ “A History of St. John Cantius Parish.”

⁷⁵ Fr. Frank Phillips, C.R., in Carney et al., *On Assignment*, 6:40.

I.3: Figures

Unless otherwise noted, all photos are courtesy of the author.



Figure 1-1: Exterior of St. John Cantius.

(Victor Grigas, *St. John Cantius Chicago - Photo Walk Chicago September 2, 2013-4885*, 2 September 2013, Wikimedia Commons, licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0, accessed 15 May 2020, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:St._John_Cantius_Chicago_-_Photo_Walk_Chicago_September_2,_2013-4885.jpg.)



Figure 1-2: 1909 postcard with the rectory, church, and school. Note the presence of the smaller cupola and the differently-configured entrance stairs.

(Sjcantius, *Postcard of Saint John Cantius Church 1909*, March 23, 2015, Wikimedia Commons, CC0 1.0

Universal, accessed 15 May

2020 https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Saint_John_Cantius_Church_Chicago.jpg.)



Figure 1-3: Interior of St. John Cantius.

(Alan Cordova, *Interior of St. John Cantius Church*, 19 October 2013, Digital Image. Available from: Flickr, licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0, accessed 15 May 2020
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/acordova/11745257283/in/photostream/>.)



Figure 1-4: High altar in the sanctuary of St. John Cantius.

(Albedo20, *St. John Cantius Church*, 16 March 2014, Digital Image. Available from: Flickr, licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0, accessed 17 April 2020 <https://www.flickr.com/photos/albedo20/13269067195/>.)

Chapter II: The Liturgical Movement and Developments in Chicago's Catholic Sacred Architecture

II.1: The Rise of "Modern" Revivalism

In the late nineteenth century, eclecticism began moving in two directions: the first, influenced by William Morris and John Ruskin, eventually manifested itself as the Arts and Crafts movement; while the second is embodied in the striving for "archeological purity and accuracy of design" in the works of McKim, Mead, and White.⁷⁶ Henry J. Schlacks' St. Paul's church grew out of the former tendency. Dedicated in 1899, St. Paul's "was without a doubt the most well-received Catholic church in nineteenth-century Chicago" as Chicago at the time "was a place of rapid growth often characterized by slipshod construction and ill-informed design by second-rate architects."⁷⁷ McNamara compares St. Paul's to the "usual bookish, molded plaster froufrou,"⁷⁸ a characterization that can be applied to many of the "Polish Cathedral Style" churches previously discussed, despite their popularity with the public today.

Schlacks' gothic revival church, built entirely of brick and terra cotta, was praised for its beauty, the "honesty" of its design and construction, as well as for being fireproof (a very concrete concern in the wake of the Great Fire).⁷⁹ The "honesty" of the church's design appears to have stemmed from the pastor's desire for a church based on those in the Moselle valley for his primarily German congregation; Schlacks had visited the valley and been struck by the area's brick churches with unplastered interiors.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Orvell, *Real Thing*, 60.

⁷⁷ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 110.

⁷⁸ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 112.

⁷⁹ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 110-111.

⁸⁰ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 111.

At St. Paul's, Schlacks used a traditional cruciform plan with side aisles, but designed the building so views of the sanctuary from the pews were not blocked by said piers, and the side altars were physically and visually separated from the high altar.⁸¹ These choices were uncommon at the time,⁸² but would soon become commonplace as other examples will show. These elements are associated with the Liturgical Movement. Because of the centrality of the ideas of this movement to the subjects discussed in this thesis, it is worth quoting from McNamara's *Catholic Church Architecture and the Spirit of the Liturgy* at length:

The term *Liturgical Movement* refers here to the great outpouring of ideas and holy desire for the renewal of the liturgy in the years before the Second Vatican Council. [...] People in the pews were asked to learn about and then pray the liturgy more closely and actively. Latin-English hand missals appeared in the pews, and Gregorian chant was revived because it allowed people to sing the texts of the Mass. A closer following of liturgical laws was promoted, and the importance of the Liturgy of the Hours, liturgical reading of scripture, and the liturgical year was emphasized. People were asked to draw from the sacramental life of the Church more often and more fully by preparing themselves to receive the sacraments and to take the liturgical parts proper to them.⁸³

Initially, the alternative to this Arts and Crafts tendency in the Catholic Church in Chicago was not the use of more Modernistic forms, but the use of more contemporary construction technologies to imitate historical forms, the practice that those promoting "honest" design denigrated. This use of imitative technologies was not limited to Chicago or churches, and "trade catalogues from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries unabashedly proclaimed the excellence of their ersatz fabrication."⁸⁴ One critique of these methodologies, other than the moral judgement of "dishonesty," was that steel-framed buildings could be seen as less "permanent" than

⁸¹ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 112.

⁸² McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 112.

⁸³ McNamara, *Catholic Church Architecture*, 171-172.

⁸⁴ Orvell, *Real Thing*, 50.

buildings constructed of masonry, which some thought better reflected the permanence of the institutional Church.⁸⁵

Despite their revival styles, these churches were still seen as modern. For example, when the Romanesque revival St. Josaphat's church was built at the turn of the century, it was considered architecturally modern because of its use of steel framing.⁸⁶ Until the rise of Modernism, "traditional styles were still seen as modern, contemporary, and up to date."⁸⁷ McNamara's description of the building emphasizes that because of the architect's level of theological knowledge, he "knew that a church building was more than an engineering project," and that it was instead "a prominent civic structure whose size, level of craft, iconographic program, sophistication of design, and prominent location in the city spoke of the importance of the church relative to other things."⁸⁸ This reads as an implicit and preemptive critique of later architects who might fail to take these things into account.

The use of these methods allowed architects to have greater freedom when designing churches, such as the gothic revival Our Lady of Mount Carmel (dedicated 1914) which "eschew[s] the traditional rows of columns down the nave, solving the problem of blocked views to the sanctuary by using the Gothic architectural language without demanding a consistent structural logic."⁸⁹ This technique is at odds with the demand for "honesty" promoted by proponents of the Arts and Crafts movement. However, this use of novel technologies and less orthodox application of forms like the pointed arch underscore the point that despite their reliance

⁸⁵ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 26.

⁸⁶ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 24.

⁸⁷ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 24.

⁸⁸ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 25.

⁸⁹ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 16.

on European architectural traditional, these churches were created and designed in a way “specific to [their] time and place.”⁹⁰

Both of these tendencies can be seen in the early issues of the quarterly magazine *Liturgical Arts*, which “bridged the gap between exclusively Catholic publications... and the secular architectural press.”⁹¹ The magazine was published by the New York-based Liturgical Arts society, which existed from 1928 to 1972, and “played a critical role in introducing new thought to the seminarians, clergy, religious, and lay intelligentsia.”⁹² The Society’s membership primarily consisted of “lay artists, draftsmen and architects (most of whom were wealthy Ivy-League graduates[]).”⁹³ The first formal meeting was in New York in 1930, where they elected “Charles Maginnis as President, John LaFarge, SJ, as chaplain, and Maurice Lavanoux as secretary.”⁹⁴ Although Catherine Osborne emphasizes the influence of Lavanoux’s “support for the application of modernist design principles to Catholic church architecture”⁹⁵ and the magazine’s “developmentalist paradigm,”⁹⁶ she fails to give much attention to specific focus on medieval aesthetics that dominated the early volumes of the journal.⁹⁷ Additionally, Eugene McCarraher has shown the “Explicitly medieval and political terms,” were used to connect “aesthetics with social transformation,” by those involved with the Liturgical Movement.⁹⁸

⁹⁰ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 17-18. This is from a discussion of a specific church but can be applied to churches of the period more broadly.

⁹¹ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 11.

⁹² Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 11.

⁹³ Eugene McCarraher, “American Gothic: Sacramental Radicalism and the Neo-Medievalist Cultural Gospel, 1928-1948,” *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia* 106, no. 1/2 (1995), 7-8.

⁹⁴ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 28.

⁹⁵ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 2.

⁹⁶ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 29.

⁹⁷ See McCarraher “American Gothic,” esp. 7-9. Osborne does briefly address the Arts and Crafts sensibility of the early Society; see Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 38.

⁹⁸ McCarraher, “American Gothic,” 9.

A prime example of this medievalism was the Society's endorsement "in the fullest possible degree" by Ralph Adams Cram, a Gothic Revival architect who became a supporting member of the Liturgical Arts Society once it was in operation.⁹⁹ He was also invited to the Society's Gregorian choir rehearsal.¹⁰⁰ The first issue of the magazine featured an article on Bertram Goodhue's gothic revival Church of St. Vincent Ferrer in Manhattan, which claimed that the church, completed in 1917, "stands out as being more essentially modern than" nearby "examples of modern architecture as the Shelton Hotel and the Chrysler Building."¹⁰¹ Despite the use of the rhetoric of Modernism, the aesthetic being promoted here is far from Modernistic. It should be noted that "*Modern Gothic* was a term used by architects of the [1920s] who saw Gothic not as a set of forms to be copied and timidly recreated, but as a language that could be kneaded and twisted, harmoniously combined with both period and modern details, and all adapted to modern needs."¹⁰² However, the deliberate choice to compare the church with the Chrysler Building and Shelton hotel demonstrates an awareness of contemporary architectural trends which were not as dependent on Revivalism.

A similar article on Saint Catherine of Sienna in New York City praises the building for being "Gothic in... [a] deeper sense... because it accepts the conditions of its time and its building and because it has much of the direct honesty and organic form of the medieval churches."¹⁰³ Early issues contained articles promoting things such as a return to pre-Renaissance mosaic methodologies, and the creation of all-male altar societies.¹⁰⁴ The magazine's rejection of

⁹⁹ Ralph Adams Cram to Everett Harman, Letter, August 27, 1928, CLIT 3/14, UNDA. See also Harry Lorin Binsse(?) to Ralph Adams Cram, Letter, May 28, 1931, CLIT 3/14, UNDA; and Harry Lorin Binsse(?) to Ralph Adams Cram, Letter, June 1, 1931, CLIT 3/14, UNDA.

¹⁰⁰ Harry Lorin Binsse(?) to Ralph Adams Cram, October 31, 1934, CLIT 3/14, UNDA.

¹⁰¹ Oliver Reagan, "The Church of Saint Vincent Ferrer," *Liturgical Arts* 1, no. 1 (Fall 1931), 21.

¹⁰² McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 92-93.

¹⁰³ Talbot Faulkner Hamlin, "A Modern Gothic Church," *Liturgical Arts* 3, no. 1 (First Quarter 1934), 30.

¹⁰⁴ Hildreth Meiere, "A Modern Way of the Cross in Mosaic," *Liturgical Arts* 1, no. 1 (Fall 1931): 34-37; and Wellington J. A. Schaefer, "An Altar Society of Wider Scope," *Liturgical Arts* 3, no. 2 (Second Quarter 1934), 73.

historicist architecture had clearly yet to come, as they began by actively championing it while maintaining a strong awareness of alternatives in the world of secular architecture.

As alluded to in the discussion of St. Vincent Ferrer, an important topic in *Liturgical Arts* was the design of altars that conformed to all of the Church's rubrics for the design of sacred architecture, with a guide to the requirements for altar design being included in the first issue.¹⁰⁵ One way this manifested in the magazine was the inclusion of before and after photos showing altar and sanctuary renovations, and a contest for church renovations.¹⁰⁶ The Liturgical Movement believed that the problem was not with the rubrics themselves, but "insufficient obedience and submission to Vatican authority."¹⁰⁷ However, changing emphases on both rubrics and historicism would come with time.

*II.2: St. Thomas the Apostle and Architectural Modernism*¹⁰⁸

The idea that the Catholic Church should participate in contemporary architectural developments emerged in the 1920s as "a mixture of Arts and Craft ideas, neoscholastic theology as interpreted by the French philosophers Jacques and Raïssa Maritain, and, most of all, the emerging modernist discourse that eventually united designers as heterogeneous as Frank Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, Walter Gropius, Alvar Aalto, and Eero Saarinen."¹⁰⁹ Central to the justification of the use of modern forms was the assertion that medieval buildings

¹⁰⁵ McNamara, *Catholic Church Architecture*, 77.

¹⁰⁶ McNamara, *Catholic Church Architecture*, 178; Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 38; "Awards for Remodeled Churches," *Liturgical Arts* 2, no. 3 (Third Quarter 1933): 117; "Six Remodeled Churches," *Liturgical Arts* 2, no. 3 (Third Quarter 1933): 126–39; and Ann H. Grill, "An Alteration in Old Saint Mary's Chicago Illinois," *Liturgical Arts* 11, no. 4 (August 1943): 81–82, 86.

¹⁰⁷ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 38.

¹⁰⁸ "Modernism" is a complicated term to use in this period and context; for the purposes of this thesis it will be used to describe work that is self-consciously striving to be "modern" architecture, irregardless of direct connections with what is typically thought of as the "Modernist" canon. Modernism is also a term that was used for a heresy during this period, complicating the way this term was used. The term never refers to the heresy in this thesis.

¹⁰⁹ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 3.

were the modern architecture of their time, a claim that was often presented as a truism or as a piece of common knowledge rather than an argument that could be subjected to scrutiny.¹¹⁰ Rhetorical appeals to scientific discourse was also used when discussing architecture and within the American Catholic Church more generally, such as “the routine use of words like *evolution* and *adaptation* to describe nonbiological processes; the positive or neutral valuing of change across time or space; the sensitive observation of the minute details that differentiate one species (or one culture) from the next; and great respect for empiricism and the experimental method, even as applied to religious life.”¹¹¹

However, a desire to move away from the exclusive use of revivalist styles “dated at least back to John Henry Newman’s comment that the Catholic Church required a ‘living architecture’ for a ‘living ritual.’”¹¹² This aligns with Orvell’s argument that the “culture of imitation” previously described shifted in the early twentieth century towards a “culture of authenticity” wherein “the arts attempt to get beyond imitation, beyond the manufacturing of illusions, to the creation of works that are themselves real things.”¹¹³ Barry Byrne’s St. Thomas the Apostle exemplifies the enactment of this desire.

Built in 1922, St. Thomas the Apostle was the first church designed by Byrne, who had apprenticed under Frank Lloyd Wright, and who would also be a key player in the “Commonweal Debate,” a debate between Modernists and Neohistoricists which took place in the Catholic magazine *Commonweal* from 1925 to 1929.¹¹⁴ Byrne “played perhaps the single most important

¹¹⁰ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 30. See also Marvin Trachtenberg, “Desedimenting Time: Gothic Column/Paradigm Shifter,” *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, no. 40 (Autumn 2001): 5–28, for a more recent piece of scholarship advancing similar ideas.

¹¹¹ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 6.

¹¹² Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 19.

¹¹³ Orvell, *Real Thing*, xx.

¹¹⁴ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 24-25.

early role in introducing American Catholics to emerging modernist architectural theory,”¹¹⁵ so it is fitting that his St. Thomas the Apostle church is “credited by historians as the United States’ first modern Catholic church.”¹¹⁶

The features that set St. Thomas the Apostle apart are immediately apparent. Unlike St. John Cantius, with its monumental staircase down to the sidewalk below, St. Thomas the Apostle is set back from the street, with only a few steps up to the building’s entrance (Figure 2-1). The church is on a corner lot, but there is space to the left of the building that is empty, leaving a lawn separated by a low wall which ensures that the church and other buildings associated with it are not seen only in isolation but as part of a larger complex designed to create open space within the city setting.

The other sides of the lawn are enclosed by a convent to the left of the church that was designed by Byrne and built in 1919, and the Robert Kane-designed rectory to the right of the lawn was built between 1925 and 1926.¹¹⁷ This empty lot is the site of two former buildings; the first was a small frame building that dated from 1869 when the parish was founded, and the second was a Victorian Gothic church that replaced it in 1890.¹¹⁸ Fr. Thomas Vincent Shannon brought in Barry Byrne to design a new church; they had met Byrne through their mutual membership in the Medievalists Club at the University of Chicago.¹¹⁹ This shared interest demonstrates the connection between early “Modernist” Catholic architecture and medievalism.

The church must be understood as the work of four main designers. At the outset, Barry Byrne worked with Alfonso Iannelli, a sculptor who had worked with Frank Lloyd Wright and

¹¹⁵ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 25.

¹¹⁶ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 82.

¹¹⁷ Sarah Carrig Bond, *The Art & Architecture of St. Thomas the Apostle Church: A Guided Tour* (Chicago: St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church, 2018), 3.

¹¹⁸ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 3.

¹¹⁹ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 3.

who designed much of the terra cotta on the exterior of the building.¹²⁰ Byrne's work with Iannelli reflected Byrne's dedication to the early Modernist emphasis on the integrating architectural and decorative elements, to "creat[e] a unified whole."¹²¹ The presence of ornament is itself notable, especially in a discussion of Modernism, and the building features more ornament than Byrne's later work.¹²² However, Byrne claimed to have taken a more intentional approach with his ornament than his Neohistoricist predecessors, and saw his own approach to art as an "interest... in an art for use which is in opposition to the museum conception of it."¹²³ More generally, Modernists called for a move away from church furnishings from catalogues and "argued for the integration of the arts 'naturally' and by design."¹²⁴ Just as ads in the post-World War I period emphasized the reality and realness of their products,¹²⁵ architects sought to create spaces that were real, without the artifice associated with mass-produced furnishings from catalogues. It is perhaps not a coincidence that Orvell argues that "the busy pages of the mail-order catalogue" epitomize the Victorian aesthetic of abundance and "its concomitant rage for order."¹²⁶

Iannelli also designed the interior furnishings, windows, and sculptural program for the entrance, but these designs remained unrealized because Byrne and Iannelli, who designed some of the ornament, "actually left the job after some disagreement with the pastor and a donor about the nature of the ornament," and as a result these designs went unrealized.¹²⁷ Byrne and Iannelli left the project in 1923 and were replaced by Robert Kane, an architect who "completed the interior in

¹²⁰ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 3.

¹²¹ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 3.

¹²² McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 82.

¹²³ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 82; Barry Byrne to Otto Lucien Spaeth, Letter, February 11, 1947, CLIT 23/03, UNDA. For context see Barry Byrne to Maurice Lavanoux, Letter, February 11, 1947, CLIT 23/03, UNDA, and Maurice Lavanoux(?) to Barry Byrne, Letter, February 13, 1947, CLIT 23/03, UNDA.

¹²⁴ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 37.

¹²⁵ Orvell, *Real Thing*, 144.

¹²⁶ Orvell, *Real Thing*, 42-43.

¹²⁷ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 3; and McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 83.

a predominantly Gothic revival style.”¹²⁸ The fourth designer is Valentine d’Ogries, who designed the stained glass.¹²⁹

The main facade is asymmetrical, with the entrance to one side and the church proper, with its tall, narrow windows, to the right. Despite the fact that the brick exterior is fairly flat, lacking the cornices, pediments, and other textural elements, the entrance is made monumental by the enormous terra cotta portal featuring a depiction of the crucifixion (Figure 2-2). The portal sculpture was designed by Robert Kane; Iannelli’s model featured a smaller, less elaborate portal with less figural sculpture, but Kane used “Iannelli’s strong geometry and organic forms” to create “a more imposing and ornate design.”¹³⁰ The ornamentation features recognizable revival features such as Gothic niches and elongated jamb figures, but other elements, such as the rather planer corpus, reflect the influence of Art Deco. The use of terra cotta also reflects the ubiquity of that material in vernacular buildings in Chicago.

The narthex (Figure 2-3) is low-ceilinged and dimly lit, with dark wood and thick, textured plaster wall, setting the state for an experience of compression and release for those entering the church.¹³¹ The narthex’s stepped ceiling echoes the ceilings in the church itself. After entering the building, the congregation must turn immediately to access the nave, a non-standard layout for the time.¹³² The nave is separated from the narthex by a thin wooden and stained-glass screen.

The nave is a wide, tall, and open space with plain walls and without columns or piers supporting the roof (Figure 2-4). The space measures 95 by 120 feet, with a 44-foot ceiling that “was said to have the largest roof structure in the world unsupported by columns” when the church

¹²⁸ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 4.

¹²⁹ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 5.

¹³⁰ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 4.

¹³¹ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 4.

¹³² McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 82.

was built.¹³³ This underscores the cutting-edge nature of the design. There are no wall murals, and decorative elements are confined to abstract ornament, the stations of the cross, the windows, the sanctuary, and side chapels. There is a devotional statue of the Pietà, but even that is in a niche of its own and not visible from much of the nave. The ceiling steps up towards the center of the space, as does the ceiling over the sanctuary. The painted geometric pattern is original, and features “symbols of Christ and the saints.”¹³⁴ At the west end of the space is a balcony with a similar ceiling, and side chapels on either side of the balcony which mirror those on either side of the sanctuary (Figure 2-5). The space is thus symmetrical along both axes, and this serves to de-emphasize the hierarchy of the sanctuary over the rest of the space. The shapes and layout of the space are the result of Byrne’s design; Kane was primarily responsible for the wooden furnishings and the baldacchino.¹³⁵

The sanctuary itself (Figure 2-6) projects outward “into the relatively wide and shallow nave, offering the best possible acoustics and bringing the laity closer to the altar,” a response to Pope Pius X’s promotion of “the ‘active participation’ of the faithful,” something that was a goal of the Liturgical Movement.¹³⁶ The sanctuary as originally designed “extended even further, creating an in-the-round effect for the seating near the altar”¹³⁷ The plan was later modified, presumably at the request of Fr Shannon, but Byrne widened as well as shortened the sanctuary.¹³⁸ The high altar sits under a baldacchino and features a tall, freestanding tabernacle. Liturgical Movement altar design sought to move away from the altars that had developed into shelves attached to large reredoses, towards altars that better combined “the understanding of the altar as

¹³³ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 4.

¹³⁴ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 5.

¹³⁵ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 5.

¹³⁶ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 83. See also Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 92.

¹³⁷ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 5.

¹³⁸ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 5.

a place of sacrifice and the prophecy of the last supper with the notion of altar as throne, emphasizing Christ as priest, prophet, and king.”¹³⁹ In front of the baldacchino is a second altar which was installed after the second Vatican Council.¹⁴⁰ The sculpture work on the baldacchino is Art Deco, with imagery that is an abstract representation of the Heavenly City described in Revelation.¹⁴¹ At the top of the baldacchino is a figure of the Risen Christ, portrayed as beardless “in the Early Christian manner,” and dressed as a priest.¹⁴² The baldacchino thus combines contemporary design trends, biblical symbolism, and self-conscious imitation of early Christians, something that is particularly relevant to discussions of the second Vatican Council. The baldacchino also connects the Mass, as a re-entering into Christ’s redemptive sacrifice on the cross, with the resurrection and the defeat of death, and portrays Christ as High Priest through his dress.

A Gothic Revival screen partially hides the choir; music would have emanated from behind the altar during the Mass, rather than from behind the congregation as at St. John Cantius. The church overall fits the same “*classic sacramental*” model as St. John Cantius; the presence of the choir in the chancel is something Kieckhefer mentions that is not present at St. John Cantius, though the presence of choir stalls behind the screen seems unlikely.¹⁴³ The finials on the top of the screen recall the exterior terra-cotta ornament along the roofline by Iannelli, demonstrating a desire to maintain continuity despite the change in architecture and style.¹⁴⁴ The altar rail features Eucharistic imagery of grapes and wheat on both the polychromed wooden section as well as the metal gate. The marble floor of the sanctuary includes fish shapes, a symbol of Christ. The original

¹³⁹ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 175, 176.

¹⁴⁰ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 12. Carrig Bond states that its installation was the result of a requirement for priests to face the congregation after the reforms of Vatican II (12). This is technically chronologically correct but the idea that the reforms themselves required Mass to be said facing the people is actually more complex as is discussed in section II.4.

¹⁴¹ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 13.

¹⁴² Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 12.

¹⁴³ Kieckhefer, *Theology in Stone*, 11.

¹⁴⁴ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 13.

pulpit is located outside of the sanctuary itself, to the north. The pulpit is notable for its acoustics, as the sounding board above the pulpit amplifies the sound.¹⁴⁵ Not included in the photograph is a painted wooden crucifix that hung over the altar rail showing a living Jesus which was installed soon after the church was dedicated.¹⁴⁶ The figural imagery in the sanctuary is thus dominated by images of Jesus Christ, rather than by images of saints, as can be seen at St. John Cantius.

Decorative elements within the church range from heavily revivalist to very modern. The space which is perhaps most “traditional,” in appearance is the St. Anne Chapel (Figure 2-7), which features a large, gilded altarpiece with a painting in the center surrounded by gothic-revival statues. This chapel was designed by William E. Anthony and has remained mostly unchanged since the church’s 1924 dedication.¹⁴⁷ The wings of the altarpiece feature coats of arms, which presumably only assume an aesthetic purpose and had no meaningful connection to anyone connected to the church. The centerpiece of the chapel is a painting of *The Virgin and Child with St. Anne*, copied from a sixteenth century Italian original by a teaching sister at the parish school.¹⁴⁸ This chapel, like the others, has a rood screen. These screens make the spaces seem more “traditional” but also de-center the side chapels relative to the more open sanctuary, which projects into the nave.

The St. Anne Chapel is directly opposite the St. Joseph Chapel (Figure 2-8), which is markedly different in style. The art deco statue matches one of Mary in the Mary chapel and dates from the 1920s.¹⁴⁹ The statue is a departure from the romantic and sentimental polychrome statuary typical of the Victorian period. The face and neck especially, with their dramatic lights and darks and orangish color, suggest a rather gaunt man. The statue sits on a relatively plain altar and in

¹⁴⁵ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 14.

¹⁴⁶ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 12. The crucifix “was recently removed for cleaning and has not yet been put back,” (12).

¹⁴⁷ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 16.

¹⁴⁸ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 16.

¹⁴⁹ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 17.

front of a plain stone backdrop, the shape of which matches the stepped ceiling of the church and chapel.¹⁵⁰ The portrayal of St. Joseph as a beardless young man is also unusual, which led to the mis-labeling of the statue as St. Thomas during a restoration.¹⁵¹ The location of this chapel is not original; the Joseph Chapel and the Mary Chapel on the opposite side of the sanctuary were originally in each other's locations, reflecting a traditional church layout dating from the Middle ages and which can be seen in other churches in Chicago including St John Cantius.¹⁵² Because the Mary Chapel is the most popular devotional space in the church, their positions were switched when the choir was moved in front of what is now the St Joseph Chapel during the 1990s.¹⁵³

The stations of the cross and statue of the Pietà by Italian sculptor Alfeo Faggi are perhaps the most famous pieces of art in the church. Both the statue and the stations were commissioned by Frances Crane Lillie, a convert to Catholicism and parishioner at St Thomas the Apostle who was passionate about the creation of sacred art in modern styles.¹⁵⁴ The Pietà she commissioned is one of three differently-sized versions; one was bought by the Art Institute of Chicago and another by Princeton University.¹⁵⁵ The version in St Thomas the Apostle “was exhibited at the Louise Bourgeois Gallery in New York in 1921” before being donated to the parish.¹⁵⁶ The high status purchases of the other two statues demonstrate an appreciation by the art world, and a shift from religious art being brought into museums from churches towards the direct acquisition of religious art by museums. The niche that the statue sits in is original to Byrne's plans for the church,¹⁵⁷ and

¹⁵⁰ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 14.

¹⁵¹ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 14.

¹⁵² Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 14.

¹⁵³ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 14, 17.

¹⁵⁴ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 14.

¹⁵⁵ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 14.

¹⁵⁶ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 14.

¹⁵⁷ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 5.

Byrne certainly supported modern art being used in churches, but it is unclear how he would have felt about that latter aspect because of his distaste for “museum personages.”

Jesus’ body in the statue is positioned in the same way as that of Mary, causing his body to appear to merge with hers (Figure 2-9).¹⁵⁸ This effect is heightened by the fact that Mary’s body and Jesus’ legs are sculpted in the round whereas Jesus’ body slowly flattens out to the point that his head is almost a low relief against Mary’s chest and neck (Figure 2-10). The positioning of the figures also recalls statues of the Mary with the child Jesus sitting on her lap in the same posture, which refer to the idea of Mary as the “Throne of Wisdom.” Thus, Faggi’s Pietà emphasizes both this scene of the lamentation as well as providing a throne for Christ’s body that calls to mind his kingship. It is a highly sophisticated take on a traditional subject which pulls from both contemporary and traditional influences.

The Stations of the Cross were created between 1923 and 1925.¹⁵⁹ They are made of a dark bronze in deep relief, with emotions conveyed through highly simplified forms and gestures in a way that recalls medieval art.¹⁶⁰ The eleventh and ninth stations, which portrays Jesus being nailed to the cross and Jesus falling, exemplifies these elements (Figure 2-11). Deep relief creates dramatic shadows, and limbs are simplified and lengthened. Jesus’ arms and legs flatten out towards the hands and feet until they barely stand out against the simple, featureless cross. Exact proportions are also abandoned in areas such as the facial features, where the large eye of the crouching soldier draws attention to his gaze in the eleventh station, and the size and shape of the hands in the ninth station. Most of the linear elements of the image are parallel to the edges of the work or to the beams of the cross. The repetition of forms between stations “creat[es] rhythms and

¹⁵⁸ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 14.

¹⁵⁹ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 15.

¹⁶⁰ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 15.

harmonies” which tie the narrative together, as can be seen in comparison between the two stations.¹⁶¹

Faggi’s approach was also a departure from tradition; each station was created “after meditating at length on the event depicted, using no preparatory drawings.”¹⁶² Because of how modern in style the stations were, they were “quite poorly received by St. Thomas parishioners,” and Fr. Shannon mounted a defense on their behalf by “seeking letters from prominent figures in the art world extolling their merits,” but was only able to “calm the storm” by calling upon Cardinal Mundelein, Chicago’s archbishop at the time, for help.¹⁶³ What this episode may demonstrate is that ecclesial authority carried more weight than the opinions of “the art world,” at least for the typical parishioner. Fr. Shannon’s involvement with the commissioning of this artwork, and work from Faggi, complicates his relationship to Modernist art and architecture. He commissioned the church from Byrne but replaced him with someone working in a Gothic Revival style. However, he still sought out contemporary artwork to place within this hybrid setting.

Devotional objects are not limited to the side chapels and Faggi’s sculptural work. On either side of the doors to the narthex are statues of St. Therese of Lisieux and St. Anthony of Padua, both of whom were extremely popular in the early twentieth century.¹⁶⁴ The inclusion thus demonstrates the rich devotional life of the parishioners as well as the fact that the parish was responding to devotional trends of the period, not simply choosing Saints at random or for reasons of tradition. There is also a statue of Jesus beside the sanctuary, occupying the space opposite the pulpit. The settings for these three statues are Gothic Revival and they were presumably designed by Robert Kane. They do not match the art deco statues of Mary and Joseph.

¹⁶¹ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 15.

¹⁶² Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 15.

¹⁶³ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 15.

¹⁶⁴ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 17.

Intercession on Fr Shannon's behalf is also not the only way that Cardinal Mundelein was involved with St Thomas the Apostle; he is also represented in the church's architecture. The windows in the church were created between 1923 and the early 1930s and designed by Valentine d'Ogries, an Austrian-born stained glass artist who was trained in a medieval revival style that is reflected in St Thomas the Apostle's windows.¹⁶⁵ The tall and narrow nave windows each portray a Church Father, and the Gothic Revival stylistic elements include the architecture portrayed in the windows, the scrolls containing the names of the Saints depicted, and the use of gray tones (grisaille) for the faces and hands of the figures.¹⁶⁶ The five windows completed earliest are the most Gothic in style, with the rest reflecting a shift towards art deco, with figures who are "rigid, erect, and frontal, with proportionally smaller heads and elongated bodies."¹⁶⁷ The faces of the figures also take on a photographic quality, which brings us back to Mundelein.

Several of the Saints are portrayed with the faces of other people. For example, St Augustine has the face of Cardinal Mundelein and St Gregory the Great has that of Fr Shannon.¹⁶⁸ While these windows can easily be seen as efforts to demonstrate continuity between the early Church and the Church in contemporary Chicago, others are more surprising. Another window features a face that "bears a striking resemblance to the newly appointed president of the University of Chicago."¹⁶⁹ Most recognizable of all are the three windows featuring the faces of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Calvin Coolidge, who was president at the time the church was built (Figure 2-12).¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁵ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 5.

¹⁶⁶ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 5.

¹⁶⁷ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 5-6. "The reason for the change in style remains a mystery," (6).

¹⁶⁸ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 6-7.

¹⁶⁹ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 8.

¹⁷⁰ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 7.

The inclusion of these distinctly non-Catholic American presidents “suggests that the Catholic Church is fully American and not a segregated group with loyalties elsewhere, a common prejudice of the time.”¹⁷¹ The figures included in these portraits more generally embody a theme of leadership that extends from the notion of the Church Fathers as leaders in the early Church, and their inclusion also “expresses that the Church is a living organism, continuous with the past, and immersed in its place and time.”¹⁷² This notion of the Church as living, organic, and evolving can also be seen in the use of contemporary art and architecture in the building more generally.

Two other windows in the building are particularly notable. One features Cardinal John Henry Newman, who was only canonized in 2019, and the presence of this window demonstrates that d’Ogries and Fr Shannon were “forward-looking and... desire[d] to emphasize learning and connect St. Thomas to the University.”¹⁷³ The second is a window of St Christopher in the balcony by an unknown artist which dates from the 1930s and features an airplane, car, ocean liner, and train to represent St. Christopher’s patronage of travelers.¹⁷⁴

While, as St. Thomas the Apostle demonstrates, Catholic Modernist architecture and the Liturgical Movement were closely related, the two were intertwined to the point that “it is impossible to establish a simple causality, as some architects became interested in the liturgical movement because it was hospitable to modernist discourse and practice,” while the converse was true for others.¹⁷⁵ It also demonstrates that the Liturgical Movement could spawn buildings with many elements influenced by contemporary architectural trends but which were also designed to

¹⁷¹ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 7. This effort at assimilation through architecture can also be seen at the seminary constructed under Mundelein’s Archbishopric, now called Mundelein Seminary. The campus, and the chapel especially, were built in a colonial revival style to emphasize the patriotism, or indeed capacity for patriotism, of American Catholics and Catholic priests; see McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 18.

¹⁷² Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 7.

¹⁷³ Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 10.

¹⁷⁴ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 8; and Carrig Bond, *Art & Architecture*, 19.

¹⁷⁵ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 11.

support a rich devotional life at the parish level. Although it does not appear particularly radical today, the church's modernity "caused quite a sensation" when it opened, and "Cardinal Mundelein believed that Byrne's designs were 'too advanced for the Catholic Church.'" ¹⁷⁶ However, it should be noted that since the Liturgical Movement also promoted Historicist design, at least initially, causality can be established by saying that the Liturgical Movement as a whole was not caused by Modernist architectural discourse, even if that discourse later influenced it.

II.3 Towards a Communal Sacramental Model? St Helen

Over time, the aesthetic standards of *Liturgical Arts* magazine moved away from historicism. However, as late as 1937 *Liturgical Arts* was willing to publish Cram's critique of Dom Bellot's "violently ultra-modernist designs" to complete the Oratory of St. Joseph in Montreal,¹⁷⁷ as long as Dom Bellot was "given a chance to defend his design, and that the whole thing should be accompanied by a third person summing up and stating his own views of the matter."¹⁷⁸ In an article on another church by Byrne, Lavanoux wrote that "perhaps the best approach to the whole question is to take an almost childishly simple attitude: 'The way to build a church is to build a CHURCH'—not a *Gothic* or *Romanesque* or *Byzantine* or *Renaissance*—or even a *Modern* church."¹⁷⁹ In the 1940s, Lavanoux moved away completely from publishing historicist content, and "by the 1950s," Modernists dominated the Liturgical Arts Society, "the holdouts having either retired or left the society in favor of the Catholic Art Association, which...

¹⁷⁶ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 83.

¹⁷⁷ Ralph Adams Cram to Harry Lorin Binsse, Letter, September 13, 1937, CLIT 3/14, UNDA.

¹⁷⁸ Harry Lorin Binsse(?) to Ralph Adams Cram, September 22, 1937, CLIT 3/14, UNDA. Cram's manuscript was withdrawn from *Liturgical Arts* after he learned "of certain developments in... Dom Bellot's scheme," see Ralph Adams Cram to Harry Lorin Binsse, Letter, October 4, 1937, CLIT 3/14, UNDA.

¹⁷⁹ Maurice Lavanoux, "St. Patrick's Church Racine, Wisconsin," *Liturgical Arts* 4, no. 2 (Second Quarter 1935), 99-100.

continued to advocate for a purist interpretation of medieval craft practices.”¹⁸⁰ Modernist arguments for the use of new technology “acknowledged the new order as strange, unsettling, and potentially destructive, but claimed that it was nevertheless capable of sacramental salvation; just as human beings existed outside of God’s grace until formally enfolded into the Church, so too did new technologies.”¹⁸¹

Changes in architectural pedagogy also affected Catholic architecture during this period. *Liturgical Arts* routinely promoted the use of architects who were not specialists in ecclesiastic architecture, “recommending that clients instead seek ‘creative’ men who approached problems individually.”¹⁸² Architecture as a trade became more professionalized, while the Liturgical Arts Society “encouraged Catholic architectural schools to move away from approaches to training that prioritized students’ copying skills,” and published a 1944 article in which the author wrote that Ludwig Mies van der Rohe’s architecture department at the Illinois Institute of Technology was “the only school with which I am acquainted which bases its teaching on sound principle.”¹⁸³ However, a few years later Lavanoux wrote that he found Mies van der Rohe “a bit confused in his thinking,”¹⁸⁴ so the aforementioned, somewhat extreme article was probably not representative of the typical member of the Liturgical Arts Society. However, the theme of the Church lagging behind secular institutions architecturally appeared often in promotions of Modernist architecture.¹⁸⁵ McNamara posits that Romanticism still motivated Modernist architects in the Church via the following line of thought, “Emotionalism was a particular response in 1890, and

¹⁸⁰ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 64, 94.

¹⁸¹ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 108.

¹⁸² Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 35.

¹⁸³ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 7, 36; and Howard Dearstyne, “Basic Teaching of Architecture,” *Liturgical Arts* 12, no. 3 (May 1944), 56.

¹⁸⁴ Maurice Lavanoux to Barry Byrne, October 15, 1947, CLIT 23/03, UNDA.

¹⁸⁵ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 82, 83. See also Maurice Lavanoux, “The Cardinal Hayes Memorial High School,” *Liturgical Arts* 10, no. 1 (November 1941): 4–7; which complements the school by appealing to this concern.

that time is over. *My* response is that we need something that speaks of our time. Our time is defined by technology and the machine. So church architecture should partake of the industrial aesthetic.”¹⁸⁶

There was also a move away from the strict rubricism that characterized the early Liturgical Arts Society. A plan for “the ideal church, the platonic idea of a church” written by a priest and published in a 1943 issue of *Liturgical Arts* contains a qualification at the end that the implementation of his ideas would require changes to “canon law and rubrics,”¹⁸⁷ a far cry from early articles which emphasized strict adherence to Vatican guidelines. The article even suggests removing the tabernacle from the altar.¹⁸⁸ The church design was probably also influenced by “voices in the liturgical movement [who] concluded that the Mass had changed greatly over time,” and “began to assimilate the corollary that it would probably change in the future, a conclusion with serious (though not always explicit) implications for not only liturgy but ecclesiology.”¹⁸⁹

St. Helen is a church in Chicago which can be used to illustrate the application of some of these ideas.¹⁹⁰ Like St. John Cantius, St. Helen was established as a parish for Polish Catholics.¹⁹¹ Although the parish was established in 1913, the current building (Figure 2-13) was constructed in 1963 to designs by Pirola and Erbach.¹⁹² The church occupies a corner lot and is oriented diagonally, with the two street-facing facades being mirror images of one another. The building is

¹⁸⁶ McNamara, *Catholic Church Architecture*, 175.

¹⁸⁷ The Reverend J. D. Chrichton, “A Church to Long For,” *Liturgical Arts* 12, no. 1 (November 1943), 14. Notably, the article calls for the church to be built of stone and or brick, ideally with a domed ceiling that “might be richly painted with pictures representing the heavenly liturgy of the Apocalypse,” (14).

¹⁸⁸ Chrichton, “A Church to Long For,” 13.

¹⁸⁹ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 43.

¹⁹⁰ Plans to visit St. Helen in person for research purposes were cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic; as a result, this section is shorter than initially intended.

¹⁹¹ *History of Saint Helen Parish*, PDF file. (Chicago: Saint Helen Parish, n.d. [2013?]).

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B8Kb8atH4owSVnhYQnpkSTNGUIE/view>. Available via “Parish History,” St. Helen Parish, accessed May 17, 2020, <http://www.sthelenparish.net/wp-en/parish/parish-history/>, 1913-1938 section, para. 2.

¹⁹² *History of Saint Helen Parish*, “1913 – 1938” section, para. 2, “New Church Building...” section, para. 2.

shaped like a fish,¹⁹³ a Christian symbol. This choice demonstrates a desire for a symbolically-driven architectural program, rather than one that relies solely on historical precedent to derive the plan. The roofline is flat, though decorative parapets extend beyond it over the sanctuary windows, which are confined to one bay window section on each of the street-facing facades. The gridded wall facing the corner is angled to create a small plaza or patio at the corner. A tower sits at this corner of the building and ends in a spire. Although the lines of the exterior are generally straight lines and unadorned curves, the tower and bay windows feature detailing which combines gothic revival buttressing and art deco. The sleek feeling of the exterior is emphasized by its construction in a single color of limestone, which is only interrupted by the white statue near the base of the tower, which stands out in result.¹⁹⁴ Exterior ornamental detail, such as the row of squares below the roofline, and the square grid on the corner-facing wall, are achieved via textural changes rather than through applied ornament. Rather than a monumental entrance facing the corner, the church is entered via entrances on either side of the wall facing the corner, with the doorways facing the streets at an angle. These angled entrances almost act as continuations of the sidewalk; the transition from walking down the street into the church or out of the church and onto the street is achieved by a smooth, curved path that follows the curved plan of the building. The building exterior combines traditional forms such as the tower with a contemporary plan and detailing.

The interior (Figure 2-14) develops some of the ideas seen in or and intended for St. Thomas the Apostle. More generally, it reflects the fact that Modernist church designers were using contemporary materials to create buildings that “followed the basic premises of the Liturgical Movement: a church was sacred, the altar was primary, and devotions were secondary

¹⁹³ *History of Saint Helen Parish*, “New Church Building...” section, para. 5.

¹⁹⁴ *History of Saint Helen Parish*, “New Church Building...” section, para. 5.

but important.”¹⁹⁵ The church is oval, with the sanctuary placed in the center of a long side of the oval.¹⁹⁶ As shown in the photo *Interior of St. Helen Church*, the curved sanctuary projects outwards from the wall, and pews radiate outwards from the sanctuary in what is almost a semi-circular space, rather than the parallel, straight pews seen in previous churches.¹⁹⁷ The sanctuary design recalls Byrne’s original intention for the sanctuary at St. Thomas the Apostle. The curved pattern on the ceiling, which resembles a sunburst or a flower, mirrors the shape of the sanctuary and arrangement of pews. The ceiling is richly decorated with paint and gilded, but primarily in abstract patterns. The sanctuary includes a large gold reredos with a crucifix and a pattern that may represent the Tree of Life, with three niches with statues on either side. The reredos combines Gothic Revival and Art Deco styles. The reredos is flanked by a pair of Chi Rhos with the words “I am the vine” and “you are the branches” in English above an icon of the Black Madonna of Częstochowa and a Divine Mercy image, which together embody a tendency towards linguistic assimilation and the maintenance of devotions originating in Poland.¹⁹⁸ These devotional images are prominently placed but not visually overpowering. More painted symbols are on the walls besides the pillasters, which themselves contain niches for an additional two statues. While the decoration of the interior is not focused on the imitation of historical styles, rich materials, including “marble, walnut, [and] terrazzo” are used.¹⁹⁹ The windows are concentrated in four bay window areas, two on each long side of the oval, and the stained glass appears to be a repeating abstract geometric pattern. The wide expanses of solid wall create a sense of separation from the outside world.

¹⁹⁵ McNamara, *Catholic Church Architecture*, 178.

¹⁹⁶ *History of Saint Helen Parish*, “New Church Building...” section, para. 5.

¹⁹⁷ *Interior of St. Helen Church*, in *History of Saint Helen Parish*, “St. Helen Parish at Age 100” section. The date and photographer are not listed.

¹⁹⁸ Jeff Zoline, *St Helen’s Catholic Church*, 15 October 2017, Digital Image. Available from: Flickr, All Rights Reserved, Used With Permission, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/zol87/26884911988/>.

¹⁹⁹ *History of Saint Helen Parish*, “New Church Building...” section, para. 5.

The church maintains the characteristics of the “*classic sacramental church*” as defined by Kieckhefer; “the focal point... is the altar... to which the longitudinal space leads. [...] Such churches often abound with symbolic forms and decorations.”²⁰⁰ The altar is definitely the focal point, towards which the radiating lines converge, and there is rich decoration and a use of symbols in the church, especially in the sanctuary. While the nave is not longitudinal, another element of the “*classic sacramental church*,”²⁰¹ there is a strong view down the main aisle that feels like it could be in a church with a more traditional layout. Elements of the layout such as “seating... wrapped around three sides of the interior” are associated with what Kieckhefer refers to as “the *modern communal church*” in which the emphasis is placed on “the importance of gathering people for worship,” and “[t]he assembly itself may thus become the main focus of attention.”²⁰² This latter point seems questionable in St. Helen; the arrangement of pews seems more focused on meeting the Liturgical Movement goal of improving views of the altar rather than of other congregants. In addition, the church lacks “ample space for social mingling at the entry” and was not “built for a congregation that is not already formed as a community in everyday life.”²⁰³ This suggests that St. Helen could be seen as a transitional example, but it could also be seen as a church which theoretically has a “modern communal” layout but not for the same reasons that more archetypal examples might use such a layout. A better term to describe the building may be McNamara’s “High Liturgical Modern of the 1960s,”²⁰⁴ on account of the modern layout and lack of historicist elements, combined with the liturgically-focused space and use of expensive materials.

²⁰⁰ Kieckhefer, *Theology in Stone*, 11.

²⁰¹ Kieckhefer, *Theology in Stone*, 11.

²⁰² Kieckhefer, *Theology in Stone*, 12.

²⁰³ Kieckhefer, *Theology in Stone*, 12.

²⁰⁴ McNamara, *Catholic Church Architecture*, 187.

II.4: The Second Vatican Council, Holy Name Cathedral, and Post-Conciliar Design Principles

While these changes to American Catholic church architecture were happening, the function they served remained largely the same. The Liturgical Movement sought to help the laity connect more deeply with the Masses they attended, but for the most part, the form and content of those Masses went unchanged until the Second Vatican Council, or Vatican II. Announced by Pope John XXIII in 1959, the Council took place from 1962 to 1965. It was an ecumenical council involving 2,000 to 2,500 Catholic bishops from across the world, who gathered to codify doctrine, with thousands of other people in attendance as observers.²⁰⁵ The Council sought to address the Church's place in the modern world, and released sixteen documents in order to do so.²⁰⁶ Among other things, these documents allowed and encouraged ecumenical activity and set the stage for the use of vernacular languages, rather than Latin, for the Mass.²⁰⁷

This latter point is especially significant for this thesis. In 1969, a revised Missal was promulgated by Pope Paul VI, which made changes to the Latin-rite Catholic Mass based on guidelines that had been laid out in "Sacrosanctum Concilium," one of the documents of Vatican II.²⁰⁸ This form of the Mass will be referred to as the Mass of Paul VI, and the form of the Mass that preceded the Council will be referred to as the Tridentine Mass.²⁰⁹ Before Vatican II, Masses

²⁰⁵ Jordan G. Teicher, "Why Is Vatican II So Important?" NPR, October 10, 2012, <https://www.npr.org/2012/10/10/162573716/why-is-vatican-ii-so-important>.

²⁰⁶ Teicher, "Why is Vatican II So Important?"

²⁰⁷ Teicher, "Why is Vatican II So Important?"

²⁰⁸ Pope Paul VI, *Missale Romanum: On the New Roman Missal*, Apostolic Constitution, Vatican website, 3 April 1969, http://www.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_p-vi_apc_19690403_missale-romanum.html. The effects of the Council on Eastern-rite Catholicism are far outside the scope of this thesis, and all discussion should be assumed to apply only to Latin-rite Catholicism.

²⁰⁹ Other terms, such as "Ordinary Form" and "Novus Ordo" for the Mass of Paul VI; and "Extraordinary Form" and "Traditional Latin Mass" for the Tridentine Mass are also seen but "Mass of Paul VI" and "Tridentine Mass" are being used here because there are relatively neutral and are the terms used for the titles of their respective Wikipedia pages at time of writing.

had typically been said *as orientem*, with the congregation and priest on the same side of and facing the altar. Since 1969, in the United States and throughout most if not all of the world, Mass has typically been said almost entirely in the vernacular language, rather than in Latin, and has been said *versus populum*, with the priest facing the congregations across a freestanding altar. However, neither change was technically required by the new missal or the Council itself.²¹⁰ The large degree of latitude taken when implementing *Sacrosanctum Concilium* may have stemmed from the document's allowance for greater liturgical flexibility "especially in mission territories," and the fact that many historically Christian countries could be "regarded as mission territories in their own right," in the face of secularization.²¹¹

Additionally, wider use of the vernacular in the Mass began on "Vernacular Sunday" in 1964, which inaugurated "a decade of seemingly endless--and endlessly unpredictable--changes" to the liturgy.²¹² While the Liturgical Movement had originally been focused on following Vatican directives and liturgical rubrics as closely as possible, with the implementation of this new form of the liturgy, "the preconconciliar consensus on functional architecture frayed as Catholics of the 1960s and 1970s faced twin tasks of remaking older churches and developing new ones... in an atmosphere of deep uncertainty about when, or whether, liturgical requirements would ever stabilize."²¹³ This "state of flux" made designing churches around the functional requirements of

²¹⁰ See, for example Vatican II Council, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (hereafter *SC*), Vatican website, December 4, 1963, https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html, esp secs. 54 and 63; Nicholas LaBanca, "The Case for Ad Orientem," *Ascension Press Media* (blog), October 4, 2019, <https://media.ascensionpress.com/2019/10/04/the-case-for-ad-orientem/>;" and Peter Kwasniewski, "The Normativity of *Ad Orientem* Worship According to the Ordinary Form's Rubrics," *New Liturgical Movement* (blog), November 23, 2015, <http://www.newliturgicalmovement.org/2015/11/the-normativity-of-ad-orientem-worship.html>. New Liturgical Movement is less neutral than the Ascension Press blog, but this particular post is primarily a list of relevant quotes from the missal promulgated by Paul VI. The inclusion of this source is *not* an endorsement of Kwasniewski.

²¹¹ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 147-147. The first quote in this sentence is from *SC* sec. 40.

²¹² Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 150-151.

²¹³ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 184-185.

the liturgy impossible.²¹⁴ However, the goals of the Liturgical Movement and the reforms of Vatican II are related; today “the lessons to be learned from the Liturgical Movement are really the lessons to be learned from the Second Vatican Council.”²¹⁵ The future seemed so uncertain that a 1969 *Commonweal* magazine advertisement questioned whether or not the Church would have priests in the year 2000.²¹⁶

As *Liturgical Arts* ran through the early 1970s, it also covered this period in history, and the articles it ran mark a break with earlier material in a way that demonstrates the turmoil, confusion, and experimentation of the period. A 1972 article by someone who both complains about “mad enthusiasm” in liturgical reform and that “[o]ne never knows what wild dream of innovation or ‘relevance’ may have crept into the pastor and his curates’ dreams the night before [Mass],” and suggests monthly Tridentine Masses for those “who are not ready for the new church,” though he did not count himself among them, embodies the sense of turmoil and chaos experienced by some during this transformative period.²¹⁷ An article from the previous year promoted liturgical dance, or dance during Mass, something that was officially condemned by the church in 1975.²¹⁸ Existing churches did not go untouched in this period. In Chicago, Holy Name Cathedral received a significant renovation at this time.

Chicago’s Holy Name Cathedral (Figure 2-15) has a long history of renovations. It replaced the previous cathedral that burned in the Great Fire of 1871, and was dedicated in 1875.²¹⁹ The

²¹⁴ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 187.

²¹⁵ McNamara, *Catholic Church Architecture*, 184.

²¹⁶ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 13.

²¹⁷ Ned O’Gorman, “A Sense of Proportion and Propriety and Revolution,” *Liturgical Arts* 40, no. 2 (February 1972): 60. O’Gorman also mentions “ill-sewn, ugly banners,” (p. 60), presumably referencing the trend of using felt banners to decorate churches during this period, as promoted in Robert W. Anderson and Richard R. Caemmerer, *Banners Banners Banners Etc.* (Chicago: Christian Art Associates, 1967), CLIT 58/02, UNDA.

²¹⁸ Carla De Sola, “The Dancer and the Christian Community,” *Liturgical Arts* 39, no. 4 (August 1971): 99–101; and Catholic Answers Staff, “Is ‘Liturgical Dancing’ Permitted at Mass?,” Catholic Answers, accessed May 5, 2020, <https://www.catholic.com/qa/is-liturgical-dancing-permitted-at-mass>.

²¹⁹ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 2.

church was designed by Patrick Charles Keely, a prolific architect of Catholic churches from Brooklyn who designed twenty cathedrals.²²⁰ However, the budget for building the church was a mere \$25,000, and as the interior was not complete when the cathedral opened, it reopened in 1893 after being renovated and redecorated at a cost of over \$200,000.²²¹ Local architects were hired for the renovation, but Keely may have had input during the process and it is possible that the renovation is a fulfillment of his initial vision.²²²

In addition to making several structural improvements and replacing materials that were already deteriorating, this renovation involved installing new statues and stained-glass windows, replacing the original columns with marble columns, installing a marble and onyx wainscot, and adding a marble altar rail and marble flooring to the sanctuary.²²³ William Lambrecht, an artist who had done work for previous Keely-designed cathedrals, created 43 murals for Holy Name.²²⁴ The ceiling, “which revealed the ‘honest’ construction of the very oak and walnut itself rather than the plaster vaults common to Keely’s work,” also dates from this renovation.²²⁵ (See Figure 2-16.)

Much of this decorative program was lost in the cathedral’s 1969 renovation.²²⁶ (See Figure 2-17) Holy Name was one of the first cathedrals renovated after the Council.²²⁷ The renovation removed much of the figural imagery, including the murals and stained-glass windows, along with elaborate architectural features such as the wainscotting. New windows with abstract patterns of colorful rectangles were installed, and marble slabs placed in the spaces that had formerly been occupied by murals.²²⁸ The changes were purportedly motivated by a desire to recapture “the

²²⁰ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 2.

²²¹ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 2.

²²² McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 3.

²²³ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 3.

²²⁴ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 3.

²²⁵ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 3.

²²⁶ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 3.

²²⁷ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 3.

²²⁸ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 3-4.

perceived purity of the unfinished Keely design as built in 1975,” with the things removed in the renovation presented as antithetical to Keely’s vision, a claim which seems dubious when one considers that the changes to the vaulting and piers were kept.²²⁹

The renovation also reflects post-Conciliar liturgical practices; the altar rail was removed and the high altar replaced with a freestanding altar which allowed the priest to face the congregation from behind the altar. Despite their early date, these renovations are mostly in line with the consensus that most liturgists reached “by the early 1980s”: “a freestanding altar, a separate lectern for reading the scriptures, and a tabernacle away from the main altar.”²³⁰ But as Osborne notes, “during the post-conciliar decade, it was far from clear either that these items *were* required or that they were all that would be required.” New construction in the post-Conciliar period would offer even greater flexibility in ecclesiastical design.

²²⁹ McNamara, *Heavenly City*, 4.

²³⁰ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 188.

II.5: Figures



Figure 2-1: Main Facade of St. Thomas the Apostle.



Figure 2-2: Main entrance.



Figure 2-3: The narthex, looking towards the main doors.



Figure 2-4: The nave of St. Thomas the Apostle.



Figure 2-5: Balcony over the narthex.



Figure 2-6: St. Thomas the Apostle Sanctuary.

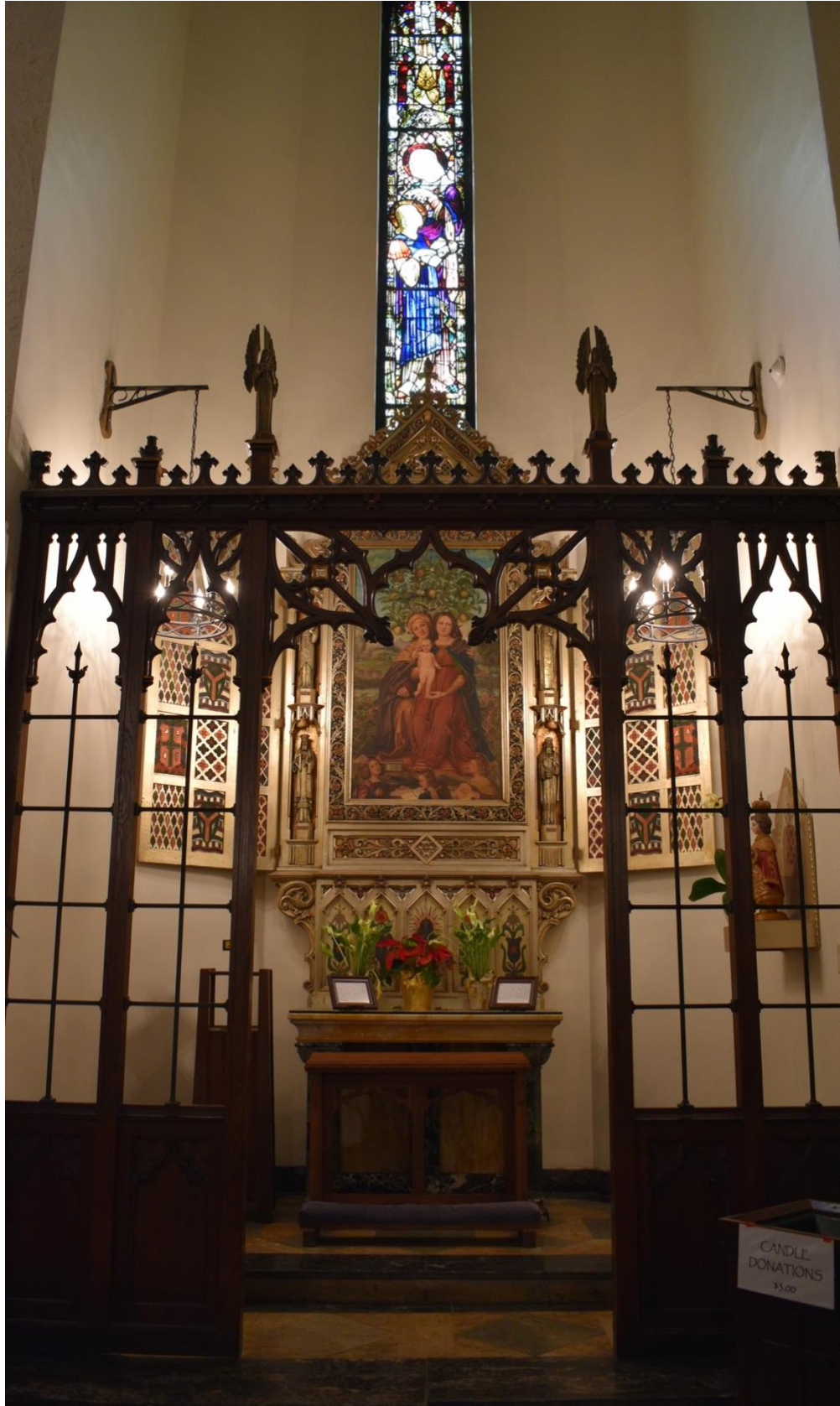


Figure 2-7: St. Anne Chapel.



Figure 2-8: St. Joseph Chapel.



Figure 2-9: Alfeo Faggi's *Pietà*.

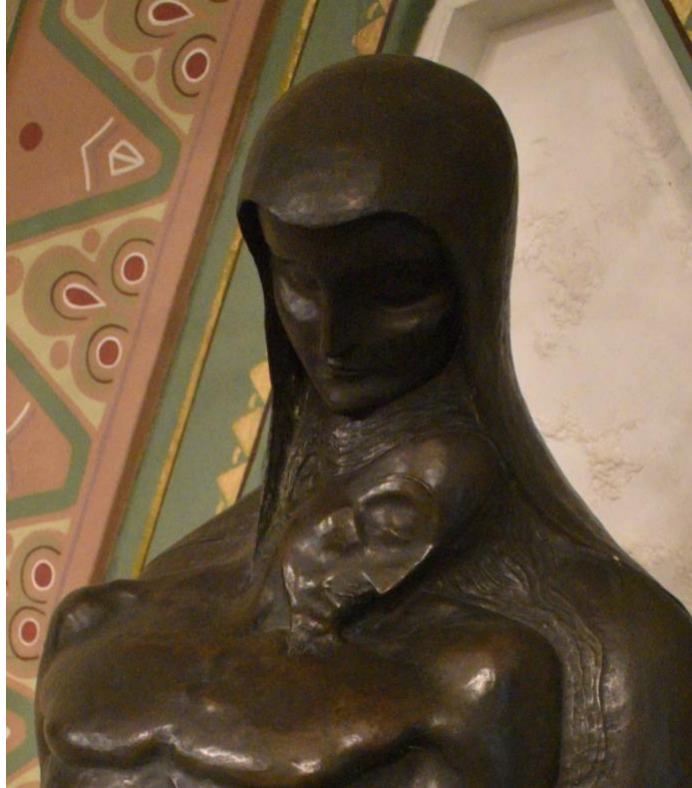


Figure 2-10: Detail of Alfeo Faggi's *Pietà*.



Figure 2-11: Eleventh Station of the Cross: Jesus is Nailed to the Cross, and Ninth Station of the Cross, Jesus Falls for the Third Time. (Composite Image.)



Figure 2-12: Windows with the faces of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Calvin Coolidge. (Composite Image.)



Figure 2-13: Exterior of St. Helen Catholic Church.

(Eric Allix Rogers, *St Helen's*, 14 June 2008, Digital Image. Available from: Flickr, licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0, accessed 11 May 2020, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/reallyboring/2592476394/>.)



Figure 2-14: Interior of St. Helen Catholic Church.

(Jeff Zoline, *St Helen's Catholic Church*, 15 October 2017, Digital Image. Available from: Flickr, All Rights Reserved, Used With Permission, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/zol87/26884911988/>.)



Figure 2-15: Exterior of Holy Name Cathedral.

(Eric Allix Rogers, *Holy Name Cathedral*, 27 October 2013, Digital Image. Available from: Flickr, licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0, accessed 9 April 2020, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/reallyboring/11673096963>.)

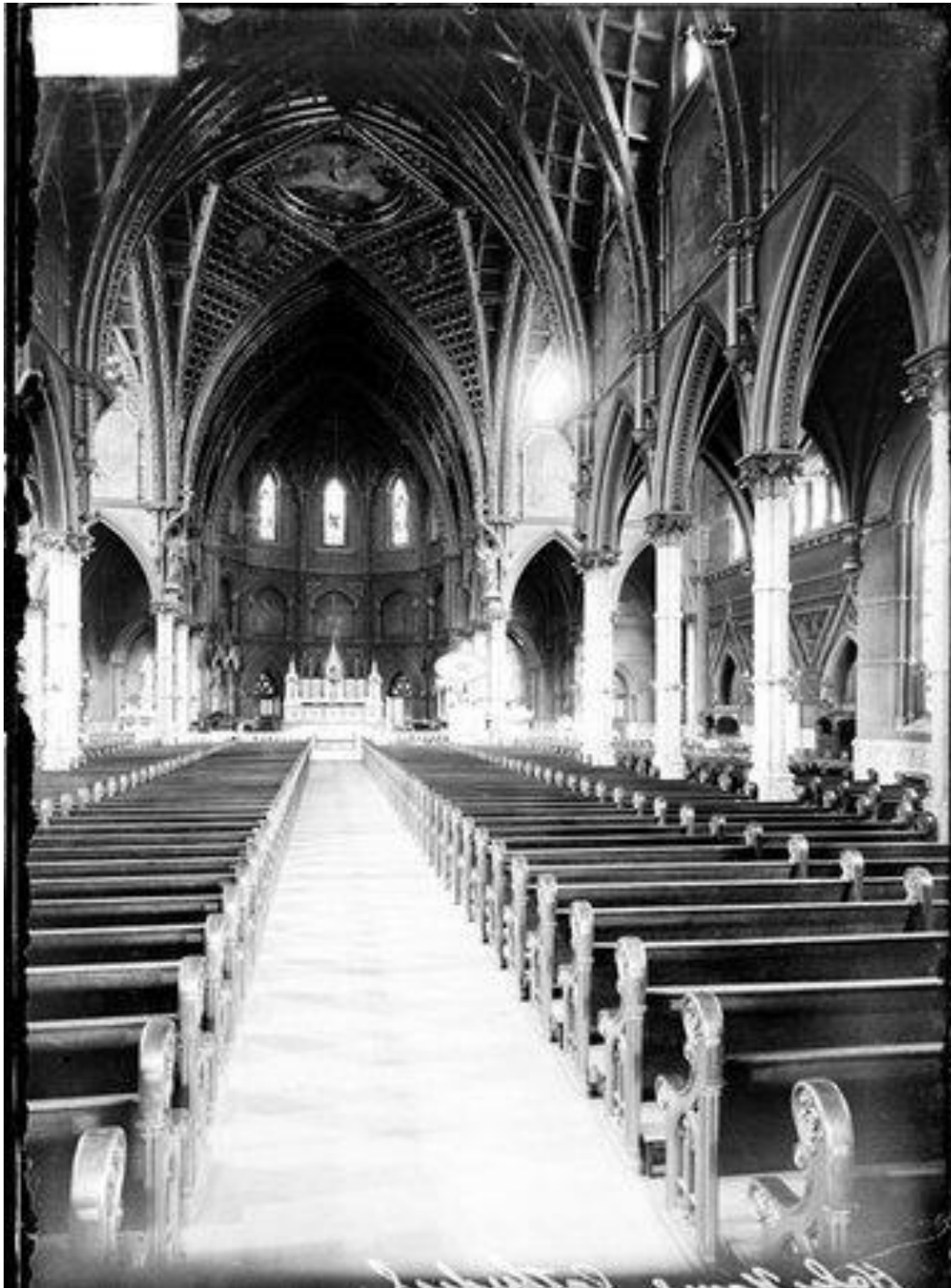


Figure 2-16: Holy Name Cathedral interior circa 1909. Note the murals below the windows and on the ceiling.

(Chicago Daily News, Inc., DN-0007834: *Holy Name Cathedral interior, looking down the center aisle toward the altar*. 1909. Glass negatives. Chicago Sun-Times/Chicago Daily News collection, Chicago History Museum, Accessed 9 April 2020, Used With Permission, <https://images.chicagohistory.org/search/?searchQuery=DN-0007834&assetType=default>.)

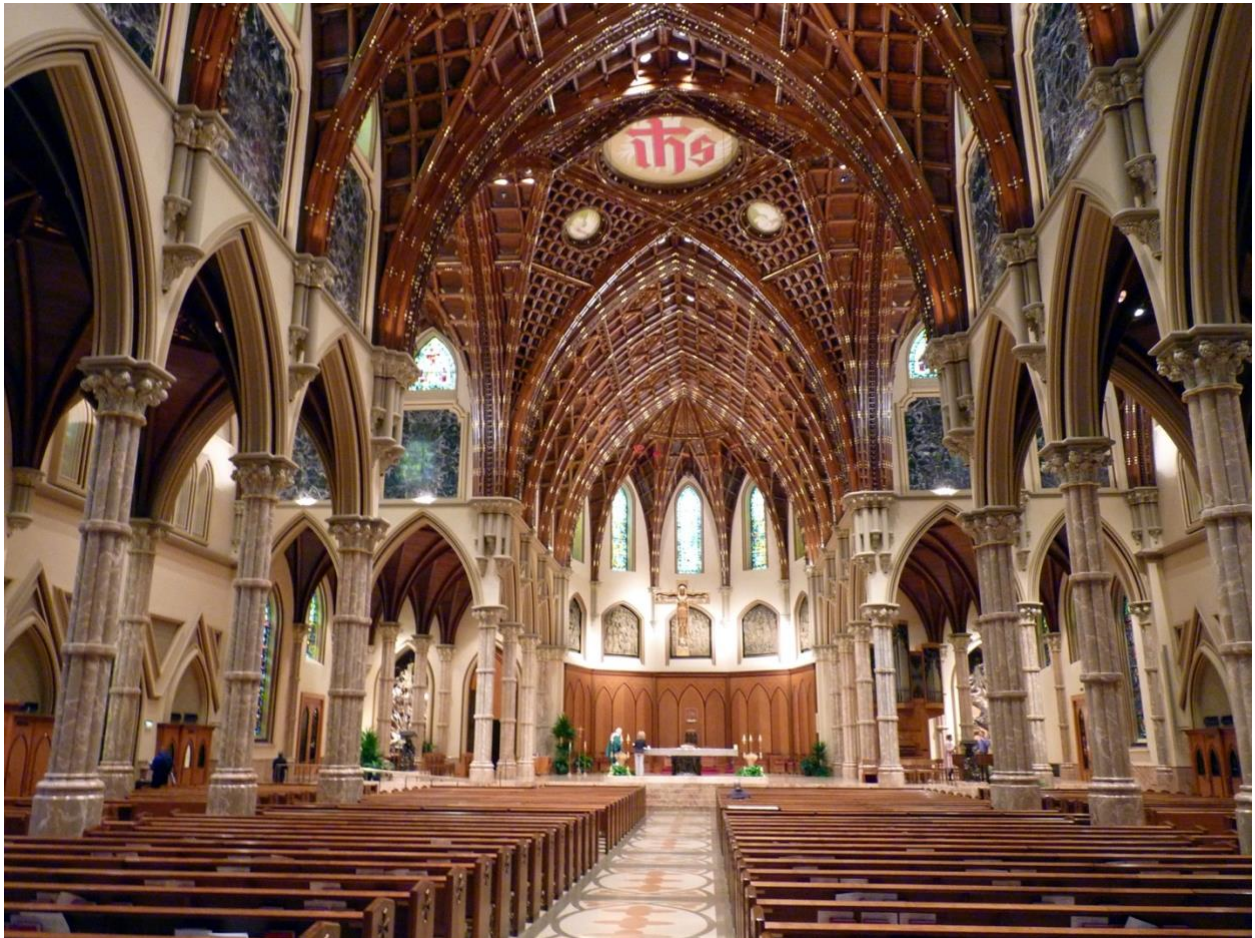


Figure 2-17: Holy Name Cathedral interior circa 2014.

(Damian Entwistle, *Chicago - Holy Name Cathedral (4)*, 16 October 2014, Digital Image. Available from: Flickr, licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0, accessed 9 April 2020, [flickr.com/photos/damiavos/15466828719.](https://www.flickr.com/photos/damiavos/15466828719/))

Chapter III: Suburbanization and the Second Vatican Council

While the Second Vatican Council had a large impact on Catholic religious culture and architecture, some tendencies in the postconciliar American Church must be examined in the context of suburbanization in order to be fully understood. The demographic shifts of suburbanization occurred simultaneously with changes in the Church, and this simultaneity shaped architectural and social changes.²³¹ Suburbanization led to the re-evaluation of church architecture, and lifestyle changes associated with suburbanization made the pre-war Catholic social and religious culture functionally impossible to maintain.

Despite the fact that cities were central to Catholic life and culture in the United States, the Church did not see city life as enviable. This tendency perhaps has its roots in St. Augustine of Hippo's fifth-century work *The City of God*, wherein the titular city is contrasted with the fallen human city, as "Augustine's dichotomy was repeated endlessly by many who distrusted and feared the supposedly corrosive effects of urban life on Catholic Faith," and "[c]oncerns like these drove a series of episcopally-backed efforts during the first half of the twentieth century to move immigrant Catholics away from the coastal cities."²³² A 1925 editorial called "The Terrible Supercity" in *Commonweal* (the same magazine that had hosted the Commonweal debates about modernist architecture led by Barry Byrne) imagined immense cities of the future that were full of lonely and miserable people.²³³ This anti-urban stance was not limited to conservatives; "[t]he liturgical movement and the Catholic counterculture of the 1930s through the 1950s... persistently attempted to alter the basically urban character of American Catholic life, arguing that the rural life and the liturgical movements were 'two halves of a circle.'"²³⁴ While American Catholics

²³¹ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 157.

²³² Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 156.

²³³ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 156.

²³⁴ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 156.

would soon move out of these urban centers, they went not to agrarian communities but to the suburbs.

It will be most fruitful to think about the suburbs, as Gretchen Buggeln does in *The Suburban Church: Modernism and Community in Postwar America*, “not as a particular demographic, but as a way of life.”²³⁵ This “suburban ‘way of life’ was centered on nuclear families in single-family homes that became receptacles for a vast array of consumer goods and comforts.”²³⁶ Neighborhoods were shaped by the “patterns of interaction, movement, and activity” of their inhabitants, cars were a requirement, and buildings were often surrounded by green spaces.²³⁷ These features of suburban life shaped both church architecture and religious practice.

There was also a massive church building boom after World War II, and a huge increase in the suburban population.²³⁸ A 1958 article discussing population increases in the suburbs of Chicago listed communities where the population had increased massively since 1950, including communities where the population had tripled or even quadrupled in that time.²³⁹

III.1: Considerations in Suburban Church Architecture

Trends in suburban Catholic church architecture were far more ecumenical in nature than preconiliar trends. Ecumenism, as defined by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “is the promotion of cooperation and unity among Christians,” and the ecumenical movement “seek[s] visible unity among the diversity of Christian Churches and ecclesial communities.”²⁴⁰ This movement was and is not exclusively an effort of the Catholic Church, and suburban churches

²³⁵ Gretchen Buggeln, *The Suburban Church: Modernism and Community in Postwar America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015), xx.

²³⁶ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, xxi.

²³⁷ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, xxi.

²³⁸ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, xxi.

²³⁹ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, xxi.

²⁴⁰ “Ecumenical,” United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, accessed April 30, 2020, <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/ecumenical-and-interreligious/ecumenical/index.cfm>.

of all denominations reflect the ecumenism of the postwar period, as well as “its liturgical and social innovation” and “fears about the increasing ‘irrelevance’ of institutional religion at a time when cultural and social change and dramatic demographic shifts rapidly transformed society.”²⁴¹ The participation of the Catholic Church can be directly tied to the Church’s degree of Ecumenism promulgated as part of Vatican II.²⁴² It was also a topic of discussions in *Liturgical Arts*.²⁴³ Thus, despite the fact that Buggeln’s book deals primarily with Protestant buildings and institutions, the ideas presented therein are relevant to Catholic churches as Catholics took part in these discussions.²⁴⁴ Of the three Protestant architects centered in Buggeln’s book, Edward Sövik (1918-2014) is especially relevant to this thesis.²⁴⁵

Sövik was at one point in charge of the newsletter of the Church Architecture Guild, a professional organization for church architects, most of whom were modernists, formed in 1940.²⁴⁶ His writings “argue[d] that liturgy and theology were both in flux, calling into question previous assumptions about what the church *is*, and the appropriate ‘atmosphere’ or ‘psychology’ of worship,” and also discussed organizations he believed his peers should be aware of, “notably the Roman Catholic Liturgical Arts Society.”²⁴⁷

The Midwest, specifically, was the site of much of this contemporary church architecture, and contemporary styles dominated by the end of the 1950s.²⁴⁸ demonstrating both the dominance

²⁴¹ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, xix.

²⁴² “Ecumenical.”

²⁴³ See, for example, “Chapel of the Monastery of Unity,” *Liturgical Arts* 40, no. 1 (November 1971): 30–31.

²⁴⁴ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, xx. This participation was not marginal; “[t]he Ecumenical Movement was closely tied to the Liturgical Movement,” which itself had an influence on Protestant denominations (2).

²⁴⁵ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, xx, xix.

²⁴⁶ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 10, 12.

²⁴⁷ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 12. While these files were not examined in the research process for this thesis, the archives of the Liturgical Arts Society contain a folder dedicated to Sövik’s correspondence with the Liturgical Arts Society (CLIT 93/08), and he is also listed under some folders of correspondence organized chronologically (CLIT 47/01, 49/03, and 50/03, all in UNDA).

²⁴⁸ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, xix.

of contemporary styles by this point as well as the continuing influence of the language of “honesty” in architectural design. The American Society for Church Architecture was a Chicago-based organization that was also ecumenical in form and demonstrates the importance of the Midwest as a site for architectural innovation.²⁴⁹

One concern that guided choices when designing suburban churches was a desire for Christianity to remain relevant in an increasingly secular culture, and a desire to signal that continuing relevance through contemporary forms.²⁵⁰ Sövik has stated that this motivation eventually surpassed cost-effectiveness as the rationale for using modernist styles,²⁵¹ a sentiment echoed by Osborne’s assertion that “the defense of the use of new materials and technologies was ultimately rooted neither in their cost-effectiveness nor their beauty,” and rather reflected the sentiment that eclecticism was forever of the past and the technological culture of the present had been affirmed.²⁵²

The necessity of building churches in the suburbs can be attested to by the aforementioned population increases, but despite the fact that “[t]oday, the many thousands of modern churches these congregations created are rendered almost invisible by their ubiquity,” “[c]hurch buildings were not a mere expression of the status quo but a bulwark against decline,” as their construction was seen as a way to work against what “[m]any postwar Christians saw [as] a secular world chipping away at their beliefs and moral standards.”²⁵³ This represents a fundamental shift in goals. Previously, much Catholic architecture was designed to communicate power, the continuing relevance of the past, and a rejection of modernity’s values, engaging with secularization through

²⁴⁹ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 12.

²⁵⁰ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, raises this point again and again. See esp. xv, xxvi.

²⁵¹ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, xxii.

²⁵² Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 81.

²⁵³ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, xiii, 56.

contradiction.²⁵⁴ Conversely, Catholic modernists saw the design of worship space as an opportunity to forecast and mold a new tomorrow.”²⁵⁵ While these attempts were not limited to the suburbs and could even be applied to some extent to both St. Thomas the Apostle and St. Helen, the influence of this goal on architecture had a dramatic impact on the suburbs because of the massive amount of new construction and transformation of American culture associated with suburbanization. The architecturally modernist viewpoint was mainstreamed. The forms suburban churches take were thus informed both by the unifying aims of the Ecumenical Movement as well as concerns about maintaining the relevance of Christianity in a rapidly changing world. To gain a better understanding of how congregations attempted to achieve these goals, it will be helpful to examine a suburban church: in this case, St. Thomas Becket in Mount Prospect, Illinois.

III.2: St. Thomas Becket in Mount Prospect, Illinois

St. Thomas Becket is a Catholic Church in Mount Prospect, a suburb to the northwest of the city of Chicago. Mount Prospect was one of the suburbs listed in the 1958 article experiencing population increases, though it’s population did not quadruple or triple between 1950 and 1958.²⁵⁶ It was not until 1968 that Cardinal Cody established St. Thomas Becket, with construction of the church taking place between 1977 and 1979.²⁵⁷ Although the parish history does not explain the cause of this delay, it suggests that the influx of Catholics to the suburbs was so great that the parish was formed to meet the demand despite the fact that the need for an actual building could not be immediately realized. The firm of James R. Cronin designed the church.²⁵⁸ In the interim,

²⁵⁴ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 3.

²⁵⁵ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 3.

²⁵⁶ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, xxi.

²⁵⁷ “Parish History,” St. Thomas Becket Parish, accessed December 23, 2019, <https://www.stthomasbecketmp.org/parish-history/>.

²⁵⁸ “Church and Parish Center,” Wall Plaque, Narthex, St. Thomas Becket Parish, Mount Prospect, IL, n.d. [1977?], viewed 3 January 2020.

Masses were said in nearby schools, the garage of the parish center, and in the homes of parishioners.²⁵⁹ The church is sited in a suburban neighborhood, across the street from one of the schools once used to hold Masses (Figure 3-1).

The church is a relatively low and wide structure faced with reddish-brown brick (Figure 3-2). The building reads as a complex of structures: the highest, central block nearest to the street contains the church, a lower block to the left holds the parish hall, and a two-story block contains the rectory and offices. The windows are tall and narrow, and begin close to the ground, and the walls around the windows are not ornamented; the windows are instead stripped down to pure rectangular forms. Beginning with a band around the tops of the windows, the bricks are set vertically rather than horizontally, giving the exterior more texture and recalling the idea of a cornice without the use of applied ornament. The asymmetrical tower with a Greek cross marks the building's purpose as a church; this aligns with the tendency in suburban church architecture to rework historical forms "in a modern idiom," and the brick exterior aligns with a preference for "natural materials and textured surfaces."²⁶⁰ Although it is difficult to imagine another function the purpose could serve, the form of the building is not immediately recognizable as a church and only reads as such through a combination of the process of elimination and the fact that there are enough churches that don't resemble the stereotypical generic "church," that the lack of resemblance is not unexpected. According to Michael J. Gibson, in an article on Catholic church architecture in suburban Los Angeles, "*modern communal*" churches often have "exterior

²⁵⁹ "Parish History," St. Thomas Becket Parish.

²⁶⁰ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, xxiv.

elevations [which] simply express the interior arrangement,” with “a steeple or free-standing tower” as the only feature marking that building’s status as a church.²⁶¹

The church is also set back from the street. The ancillary structures recede even further from the street, emphasizing the depth of the site. The lawn instead reads as an empty expanse, on which the church sits almost fortress-like, with its small windows, stark walls, and lack of a visible entrance. This is probably the result of the car-centric nature of suburban development; in suburbs where people drove to church, churches needed large lots with plenty of parking in order to accommodate their congregations.²⁶² The need for parking also determined where buildings sat on their lots: parking in front of the church could be visually unappealing, but a “a full parking lot also invited newcomers,” and parking lots to the side of the church were a common compromise.²⁶³ Members of congregations typically used rear doors near parking rather than outward-facing main entrances.²⁶⁴ Sites were often landscaped to create “a yard-like setting,” and these lawns evoked “new houses and schools” rather “than shopping centers, demonstrating that congregations conceptualized these buildings as domestic rather than commercial.”²⁶⁵ This lawn is a major presence at St. Thomas Becket, where parking is relegated entirely to the rear.

These factors led to what are perhaps the most dramatic differences between the siting of urban versus suburban parishes: while urban parishes typically fronted the sidewalk with imposing main doorways that were equally accessible to those walking to church as well as those walking by it, suburban parishes were designed to be accessed by people in cars, and were set a distance back from the street without large doorways as a main point of visual interest.

²⁶¹ Michael J. Gibson, “Creating Sacred Spaces in the Suburbs: Roman Catholic Architecture in Post-War Los Angeles, 1948-76,” in *Modernism and American Mid-20th Century Sacred Architecture*, ed. Anat Geva (London: Routledge, 2019), 169.

²⁶² Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 55.

²⁶³ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 75.

²⁶⁴ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 75.

²⁶⁵ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 75.

On either side of this lawn there is an asphalt driveway leading to the parking lot on the other side of the church; there are no sidewalks leading from the street to the church. There is far less of an opportunity for a passerby to enter the church on a whim. The church appears somewhat physically set apart from its surroundings.

The church looks more inviting from the parking lot (Figure 3-3). The three sections of the building frame the entrance and create a small terrace, which contains a small “meditation garden” with a bronze statue of St. Thomas Becket. The garden and statue were installed in honor of the fortieth anniversary of the parish and are thus not original.²⁶⁶ Like the lack of sidewalks to the street, however, the size of the parking lot and its location relative to the entrance underscores the assumption that anyone arriving at the church is doing so in a car, not on foot. The parking lot and site arrangement are convenient for someone arriving by car but present slight obstacles to those arriving on foot. While the entrance is visible, it is also small, undecorated, and has a greater horizontal than vertical emphasis, unlike the doorways of the other churches that have been examined in this thesis. The deep eave and the fact that it is adjacent to the garden area and at the level of the sidewalk give the entrance a greater sense of shelter and provide a place to linger without blocking the entrance (Figure 3-4).

The narthex is a low, rectangular room that provides access to the church proper, bathrooms, closets, and the parish hall. The glass doors allow light into the space and there are no steps into the building, common elements of suburban narthexes that make them “read as transparent and accessible.”²⁶⁷ These elements stand in contrast with the narthexes of the other churches examined in this thesis, which can be dark and accessible via stairs. The narthex ceiling

²⁶⁶ “This Meditation Garden...” Wall Plaque, Meditation Garden, St. Thomas Becket Parish, Mount Prospect, IL, 29 n.d., viewed 3 January 2020.

²⁶⁷ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 189.

is lower than that of the church, another common feature that was also seen in the other churches.²⁶⁸ Beside the door to the church proper, which is directly across from the main entrance, hangs a banner with an image of St. Thomas Becket.

The central vessel is a roughly square space which is entered from one corner, with the sanctuary in the opposite corner (Figure 3-5). The interior walls match the brick facing of the exterior, but unlike the unfaced brick of St. Paul's, they are presumably a veneer as opposed to part of the structural fabric of the building. The space is low and wide, with light from a limited number of windows, inset and track lighting on the ceiling, and windows in the tower above the sanctuary. The gap between the edges of the ceiling and the walls, combined with the lighting hidden between them, makes it appear that the ceiling hovers over the space, unsupported. The tower sits over the sanctuary and is the tallest part of the building; the position of the tower at St. Thomas Becket may have been intended to underscore the desire of the postconciliar Church to re-emphasize the centrality of the Mass in the life of the Church.²⁶⁹ However, because the church is entered from the back of the lot, the sanctuary and tower face the street; thus the position of the tower may have been motivated by a desire for the tallest and most imposing part of the structure to be closest to the street.²⁷⁰ This would be a continuity with the other churches examined in this thesis, as their towers are near the front of the church.

The stained-glass windows feature abstract patterns made up of large panes of thick, textured, and brightly-colored glass (Figure 3-6). Rather than being leaded, the pieces of glass are set in concrete, which gives the windows a sense of sturdiness. The windows reflect the tendency to allow “the natural colors and properties of building materials” to remain visible in suburban

²⁶⁸ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 189.

²⁶⁹ For more on this, see Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 157.

²⁷⁰ Of course, these possible motivations are not mutually exclusive, and the layout or sit planning of the church may have followed discussions about the tower or vice versa.

churches, while also adopting “a contemporary color palate [sic].”²⁷¹ Figural imagery in the church is limited to the sanctuary, the stations of the cross, and a tapestry near the entrance where it would not be visible to anyone facing forward in the pews. This seems to reflect a desire to reduce the amount of “distracting” imagery in churches and to keep parishioner’s attention focused on the sanctuary. The doors into the nave from the narthex also contain pale stained glass with highly stylized images including a dove, a chalice and host, water, a stole, and a rainbow. These symbols serve to remind those entering the space what its purpose is while also maintaining a sense of transparency and visual connection with the narthex and outside world beyond, though the doors were solid and opaque at a previous point.²⁷²

The current appearance of the space is the result of a 2019 renovation by Daprato Rigali Studios,²⁷³ but the layout is similar to the original layout of the space, with some notable differences. When it was completed in 1980, the space had brown carpeting and blonde, open-backed pews.²⁷⁴ Although St. Thomas Becket was completed much later, its stylistic elements are in continuity with postwar churches of the suburban Midwest: Buggeln lists “walls of brick or stone,” “clean lines,” “little if any applied ornament,” and “wooden pews... arranged in rows... [which] often have a 1950s blonde finish,” as elements of a typical “1950s Midwestern

²⁷¹ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 128.

²⁷² Unlabeled ca. 1980 photos in 50th Anniversary Committee, “50th Pictorial Book #3,” PDF file, <https://www.stthomasbecketmp.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2019-3-PICTORIAL-DIRECTORY.pdf>, from 50th Anniversary Committee, *Parish Pictorial Book: St. Thomas Becket 50th Anniversary 1969-2019*. (Mount Prospect: St. Thomas Becket Catholic Church, 2019). Available via “50th Anniversary,” St. Thomas Becket Parish, accessed May 2, 2020, <https://www.stthomasbecketmp.org/50th-anniversary/>, “Original Church – 1980” section. Photographers are not listed.

²⁷³ “Church Renovation 50th Anniversary of St. Thomas Becket,” Wall Plaque, Narthex, St. Thomas Becket Parish, Mount Prospect, IL, 29 September 2019, viewed 3 January 2020.

²⁷⁴ Unlabeled ca. 1980 photos in 50th Anniversary Committee, “50th Pictorial Book #3,” “Church Dedication...” section, “Original Church – 1980” section. Photographers are not listed. An additional photo sent to me via email on 6 January 2020 by Parish Office Manager Liz Mika is supposedly in this document according to an email from 10 April 2020, but is not visible on the online PDF.

sanctuary.”²⁷⁵ While the space lacked the “large expanses of clear or colored glass” “abundance of natural wood,” and hard flooring Buggeln lists as typical, it also features “hidden [light] sources near the altar” which “bathe the ritual center in soft light.”²⁷⁶ This is more in line with sanctuary design trends of the seventies, where “church architecture often presented a face to the community outside that was more massive and angular, less readily approachable, less transparent,” as is seen in the large expanses of blank brick, small windows, rear entrance, and dramatic angular tower.²⁷⁷ She is careful to note, however, that this does not necessarily reflect the character of the congregations, as this period was one of “an increased interest in urban outreach among suburban congregations and more socially conscious and culturally accommodating programming.”²⁷⁸ Overall, there is nothing particularly out of the ordinary in the design of the space.

Around the time of St. Thomas Becket’s formation and construction, “much sanctuary design moved decisively away from traditional forms and toward what Richard Kieckhefer has called ‘modern communal’ religious architecture,” which involved movement towards “churches in the round, remov[ing] barriers such as the altar rail, and accelerat[ing] the trend toward informality.”²⁷⁹ These elements can be seen at St. Thomas Becket: there is no altar rail, the sanctuary projects forward, and pews are arranged at multiple wrap in a quarter circle to converge upon the rather than only in parallel rows in one direction. The motivation behind such choirs is the desire “to emphasize gathering people for worship,” frequently with seating “wrapped around three sides of the interior, heightening a sense of group identity,” which may cause “[t]he assembly

²⁷⁵ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 131-32. It should be noted that Buggeln is here using the term sanctuary to refer to the entire central vessel, including the nave.

²⁷⁶ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 131-132.

²⁷⁷ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 130-131.

²⁷⁸ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 131.

²⁷⁹ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 130.

itself’ to “become the main focus on attention.”²⁸⁰ There are also fewer symbolic elements than are typically present in a church following “the classic sacramental” model.²⁸¹

The sanctuary (Figure 3-7) is a hexagonal space which projects forward into the nave, and is raised up on a step. The altar, lectern, and tabernacle stand are all made of a light marble and are unadorned, with square edges and right angles. The tabernacle is placed against the wall directly behind the altar, and a large crucifix hangs above. A set of chairs slightly behind the altar and to the right faces the nave. There is no altar rail, and kneelers and candles in front of niches invite people to step into the sanctuary to pray and light candles, demonstrating a more fluid differentiation between who can and cannot enter the sanctuary than in a space with an altar rail. Originally, the sanctuary was also carpeted, and the space currently occupied by the tabernacle featured a three-step predella on which the presider’s chairs sat, with the tabernacle in the niche to the left of the altar, where a nativity scene may be found in Figure 3-7.²⁸²

These changes did not come all at once, and in fact the layout of the entire space was completely transformed for slightly over twenty years. In the late nineties, “[g]uided by the Bishops' Committee on Liturgy document titled ‘Environment and Art in Catholic Worship[?]’... and the Becket 2000 Capital Campaign, the church was remodeled into an ‘antiphonal’ configuration.”²⁸³ *Environment and art in Catholic Worship* is a 1977 pamphlet promulgated by

²⁸⁰ Kieckhefer, *Theology in Stone*, 12.

²⁸¹ Kieckhefer, *Theology in Stone*, 12.

²⁸² Unlabeled ca. 1980 photos in 50th Anniversary Committee, “50th Pictorial Book #3,” “Church Dedication...” section, “Original Church – 1980” section. Photographers are not listed. An additional photo sent to me via email on 6 January 2020 by Parish Office Manager Liz Mika is supposedly in this document according to an email from 10 April 2020, but is not visible on the online PDF.

²⁸³ 50th Anniversary Committee, “50th Pictorial Book #2,” PDF file, <https://www.stthomasbecketmp.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2019-2-PICTORIAL-DIRECTORY.pdf>, from 50th Anniversary Committee, *Parish Pictorial Book: St. Thomas Becket 50th Anniversary 1969-2019*. (Mount Prospect: St. Thomas Becket Catholic Church, 2019). Available via “50th Anniversary,” St. Thomas Becket Parish, accessed May 2, 2020, <https://www.stthomasbecketmp.org/50th-anniversary/>, “St. Thomas Becket History” section, para. 24.

the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy which “sought to canonize many of the modernist experiments of the 1960s and 70s and argued that these were a response to the liturgy,” and “[m]any diocese adopted EACW as if it were liturgical law.”²⁸⁴

St. Thomas Becket was rearranged so that the altar and lectern were in opposite corners of the space, with seating arranged so that the congregation faced itself across the axis between the altar and lectern.²⁸⁵ This arrangement, with the entire each half of the congregation facing the other half, perhaps embodies the “modern communal” emphasis on gathering and assembly at its most extreme.²⁸⁶ However, the term “antiphonal” implies a desire to imitate the typical arrangement of a choir with choir stalls. The tabernacle was placed in what is now the sanctuary, partially separated from the rest of the space by wooden screens.²⁸⁷

In 2019, the church was again renovated “back to its original design,” which added approximately 200 seats to the space.²⁸⁸ When discussing the series of renovations, the parish Office Manager used the phrase “like a church” to describe the original arrangement of the pews, implying that the antiphonal arrangement was not perceived as church-like.²⁸⁹ The space now features tile instead of carpet and the pews are now darker in color, upholstered, and have closed backs. The altar, lectern, and tabernacle stand also date from this recent renovation and are not original to the church.²⁹⁰ While one reason for the return to the original layout may have been to increase the seating capacity, it also reads as an implicit rejection of the attempt to design the space

²⁸⁴ Duncan G. Stroik, “Church Architecture Since Vatican II,” *The Jurist: Studies in Church Law and Ministry* 75, no. 1 (2015), 12.

²⁸⁵ Unlabeled drawings in 50th Anniversary Committee, “50th Pictorial Book #3,” “Becket 2000 – Floor Plan” section. There are no people or dates listed for the drawings. This description was also based off of a 1999 photo from the parish files sent to me by Liz Mika (Parish Office Manager) via email on 6 January 2020.

²⁸⁶ Kieckhefer, *Theology in Stone*, 12.

²⁸⁷ Unlabeled photo in 50th Anniversary Committee, “50th Pictorial Book #3,” “Becket 2000” section. Photographer and date are not listed.

²⁸⁸ 50th Anniversary Committee, “50th Pictorial Book #2,” “St. Thomas Becket History” section, para. 36.

²⁸⁹ Conversation with Liz Mika (Parish Office Manager) on 3 January 2020.

²⁹⁰ 50th Anniversary Committee, “50th Pictorial Book #2,” “St. Thomas Becket History” section, para. 37.

based off of the guidelines in *Environment and Art in Catholic Worship*. Notably, *Environment and Art in Catholic Worship* “was not liturgical law due to the fact that it had never been voted on by the whole body of American bishops, nor had it been sent to the Vatican for approval.”²⁹¹ The document was replaced by “a new document, *Built of Living Stones*, published in 2000,” which “includes a large part of canonical Church teaching in its footnotes and offered a view of church architecture less iconoclastic and more respectful to the Church’s artistic heritage.”²⁹²

The parish also has a parish hall, which is approximately the same size and shape as the central vessel, the entrance to which is in the opposite corner from the entrance to the nave (Figure 3-8). This space was used for Masses during both renovations of the main church, and as overflow space before the recent increase in seating capacity.²⁹³ The fact that this hall as well as the rectory and office block are all part of one integrated structure is significant; though sanctuaries were architecturally dominant in suburban church design, “informal, sprawling wings... contain[ing] classrooms, offices, recreational spaces, and community meeting places” extended from them in a way that “announced the multiple roles that suburban congregations were ready to play in their communities.”²⁹⁴ Prewar churches typically used church basements, “ancillary church hall[s],” or “ample, multistoried parish halls, notably distinct from the church proper.”²⁹⁵ Suburban church halls replaced the many rooms with specific purposes of prewar church halls with more flexible and informal spaces meant to be “deliberately integrated into a total program for ‘religious living.’”²⁹⁶ The presence of these spaces is related to the fact that “[m]ore than in other designs, the modern communal church is built for a congregation that is not already formed as a community

²⁹¹ Stroik, “Church Architecture,” 14.

²⁹² Stroik, “Church Architecture,” 14.

²⁹³ 50th Anniversary Committee, “50th Pictorial Book #2,” “St. Thomas Becket History” section, para. 25, para. 37; and Conversation with Liz Mika (Parish Office Manager) on 3 January 2020.

²⁹⁴ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 169.

²⁹⁵ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 170.

²⁹⁶ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 170.

in everyday life and that thus needs to be constituted as a social community en route to the space where it becomes a worshipping community.”²⁹⁷ Although Kieckhefer is here referring specifically to churches designed “with ample space for social mingling at the entry,”²⁹⁸ other social spaces can be seen as a fulfillment of this same desire.

The low, drop ceiling, fluorescent lighting, and linoleum tile floor of the hall are all fairly generic. While concrete block “was left exposed in some areas of most suburban churches” for reasons of cost,²⁹⁹ it is notable that the cinder block walls of St. Thomas Becket’s parish hall feature a stack bond pattern, as opposed to a more utilitarian running bond, which suggests that the space was given more design detailing than one might expect. The gridded walls and ceilings as well as the division of the space with columns and the repeating square pattern on the floor all serve to emphasize the modular, multipurpose nature of the space. Off of the hall there are a few offices and a kitchen with a pass-through window. Kitchens were given a great deal of attention in the design process, reflecting overall priorities in church design and well as the importance of kitchens in these churches.³⁰⁰ A well-designed kitchen was necessary to create the “‘homelike’ and ‘friendly’” atmospheres the congregations desired, and “[s]imilar careful attention was poured into the kitchens of suburban homes, often sites for the newest technology and ideas about modern living.”³⁰¹ The small size of the church means that there are no other rooms dedicated to specific functions, such as meeting rooms, a library, or classrooms.³⁰² There is a set of bookshelves in the parish hall, which serves the purpose of a library.

²⁹⁷ Kieckhefer, *Theology in Stone*, 12.

²⁹⁸ Kieckhefer, *Theology in Stone*, 12.

²⁹⁹ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 181.

³⁰⁰ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 193-194.

³⁰¹ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 194.

³⁰² According to a conversation with Liz Mika (Parish Office Manager) on 3 January 2020, the parish shares religious education with the nearby St. Emily and there is no parish school because of the existence of schools at other nearby parishes. Cf. the situation in urban enclaves: “As the Irish and German population drifted away toward

Flexibility was an attribute especially valued by Sövik, whose “influential book *Architecture for Worship* articulated the mature formulation of his idea of the ‘nonchurch,’ a flexible, multipurpose worship space he called a ‘centrum,’ rendered in a quiet beauty that he believed was the best witness to Christian faith.”³⁰³ Sövik’s ideas were especially influential among Catholics after the book was published in 1973.³⁰⁴ He believed this concept could be universally applicable to the needs of Christian worship.³⁰⁵ It is no wonder that if the man Buggeln called “the most theologically informed and articulate American church architect of his day”³⁰⁶ was advocating for this vision of the “nonchurch,” church architecture in the American suburbs broke dramatically with precedent, the influence of Vatican II notwithstanding. His influence is so recognized that “a recent backlash in Catholic circles against postwar, modernist churches points an accusing finger that those who listened too much to Sövik.”³⁰⁷

This notion can be contrasted with the idea that a church should “set apart” from the rest of the world, and that this should be reflected architecturally. The magazine *Progressive Architecture* “commented in 1968 that secular theology’s abrogation of the distinction between sacred and the profane meant a shift in the definition of a church,” requiring that a church cease to be considered as having any especial importance.³⁰⁸ Another attitude saw the need for separation as a mere need for “a simple reparation from the ‘dreary’ suburban world of the parking lot,” rather than a need requiring “architectural grandeur.”³⁰⁹ This separation *from* the parking lot is defined negatively, with a lack of any corresponding positive requirements.

new parishes, Eastern European newcomers resolutely maintained their own schools instead of filling the vacant slots in once booming Irish or German schools,” (McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*, 10-11).

³⁰³ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 145.

³⁰⁴ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 163.

³⁰⁵ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 145.

³⁰⁶ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, xx.

³⁰⁷ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 30.

³⁰⁸ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 201.

³⁰⁹ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 220.

Parallels have also been drawn between church architecture during this period, and domestic space. In addition to the aforementioned similarity between the lawns of churches and the lawns of suburban homes, Buggeln notes, “[t]o a degree, new churches looked like new houses, new schools, and new shopping centers. The advocates of contemporary church architecture went home after Sunday services to their contemporary suburban houses.”³¹⁰ McNamara has also posited that “church buildings were often re-envisioned after the Council as ‘worship spaces’ based on domestic rather than public buildings, with their actual designs of little or no import outside a perceived sense of hospitality, physical participation, and functional neutrality.”³¹¹ He traces this to “another Romantic streak” in the postconiciliar Church, wherein people believed “church buildings should be modelled on the house: a welcoming, hospitable, domestic space with *feelings* of intimacy and welcome.”³¹² Church consultants drew explicit comparisons between domestic spaces and churches, and social spaces especially were often modelled on domestic living rooms.³¹³ Aspects of St. Thomas Becket’s design which align with these ideas are the large lawn in front of the church, the original carpeting, and kitchen, though there might have been more parallels had the complex included more social spaces.

This transformation in American Catholic church architecture was closely related to suburbanization. These complexes were influenced by concrete domestic spaces, not some abstract notion of domesticity. The cramped urban homes and apartments of working-class immigrants were not emulated; implicit in the imitation of domestic space is the assumption that those domestic spaces were suburban and middle-class. Even if there was an attempt to model churches on domestic space in a universe where suburbanization had not occurred, it would be difficult to

³¹⁰ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 132.

³¹¹ McNamara, *Catholic Church Architecture*, 187.

³¹² McNamara, *Catholic Church Architecture*, 175. Emphasis original.

³¹³ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 173-174, 185-188.

imagine the resulting buildings being the same.³¹⁴ But just as the geography of suburbia influences the forms of ecclesiastical architecture, it also had a major impact on Catholic religious culture and practice.

III.3: Suburbanization and Catholic Religious Culture

To some degree, there were continuities between the social lives of urban and suburban parishes. Suburban churches could still be described as “seven-day-a-week” churches, but the suburban church took on a “complex social nature,” and was “centered on a postwar idea of family.”³¹⁵ In response to the perceived seductiveness of “America’s postwar secular culture,” churches sought “[a] deep integration of faith into all of life’s activities;” the construction of this integration was made all the more important by the loss of “generational influences and structures of accountability” that had been present in pre-suburban churches.³¹⁶ This is not to say these structures were seen as undesirable, and churches sought to cultivate them in a suburban setting to counteract: “the notion that one religion is practically as good as another,” by creating “a new model for Catholic congregations: the post-war suburban parish,” “designed to promote, support, and celebrate marriage, parenting, and especially, children” and which featured “a full range of activities was designed to attract parishioner participation” meant to create “a sense of parish loyalty and, more importantly, a sense of personal and group identification as Catholic.”³¹⁷ However, these structures were more difficult to maintain because of the nature of the suburbs.

³¹⁴ Interestingly, connections can be drawn between domestic space and suburban churches in the UK as well, even when looking at suburban churches that are far more “traditional” architecturally. See Robert Proctor, “Designing the Suburban Church: The Mid Twentieth-Century Roman Catholic Churches of Reynolds & Scott,” *Journal of Historic Geography* 56 (2017), 120-121.

³¹⁵ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 170, 172.

³¹⁶ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 186.

³¹⁷ Gibson, “Creating Sacred Spaces,” 158.

St. Thomas Becket hosted a variety of parish organizations, such as a youth group, the Knight of Columbus, a group for seniors, a four-team softball league.³¹⁸ The youth group was called “Active Christian Teens (ACT),” which seems to reflect the mid-twentieth century shift in youth ministry “towards *practices*, opportunities for youth to experiment ‘with adult roles and responsibilities’ within that troubled [secular] culture.”³¹⁹ However, Catholic religious culture changed dramatically over the second half the twentieth century, and suburbanization played a major role.

The period associated with increasing suburbanization and sprawl is also associated with a decline in religious practice in the United States. Attendance at religious institutions has declined since a peak in the 1950s.³²⁰ As of 2019, only thirds of those raised Catholic in the United States “still identify as Catholic,” meaning that there are 29.5 million people who were raised in the Church but who no longer consider themselves to be Catholic.³²¹ In Catholic circles, “some have attributed this to post-Vatican II changes having gone too far... others to them not having gone far enough,” while “a third group suggested that the problem was that the American parish plant” could not have the same relationship with its suburban parishioners that it had with “their parents and grandparents in dense urban settings.”³²²

A main purpose of Stephen Bullivant’s book *Mass Exodus: Catholic Disaffiliation in Britain and America since Vatican II* is the examination of the nature of the relationship between

³¹⁸ “Parish History.” St. Thomas Becket Parish.

³¹⁹ “Parish History.” St. Thomas Becket Parish. Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 183.

³²⁰ Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, Chapter 4, esp. pp 70-72, 75, 76. Putnam “use[s] the term church... to refer to all religious institutions.” (65), but I have not done the same here. Although Putnam’s work is relevant to this thesis, I am wary of his approach to religion; his call for “a new, pluralistic, socially responsible ‘great awakening,’” as a means to increase social capital (409) promotes an increase in generalized “religiousness” without concern for the validity of the truth claims to which people would adhere in this scenario.

³²¹ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 28-28.

³²² Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 194.

Vatican II and Catholic disaffiliation in the United States and Britain.³²³ He describes “three broad tendencies” in discussions of this issue:

1. Vatican II’s reforms, especially liturgical reforms, or their implementation, are blamed for disaffiliation, even though this was not the intended effect of the Council,
2. The Council’s reforms were meant to go further but “supposedly conservative tendencies or figures within the Church itself... either applied brakes to the Council’s far-reaching reforms, or even actively betrayed them,” or
3. “wider social or cultural pressures,” some of which emerged before the Council, are presented as the cause of disaffiliation, especially as other Christian denominations are facing similar problems, despite not having had Vatican IIs of their own.³²⁴

The discussions in this thesis mostly support the third tendency; suburbanization was a process that had an impact of its own in disaffiliation and magnified the effect of other factors on disaffiliation. The immediate postwar period “has typically been viewed as an era of Christian vitality, with Catholics taking (more than) their fair share of the spoils,” with Mass attendance among Catholics peaking in 1958 when “74 per cent (!) of Catholics telling Gallup they had attended church in the previous seven days.”³²⁵ Bullivant examines the role of “the close-knit community life of Catholic parishes” in creating “*plausibility structures*” and strong social networks as well as how “the richly elaborate devotional life that these fostered” embody the idea

³²³ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 12.

³²⁴ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 13-15.

³²⁵ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 86.

of a “*Credibility Enhancing Displays*” in order to consider this vitality from a social-scientific standpoint.³²⁶

Postwar parishes were the sites of dense social networks where many people in the group knew many of the other people, something that fosters a strong sense of group identity and increases commitment to the group, where an individual’s weak connections within the group make leaving that group more likely.³²⁷ “Plausibility structures” are “the complex social and cultural architectures which shape and support specific worldviews,” and are embodied in United States Catholic culture by the fact that “Catholics lived out their lives in robustly Catholic worlds” in which all the people and institutions in their lives reinforced their Catholicism.³²⁸

Devotional practices functioned as “Credibility Enhancing Displays,” a term describing the idea “that human beings are significantly more likely to adopt a belief, if those proposing it to them are seen to live out ‘costly’ implications of it,” and devotional practices like those described in the first chapter of this thesis involved “huge amounts of time, thought, effort, and expense,” and therefor functioned to underline the seriousness of the beliefs that they resulted from.³²⁹ In the postconciliar period, many devotional practices were downplayed and largely disappeared, primarily because the perceived excess of devotionism was thought to be distracting from the Mass and central tenets of Catholicism.³³⁰ While this occurred independently of suburbanization, it was probably facilitated by it as well once dropping into a church to participate in a devotional practice became more difficult in a landscape of automobile-dominated sprawl.

³²⁶ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 89.

³²⁷ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 95.

³²⁸ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 96-98.

³²⁹ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 102, 107-108.

³³⁰ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 156-157.

While Bullivant argues that “‘*The awfulness of everything before Vatican II (and the wonderfulness of everything after, and because of, it)*’ is... a well-worn cliché from both popular and academic writing,” he admits that “the charge of a ‘self-imposed ghetto mentality’ was one made, at least in some quarters, at the time itself,” and that “the haste with which the bastions would, all too soon, be razed is perhaps best explained by a pent-up, collective claustrophobia.”³³¹ Even before the Council this religious culture was already on the decline “in the 1940s and 1950s, due largely to suburbanization and middle-class-ization.”³³² And the 1958 peak in Mass attendance meant that Mass attendance was already declining years before the beginning of the Second Vatican Council in 1962.

While Bullivant examines factors such as social mixing resulting from World War II, an increased frequency of religious intermarriage, higher rates of college attendance, his examination of suburbanization is most relevant to this thesis.³³³ In suburban areas, religious and ethnic identity were replaced by factors such as “age, wartime experience, class, stage of life, outlook, and aspiration,” as “the common factor” in these new communities, though racial homogeneity was maintained through racist exclusions on black homeownership in many suburban neighborhoods.³³⁴ Catholic social networks were thus weakened in suburbia.³³⁵

Suburban parishes typically built schools before the churches themselves; in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, which a 1958 study considered especially suburban, the archdiocesan policy was such that “no parish was allowed to build a permanent church until all other parish facilities had been completed and, to an appreciable extent, paid off. These typically included a

³³¹ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 99.

³³² Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 123-124.

³³³ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 125-126.

³³⁴ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 126.

³³⁵ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 120-121.

temporary church suitable for eventual conversion into a multipurpose social hall or gymnasium, a full school, a convent to house the sisters teaching in the school, and a rectory to house the priests serving in the parish.”³³⁶ While there were still high rates of church attendance among Catholics, “it was no longer the taken-for-granted *given* it has been during their own childhoods.”³³⁷ Bullivant notes that church attendance now required driving, and was “now one among many potentially more enticing options that one might drive to on a Sunday;” Buggeln notes that advocates who were “[w]ell-versed in the mechanisms of postwar consumerism... spoke frankly about the importance of the building as an advertisement in a world in which potential consumers had many options for how to spend their time and money.”³³⁸ Implementing the changes that resulted from the Council was probably far more difficult in transient suburban communities than in the dense social networks of urban parishes.³³⁹

Perhaps inadvertently, Catholic chapels operated out of mall storefronts exemplify this idea of religion-as-consumer-choice. These “ministries were aimed squarely at the concerns, ease, and comfort of the suburban middle class,” as these chapels sought to fill the gap left when people running errands could no longer “stop by the parish for a quick prayer or to light a candle.”³⁴⁰ However, these are not spatially equivalent actions; architecturally, mall storefronts are designed to be generic and interchangeable in order to be easily adaptable to a wide range of tenants depending on economic demand; a mall chapel visually reads not as a religious institution but as a place of consumption. Mall complexes as a whole are built to facilitate consumption and are not

³³⁶ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 127; and Gibson, “Creating Sacred Spaces,” 155, 157.

³³⁷ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 127.

³³⁸ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 127; and Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 73.

³³⁹ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 155.

³⁴⁰ Osborne, *Church of Tomorrow*, 196.

the same sites of community life and interaction that shopping streets in urban neighborhoods would have been.³⁴¹ They do not provide the same opportunities to strengthen social networks.

The impacts of the changes to Catholic religious culture were magnified by the huge number of Baby Boomers being raised in these environments, who would go on “to exert a powerful influence over American life and culture for decades to come” on account of making up a large proportion of the population.³⁴² Putnam noted that decline in religious observance is a generational phenomenon; religiosity does not decrease equally across the board but as a result of the replacement of more religious generations by younger, less religious generations.³⁴³ Religious disaffiliation was common among Baby Boomers; “96 percent of boomers were raised in a religious tradition,” but “58 percent abandoned that tradition, and only about one in three of the apostates have returned.”³⁴⁴ Boomers were also “more disaffected from religious institutions than their predecessors had been in *their* twenties,” and though they became more religiously involved later in life they “at a much lower level of religious involvement and have never closed the gap.”³⁴⁵ However, despite an overall increase in the proportion of the U.S. population that is not involved with organized religion, “the fraction that is intensely involved has been relatively stable.”³⁴⁶

Buggeln argues that in the face of “the cynicism of the 1960s,” “a stereotypical prosperous and comfortable suburban church rang false,” and “impossibly ill-suited for the spiritual and social transformation the revolutionary 1960s generation championed.”³⁴⁷ This championing occurred within Catholicism, not merely outside of it.³⁴⁸ The attitudes that drove much of the

³⁴¹ Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 211.

³⁴² Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 127-128.

³⁴³ Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 72.

³⁴⁴ Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 258.

³⁴⁵ Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 73.

³⁴⁶ Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 75.

³⁴⁷ Buggeln, *Suburban Church*, 172.

³⁴⁸ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 129-130.

experimentation in the postconciliar period thus have at least part of their origin in a larger context of 1960s Catholic youth culture that originated independently of the Council.

In 1996, St. Thomas Becket began hosting Polish-language Masses, which marked “the start of the revitalization of [the] parish;” “Mass attendance grew” even as “other parishes witnessed a decline in Mass attendance.”³⁴⁹ The presence of a Polish-language Mass is distinct from the model of a parish meant exclusively for Poles, as national parishes “went out of fashion after the Council.”³⁵⁰ Attendance at the Polish Masses eventually overtook that of the English Masses, and “[m]ost of the young/new families were Polish.”³⁵¹ The parish may need to begin using the parish hall as overflow space again, even after having increased the seating capacity, because of the number of people attending Mass.³⁵²

Although the initial renovation of the church occurred shortly after Polish Masses began at the parish, this revitalization eventually precipitated the re-renovation of the parish in order to meet the need of a higher seating capacity. Implicit in this fact, assuming that the church’s seating capacity when initially constructed was not excessive, is that the initial renovation was only a reasonable choice if attendance had declined significantly since the church was constructed.

The parish’s fiftieth anniversary booklet features photos of an outdoor Corpus Christi procession with signs in Polish,³⁵³ suggesting that such devotional practices may have been influenced by the influx of Polish immigrant parishioners. This suggests that existing community

³⁴⁹ 50th Anniversary Committee, “50th Pictorial Book #2,” “St. Thomas Becket History” section, paras. 26-27.

³⁵⁰ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 91.

³⁵¹ 50th Anniversary Committee, “50th Pictorial Book #2,” “St. Thomas Becket History” section, paras. 30-31.

³⁵² Conversation with Liz Mika (Parish Office Manager) 3 January 2020.

³⁵³ Unlabeled photos in 50th Anniversary Committee, “50th Pictorial Book #5,” PDF file, <https://www.stthomasbecketmp.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2019-5-PICTORIAL-DIRECTORY.pdf>, from 50th Anniversary Committee, *Parish Pictorial Book: St. Thomas Becket 50th Anniversary 1969-2019*. (Mount Prospect: St. Thomas Becket Catholic Church, 2019). Available via “50th Anniversary,” St. Thomas Becket Parish, accessed May 2, 2020, <https://www.stthomasbecketmp.org/50th-anniversary/>, “Corpus Christi” section. Photographers and dates are not listed.

ties in suburban immigrant communities may help overcome the difficulties in maintaining a parish-centered community in the suburbs. But only time will tell how such communities change as assimilation progresses; as Bullivant has shown, the longer a given Catholic's family has lived in the US (as measured by generations since immigration), the higher their rate of disaffiliation.³⁵⁴ This is not to suggest that attempts to create a strong parish community in the suburbs are futile, but rather that the conditions that must be navigated are radically different from those navigated by Catholic immigrants a century or even fifty years previously.

³⁵⁴ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 52-53.

III.4: Figures



Figure 3-1: A street near St. Thomas Becket. The housing stock is predominated made up of postwar split-levels.



Figure 3-2: St. Thomas Becket as viewed from the street. During most of the year, leaves would further block the view of the church from the street.



Figure 3-3: St. Thomas Becket as seen from the parking lot.



Figure 3-4: Church entrance and garden.



Figure 3-5: The nave and sanctuary as viewed from the entrance.

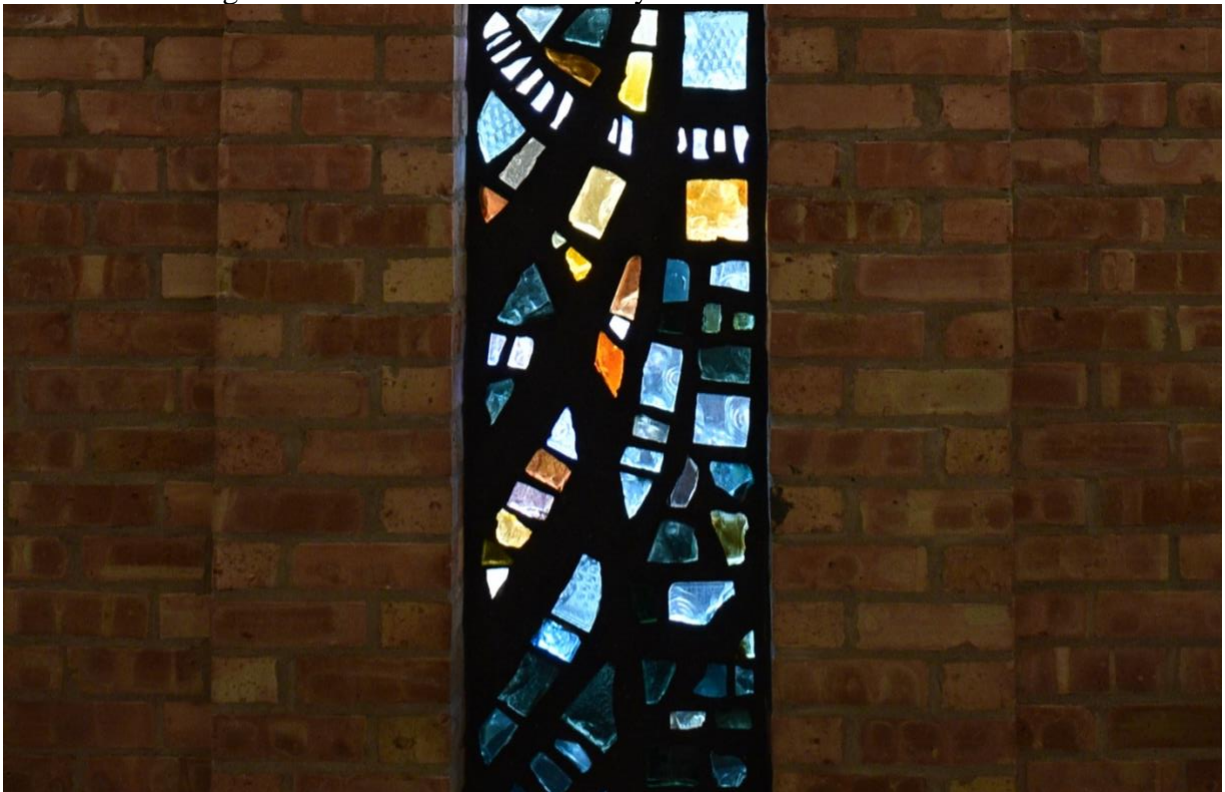


Figure 3-6: Detail of a window showing colors and texture of glass.



Figure 3-7: St. Thomas Becket Sanctuary. Unfortunately, the altar is obscured by poinsettias in this photo.



Figure 3-8: The parish hall. The entrance is at the far left of the photo.

Conclusion: Urban(?) Community and Liturgical Traditionalism: The Revival of Saint John Cantius

Though there has been no discussion of St. John Cantius' history since the first chapter, it did not cease simply because a trucking road was built and more modern churches like St. Thomas the Apostle were constructed elsewhere. The parish realizes the role it has played in the history of Catholicism in Chicago; a history of the parish on its website makes the claim that "its history is integrally intertwined with the development of Roman Catholicism in Chicago," despite its initial foundation for Poles.³⁵⁵

Its history since we left it on a downturn was for a long period a history of decline. St. John Cantius' fiftieth anniversary was "emotionally trying for the older parishioners," because of this decline; the school only had 376 students and the church had approximately 5,000 parishioners.³⁵⁶ In the postwar period, those in the neighborhood "who got married after returning from war, began moving to newer areas of the city and even to the suburbs," and few Polish people remained.³⁵⁷ Although "migration to the suburbs possessed an independent momentum, its connections to racial issues were profound," as an influx of black residents was seen as an existential threat in many Catholic communities, who feared the effort and money that had been put into building their parishes "might be rendered obsolete in a few years."³⁵⁸

Then, "the parish received its most cruel blow. The construction of the Kennedy Expressway... in the late 1950s necessitated the demolition of thousands of homes, and even more parishioners were forced to leave the area."³⁵⁹ Around the same time, the Cabrini-Green housing project was constructed nearby, and although the buildings there were initially nice and well

³⁵⁵ "A History of St. John Cantius Parish."

³⁵⁶ "A History of St. John Cantius Parish;" and "A Short History."

³⁵⁷ "A History of St. John Cantius Parish."

³⁵⁸ McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*, 84-85.

³⁵⁹ "A History of St. John Cantius Parish."

received by many residents, they soon became poorer and more unstable, in part because of Chicago Housing Authority policy requiring higher-income tenants to move elsewhere and the lack of community caused by high rates of tenant turnover.³⁶⁰ Ironically, much of Chicago's public housing was motivated by a desire to make slums available for redevelopment designed to compete with the suburbs and prevent more people from leaving the city.³⁶¹ In addition to the displacement of Catholic residents caused by urban renewal projects, these projects in multiple cities often displaced black people who then moved into neighborhoods that had previously been white Catholic enclaves.³⁶²

The school closed in 1967 because of how few children remained in the parish, which drove even more people to leave.³⁶³ The role of the school is especially important because "white families tended to abandon a neighborhood when the number of minority students in the public schools increased dramatically," Catholic schools fostered neighborhood integration even as they limited potential integration within the public schools."³⁶⁴ While it was common for Protestant and Jewish congregations to "sell their buildings both to recover their equity and to relocated away from the expanding African-American ghetto," the parish system meant that an individual Catholic church was tied to its location and could not simply relocate, and the buildings remained under diocesan ownership.³⁶⁵ Not all churches remained open, however, the archdiocese closed and demolished a church near Cabrini-Green because of "the racial transformation of the neighborhood."³⁶⁶ The

³⁶⁰ For a history of Cabrini-Green's planning and construction, see Lawrence J. Vale, *Purging the Poorest: Public Housing the Design Politics of Twice-Cleared Communities* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), Chapter 5, especially pages 216-217, 223-224, and 226-227 for the things mentioned in this sentence.

³⁶¹ Vale, *Purging the Poorest*, 193-194.

³⁶² McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*, 128. This book as a whole provides a good overview of the role of race in the history of Catholic neighborhoods.

³⁶³ "A History of St. John Cantius Parish;" and Fr. Phillips, C.R., in Carney et al., *On Assignment*, 7:16.

³⁶⁴ McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*, 240-241.

³⁶⁵ McGreevey, *Parish Boundaries*, 19.

³⁶⁶ Vale, *Purging the Poorest*, 228.

situation stabilized in the seventies and early eighties, with a significant number of parishioners commuting to the church on Sundays from their new homes.³⁶⁷

Things changed in the late eighties when a new pastor was assigned to the parish. Fr. Frank Phillips, C.R. became pastor in 1988, and the parish had “a total of 70 people attending two Masses when he came.”³⁶⁸ An immediate concern was the state of the building. According to a short documentary about the parish, the church required extensive renovation on account of deferred maintenance; after Fr. Phillips became pastor the “first heating bill was, like, \$45,000, and [the] average collection on a good Sunday at that time was, like, \$500,”³⁶⁹ demonstrating the parish’s difficult financial straits. According to Fr. Phillips, “The church itself always was maintained very nicely, so it was always clean. But then when you started going into... the boiler room, different storerooms, every room was just filled with debris. Every window in the basement of the church was boarded up. Some of the doors to the church on the lower level were boarded up just for security and nailed shut.”³⁷⁰ Wiring had to be replaced; the high altar, which “had been held in place for years only by gravity and grace,” was secured,³⁷¹ and after several tons of pigeon droppings were removed from the attic, “the stained-glass window on the north side of the church [which] was bowed out about twelve inches.... popped back, twelve inches.”³⁷² However, it was not merely the work done to maintain the building that changed the parish’s direction; as the parish history notes “Saint John Cantius Parish has adopted a policy of historical preservation and restoration not only of the physical plant and artwork, but also of the liturgy itself.”³⁷³

³⁶⁷ “A History of St. John Cantius Parish.”

³⁶⁸ “A History of St. John Cantius Parish;” and Fr. Dennis Kolinski, S.J.C., “One Rite, Two Forms: The Liturgical Life of St. John Cantius, Interview with Fr. Dennis Kolinski, S.J.C.,” *Sacred Music* 134, no. 3 (2007): 17.

³⁶⁹ Fr. Frank Phillips, C.R., in Carney et al., *On Assignment*, 9:58.

³⁷⁰ Fr. Frank Phillips, C.R., in Carney et al., *On Assignment*, 7:28.

³⁷¹ Don Carney (Narrator), in Carney et al., *On Assignment*, 11:18.

³⁷² Fr. Frank Phillips, C.R. in Carney et al., *On Assignment*, 12:42, 13:04, 13:22.

³⁷³ “A Short History.”

Fr. Phillips sought “to make St. John Cantius a viable parish for the future by promoting the richness of the Church’s liturgical tradition— particularly its Latin Liturgy.”³⁷⁴ He began by saying the Mass of Paul VI using both Latin and English, which is “actually when people started coming... to the parish.”³⁷⁵ Fr. Phillips also began saying the Tridentine Mass at the parish in 1989, which drew more people to the parish, including many who had been attending the Tridentine Mass said by a schismatic group.³⁷⁶ The Mass of Paul VI is also said almost entirely in English, as is typical in the United States.³⁷⁷ Both the Tridentine Mass and Mass of Paul VI are said daily at the parish.³⁷⁸ The growth of the parish occurred “little by little,” according to Fr. Dennis Kolinski, a priest at the parish.³⁷⁹ Rather than dividing the parish into camps, this has actually led people who previously only attended one form to attend the other as well.³⁸⁰ This change also brought more money into the parish as people who did not live in the neighborhood or have a historical connection to the parish began to attend; some of these people came from the suburbs.³⁸¹ There were eventually over 3,000 parishioners, an impressive number that makes the fact that there were 3,000 students at the parish school in the early 1900s even more impressive.³⁸²

³⁷⁴ “A History of St. John Cantius Parish.”

³⁷⁵ Fr. Frank Phillips, C.R., in Carney et al., *On Assignment*, 14:47.

³⁷⁶ “A History of St. John Cantius Parish.” The permission for the Tridentine Mass to be said at St. John Cantius was the result of Pope John Paul II’s 1988 document *Ecclesia Dei*, which allowed for more Tridentine Masses to be celebrated. Bringing people who had left the Church for schismatic groups back into communion was a large motivation for this (“A History of St. John Cantius Parish,”). The politics and history behind this are extremely complicated and outside of the scope of this thesis.

³⁷⁷ “A Short History.”

³⁷⁸ “A Short History.”

³⁷⁹ Kolinski, Interview.

³⁸⁰ Fr. Jim Isaacson, S.J.C., in Carney et al., *On Assignment*, 17:35; Kolinski “One Rite, Two Forms,” 19. It should be noted that this was potentially facilitated at least in part by the fact that most parishioners self-selected St. John Cantius on account of its liturgical offerings, and things may have played out differently at a parish that began with a larger number of parishioners.

³⁸¹ “A History of St. John Cantius Parish.”

³⁸² Don Carney (Narrator), in Carney et al., *On Assignment*, 28:30; and Fr. Frank Phillips, C.R., in Carney et al., *On Assignment*, 6:19.

The parish also incorporates into the liturgy variety of traditional music such as Gregorian chant, and Renaissance polyphony;³⁸³ and at time of writing the parish houses nine choirs.³⁸⁴ The majority of Sunday Masses are sung, meaning that much of the text is chanted rather than spoken normally.³⁸⁵ On account of the music, vestments, and the fact that all Masses are now said *ad orientem* irregardless of form, there are fewer aesthetic differences between the two forms of the Mass than one might expect; according to Fr. Dennis Kolinski, the music “is the key aesthetic bridge between the two forms.”³⁸⁶ This idea of a bridge fits into larger themes related to the parish’s relationship with the Second Vatican Council.

When discussing the music, Fr. Kolinski called St. John Cantius as “a true Vatican II parish,” “where the actual instruction from the council is being carried out,” referring to the call in *Sacrosanctum Concilium* for the continued use of Latin in the liturgy, and also its instruction that Gregorian chant “should be given pride of place in liturgical services,” and that “the pipe organ is to be held in high esteem.”³⁸⁷ Kolinski’s statement that at St. John Cantius “we have always looked to the future that we are beginning to see coming to fruition today, a future in which chant is the music of the Catholic liturgy,”³⁸⁸ a comment which echoes the promotion of Gregorian chant by the Liturgical Movement. Some of Fr. Phillips’s mentors were involved in the Liturgical Movement, and Fr. Kolinski characterized Fr. Phillips as “a continuation of the twentieth-century

³⁸³ “A History of St. John Cantius Parish.”

³⁸⁴ “Choirs of St. John Cantius,” St. John Cantius Parish, accessed May 8, 2020, https://www.cantius.org/go/music/category/choirs_of_st_john_cantius/. There is a listing for “Saint Cecilia Choir” as well as one for “Saint Cecilia Choir and Orchestra,” but presumably this is the same choir with and without orchestral accompaniment and thus is only counted once.

³⁸⁵ Kolinski “One Rite, Two Forms,” 18.

³⁸⁶ Kolinski “One Rite, Two Forms,” 18-19. Fr. Kolinski also recounted a story of someone born after the Council who attended the Sunday Mass of Paul VI in Latin and then declared he would only attend the Tridentine Mass from that point forward, not realizing that he had attended a Mass said using the postconciliar form (18).

³⁸⁷ Kolinski “One Rite, Two Forms,” 18; *SC*, secs. 116 and 120. Fr. Kolinski makes similar comments about the music in Carney et al., *On Assignment*, 22:07; and the connection between the Council and the parish’s music is also made in “A Short History.”

³⁸⁸ Kolinski “One Rite, Two Forms,” 18.

Liturgical Movement.”³⁸⁹ Another Liturgical Movement parallel is the emphasis placed on following the rubrics for liturgy as closely as possible in both forms.³⁹⁰

Fr. Kolinski characterized the devotional life as “very rich and very fervent.”³⁹¹ The parish facilitates a number of devotions, such as a novena to St. Monica on Wednesday nights and processions.³⁹² When the relics of St. Maria Goretti were on tour and stopped at St. John Cantius, the church was open for 24 hours straight and was visited by around 20,000 people.³⁹³ Three thousand people participated in a recent procession with a statue of the Virgin Mary as “Our Lady of the Broken.”³⁹⁴ Processions and other such public devotional activities physically bring the people out into the street in a way that gives the parish a visible presence as an institution that can muster an impressive number of people in addition to having an impressive building.

When mentioning that people would thank him for making confession available Fr. Phillips commented that at St. John Cantius, “You don’t have to knock on the door, confessions... from 4:45 until 4:50, or by appointment only,” referencing the infrequent availability of confession at

³⁸⁹ Kolinski, Interview.

³⁹⁰ See, “A History of St. John Cantius Parish:” “Fr. Phillips has always been a proponent of liturgy that is celebrated... with great attention paid to the rubrics established by the Church;” rubrics are mentioned multiple times by Fr. Phillips in Carney et al., *On Assignment*: “When I got the idea to restore the sacred, very simply what that means is because we do the traditional Mass here, which is called the Tridentine Mass, and also the present Mass, keep the both books separate... don’t confuse them and don’t try to add and don’t try to subtract, we’ll do exactly what all the norms would require,” (6:12), “So, as long as we can follow what is in the books, I believe we are doing a great service to the Church,” (17:05) “Rubrics are very important because the more one is able to follow the rubrics, first of all, it shows a humility. And then the more one is humble at the altar, the more Jesus Christ shows through at the altar,” (18:27). See also, Kolinski “One Rite, Two Forms:” “We always try to do the best we can with the liturgy we are given, with the highest possible attention to detail and rubrical precision. This is of utmost importance,” (19).

³⁹¹ Kolinski, Interview.

³⁹² Kolinski, Interview; “A History of St. John Cantius Parish;” and “A Short History.”

³⁹³ Kolinski, Interview.

³⁹⁴ Kolinski, Interview; Joyce Duriga, “‘Broken Mary’ Focus of Peace Procession,” *Chicago Catholic*, June 5, 2019, <https://www.chicagocatholic.com/chicagoland/-/article/2019/06/05/-broken-mary-focus-of-peace-procession>; and “There Is Hope for the Broken,” Our Lady of the Broken, accessed May 10, 2020, <https://www.ourladyofthebroken.org>.

many other parishes.³⁹⁵ Confession is available on Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.³⁹⁶ Parishioners “come here in great part because of confessions,” and there are around “three to five hundred confessions a Sunday.”³⁹⁷ Bullivant presents confession as a very important Credibility Enhancing Display, especially on account of the publicness of waiting in line.³⁹⁸

Because a number of parishioners were considering the priesthood, Fr. Phillips went on to found the Canons Regular of Saint John Cantius, a group of priests based out of the parish “dedicated to the restoration of the sacred.”³⁹⁹ Kolinski was one of the first members of the Canons regular when the group was formed in 1998.⁴⁰⁰ The priests each say both the Mass of Paul VI and the Tridentine Mass.⁴⁰¹ Those joining the Canons learn Latin, and take a variety of other classes in categories including “liturgy, canon law, church documents, music, [and] history,” and the work of the canons “is essentially based on *Sacrosanctum Concilium* and *Mediator Dei*.”⁴⁰² Vatican II and the Liturgical Movement are cited constantly, yet this is taking place in a building unlike anything *Liturgical Arts* ever promoted and which, unlike Holy Name Cathedral, was not subjected to any major renovations after the Council like Holy Name, a situation due in large part to a lack of money and the conservatism of the Polish parishioners.⁴⁰³

³⁹⁵ Fr. Frank Phillips, C.R., in Carney et al., *On Assignment*, 18:48. For more on lack of availability in parishes at large see “Priests Working to Reverse Decline in Confession by Expanding Availability,” *St. Louis Review*, March 12, 2020, <https://www.archstl.org/priests-working-to-reverse-decline-in-confession-by-expanding-availability-5077>.

³⁹⁶ Kolinski, Interview.

³⁹⁷ Kolinski, Interview.

³⁹⁸ Bullivant, *Mass Exodus*, 110-111.

³⁹⁹ Fr. Burns Seeley, S.J.C., in Carney et al., *On Assignment*, 24:22; and Fr. Frank Phillips, C.R., in Carney et al., *On Assignment*, 24:45. Kolinski noted in “One Rite, Two Forms,” that “The focus of the Canons Regular [as a category of vowed religious] is the Liturgy,” (17).

⁴⁰⁰ Kolinski “One Rite, Two Forms,” 17.

⁴⁰¹ Kolinski “One Rite, Two Forms,” 18.

⁴⁰² Kolinski “One Rite, Two Forms,” 17. *Mediator Dei* is a 1947 encyclical by Pope Pius XII “which gave papal recognition to many of the ideas of the Liturgical Movement,” and had a strong influence on the writings of the Second Vatican Council; see McNamara, *Catholic Church Architecture*, 180.

⁴⁰³ Kolinski, Interview.

Part of this, at least, is practical: it is not as if Fr. Phillips could shop around the archdiocese to pick a parish to become pastor of based exclusively on its architecture and artistic program. And yet, the building itself plays an important role in this narrative of revival. Kolinski characterized the building's role as follows:

The building wasn't, you might say, *integral*. What was most important was what was happening inside the building, but the building played a large role because it constituted the setting. Fr. Phillips might have done something like this in another old, Polish parish, and it might have had similar success, similar results. But if he had done it in a suburban parish, built in the sixties or seventies, I doubt that it would have taken off the way that it did, because like what happened with me, there's something about walking through the doors of this church that strikes people in an exceptional way. There's something exceptionally beautiful about this church, magnificent, and there's a very very profound sense of the sacred in the church.⁴⁰⁴

While "the broad view of the church" is "much like parishioners or anybody else would have seen if they had walked in here in 1940, 1950, 1960, &c.," new art and architectural elements have also been added to the church beyond those required for to maintain the building. For example, the inlaid wooden floor was installed after the 1995 heat wave buckled the floorboards and cracked the linoleum tile. In a move presented as representative of Fr. Phillip's "philosophy of repairing things so they will never have to be repaired again," the parish worked with "Jed Gibbons, a parishioner, to design and install an all-wood floor that would not only last forever, but instruct you even as you walked on it," through the use of symbols of stages in the life of Jesus Christ. Many of the statues date from before the parish's revival but have subsequently been rearranged, and others have been acquired more recently, such as a wooden statue of the Pietà acquired from the nearby St. Boniface after its closure, a Divine Mercy image "acquired on a pilgrimage to Poland," nineteenth-century Belgian Gothic-Revival choir stalls, a Veit Stoss

⁴⁰⁴ Kolinski, Interview.

Altarpiece replica, and hand-carved Gothic-Revival confessionals custom-made in Poland.⁴⁰⁵ These pieces add to the general sense of eclecticism and provide sites for devotional activity, but none of these recent acquisitions have the same Baroque influences as the building. However, several of the additions reinforce a connection between the parish and Poland even though fact that the parish is no longer primarily Polish. This suggests that the idea of “Polishness” with the associated high levels of (Catholic) religiosity, remains attractive.⁴⁰⁶

In the documentary, a member of the Canons Regular mentions that “the building encourages” the reverence of the priests and parishioners,⁴⁰⁷ demonstrating that the building’s architecture is perceived as encouraging personal faith. Another stated that “this is the House of God... not man’s house. We should not build to suit our needs, or to suit a fashion, or a trend of the time,”⁴⁰⁸ and that “[w]hen you come in here, it’s got to be so different from what you’re used to, that it’s gotta give you that sense of transcendence, to make you think about Heaven. Because the church is like a model of Heaven.”⁴⁰⁹ From this perspective, familiar, domestic typologies are something to be avoided in church spaces, as is the idea that churches should not have a sense of set-apartness. As discussed, these things are associated with suburban church architecture, and this line of thinking elucidates Fr. Kolinski’s comment that Fr. Phillips probably would have had less success at the suburbs. Notably, the type of set-apartness being promoted here is not that of St. Thomas Becket, which appears somewhat set apart from the neighborhood by its site planning and the locations of its entrance. St. John Cantius presses up against the sidewalk and is deeply

⁴⁰⁵ Kolinski, Interview. Notably, a picture of the now-abandoned St. Boniface is the cover image of Bullivant’s *Mass Exodus*. The Divine Mercy image was replaced in April 2020 with “a new image of Divine Mercy, recently completed by local artist Sarah Crow,” see “New Image of the Divine Mercy,” St. John Cantius Parish, 2020, <https://www.cantius.org/go/news/detail/painting-divine-mercy/>.

⁴⁰⁶ For information of Poland’s (non)secularization, see Robert Carlton, “Is Poland Secularizing?,” *The Polish Review* 60, no. 5 (2015): 31–48.

⁴⁰⁷ Fr. Jim Isaacson, S.J.C., in Carney et al., *On Assignment*, 19:55.

⁴⁰⁸ Fr. Anthony Rice, S.J.C., in Carney et al., *On Assignment*, 20:11.

⁴⁰⁹ Fr. Anthony Rice, S.J.C., in Carney et al., *On Assignment*, 20:58.

embedded in its secular surroundings, but it is perceived as providing an atmosphere that transcends its surroundings.

However, the comment about trends fails to acknowledge that St. John Cantius' art and architecture did not come into being uninfluenced by trends, and, in fact, embodies major trends of the period in which it was built. The role played by the building's setting is also not discussed. The building also has wide popular appeal; in 2016 it won a bracket-style contest on a blog to determine the most beautiful church in the United States, "marshal[ing] more than 16,000 of its fans and faithful" in order to do so.⁴¹⁰ This example also underscores the fact that the parish's revival is dependent on people coming to the parish.

The previous churches examined in this thesis, including St. John Cantius in the period when the parish was first formed, were all reliant on parishioners attending from nearby. Even in the suburbs, where driving is the norm, no one would have to go out of their way to seek out St. Thomas Becket, though some may do so for the Polish-language Masses. Ironically, the revival of St. John Cantius has been facilitated by the Kennedy Expressway; the former existential threat to the parish now makes attendance there easier for suburbanites, something that the parish is aware of and "was one of the premises [Fr. Phillips] worked on when [he] asked to come" to St. John Cantius.⁴¹¹ Parishioners do not simply travel from nearby suburbs, but "some people, with all their kids, five, six kids in a van, may travel for two hours to come here for Mass,"⁴¹² with some travelling from Indiana or Wisconsin.⁴¹³ Because so many of the parishioners do not actually live near the parish, the attendance at daily Masses is comparatively low, with only 30-40 people total

⁴¹⁰ Manya Brachear Pashman, "St. John Cantius chosen America's Most Beautiful Church," *Chicago Tribune*, 20 April 2016, <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/breaking/ct-st-cantius-church-award-met-2-20160419-story.html>.

⁴¹¹ Fr. Frank Phillips, C.R., in Carney et al., *On Assignment*, 8:14. The irony of the situation is also explicitly pointed out in "A History of St. John Cantius Parish."

⁴¹² Fr. Frank Phillips, C.R., in Carney et al., *On Assignment*, 17:22.

⁴¹³ Kolinski, Interview.

typically attending the two daily Masses, not including the Canons Regular themselves.⁴¹⁴ The makeup of the parish is also diverse; it is not merely white suburbanites who are attending.⁴¹⁵

However, St. John Cantius is not divorced from the neighborhood and city. Although locals participate in events such as processions, these are still primarily made up of people who commute.⁴¹⁶ While the area was residential when the church was built, it is now primarily commercial because businesses were able to buy cheap land after the parishioners left the area.⁴¹⁷ The neighborhood's "gentrification didn't begin until the late nineties" and despite new housing built nearby, "most of the people that have moved into the neighborhood... either are not Catholic or they're not practicing" and there are "very few neighborhood parishioners" as a result, though the parish has not attempted to study this element of the parish's demography.⁴¹⁸ While some people have moved closer to the parish in order to attend more easily, others who would like to do so have been held back by the expensive real estate.⁴¹⁹

The title of this thesis, "How Lonely the City Stands," is taken from a non-standard translation of the first line of the book of Lamentations, written about the destruction of Jerusalem.⁴²⁰ A more standard translation, including the rest of the sentence, is "How lonely sits the city / that was full of people!"⁴²¹ The title was chosen to reflect the sense that something has been lost in American Catholicism, in the form of religious culture or practice, and that this loss has been associated with suburbanization and the emptying of Chicago. But of course, Chicago

⁴¹⁴ Kolinski, Interview.

⁴¹⁵ Fr. Frank Phillips, C.R., in Carney et al., *On Assignment*, 3:21.

⁴¹⁶ Kolinski, Interview.

⁴¹⁷ Kolinski, Interview.

⁴¹⁸ Kolinski, Interview.

⁴¹⁹ Kolinski, Interview.

⁴²⁰ Said non-standard translation comes from Alejandro, "Quomodo Sedet Sola Civitas: Some Thoughts on the Liturgy and Waugh," *A Heap of Broken Images* (blog), July 28, 2011, <https://aheapofbrokenimages.wordpress.com/2011/07/28/quomodo-sedet-sola-civitas-some-thoughts-on-the-liturgy-and-waugh/>.

⁴²¹ Lam. 1:1 Revised Standard Version Second Catholic Edition.

was not “empty;” it was simply “full of people” who were not Catholic, who have just as much of a claim to the city and who must be considered in these discussions.

Although gentrification has not brought with it a large number of new parishioners, it is perceived positively by Kolinski for improving the “character of the neighborhood,” which he described as having been “somewhat seedy” in the early nineties, but which he now considers “not exclusive, but... a lot nicer than it was.”⁴²² A history on the parish website states that gentrification “has further contributed to a bright future as the parish enters its second century.”⁴²³ Significantly, redevelopment of Cabrini-Green also began in the mid and late nineties, which has resulted in the displacement of low-income black residents and an influx of middle-class whites.⁴²⁴ These developments are often designed to discourage outdoor gatherings and community interaction in ways meant to keep the poor out of sight.⁴²⁵ Many of these developments are based around a townhouse typology, and townhouses have been constructed “kitty-corner from the rectory” of St. John Cantius; these “New Urbanist neighborhoods that have gradually superseded demolished public housing are part of a broader trend to reimage Chicago as a safe, green, and comfortable environment, especially for the middle class.”⁴²⁶ This is also a childless middle class or a middle class with a young children; large families are not the customer base that developers are seeking to serve.⁴²⁷ Even if the parish’s immediate surroundings were primarily commercial, the changes in the area are interconnected with those occurring nearby in places like Cabrini-Green.

Anecdotally, Kolinski believes that the neighborhood’s location near an L stop with restaurants and coffee shops has probably brought some young people to the parish.⁴²⁸ There is a

⁴²² Kolinski, Interview.

⁴²³ “A Short History.”

⁴²⁴ Vale, *Purging the Poorest*, Chapter 7, especially pp. 258, 261, 262, 277, and 307-308.

⁴²⁵ Vale, *Purging the Poorest*, 277, 281.

⁴²⁶ Vale, *Purging the Poorest*, 283.

⁴²⁷ Vale, *Purging the Poorest*, 277.

⁴²⁸ Kolinski, Interview.

substantial young adult population at the parish, and young adults often wander in; it is typically kept unlocked all day, something that is atypical in Chicago, but meant to encourage visits.⁴²⁹ The liturgical traditionalism is also a particular draw for young people, and the young adults who attend typically live in Chicago whereas the families typically live in suburbs.⁴³⁰

At the end of the interview, Kolinski commented that

we've lived through... this era of, "It's a new time, it's a new era, get rid of the old, bring in the new, you know, all this old-fashioned stuff doesn't mean anything, it's irrelevant," gutting churches, throwing away vestments, getting rid of devotions, processions, etcetera. "And do new things that will revitalize the faith," and it hasn't revitalized the faith. In fact, people have left the Church. [...]

If God is beauty, you give them something that's beautiful. You give them something that appeals to the senses, visually, beautiful music, aurally, incense, you give them processions. People have a need to do things, and then little by little they begin drawing them into the life of the soul. You give them these things, and it resonates with people. And you find this not just here, but all over, parishes, even seventies churches. Pastors that are reviving traditional Catholic practices and customs, that resonates with people, and they love it, and they want more. If you have an old church, if you have beautiful vestments and great choirs and everything, it's all the better, but just in general people have a hunger for this.⁴³¹

This quotation sums up the attitude that a primary cause of the decline of Catholic religious culture is changes to liturgical and devotional practices that jettisoned things that were actually sustaining. There is definite merit to this argument, as has been discussed in relation to St. Thomas Becket. However, St. John Cantius' revival does not address the social factors related to suburbanization that played a large role in this decline as well. As a church is incapable of reversing massive nationwide demographic changes with complex and interlocking causes, this is understandable.

But as a result, parishes like St. John Cantius exist in a liminal state where they imitate a liturgical and social structure that initially came about in tight-knit urban neighborhoods, but which

⁴²⁹ Fr. Frank Phillips, C.R., in Carney et al., *On Assignment*, 2:09, 2:47.

⁴³⁰ Fr. Burns Seeley, S.J.C., in Carney et al., *On Assignment*, 7:12; and Kolinski, Interview.

⁴³¹ Kolinski, Interview.

now rely on car culture and long commutes, both of which contributed to the decline of those social structures in the first place. This means that, for many, participation in the life of such a church is associated with a large burden in time and resources to make that participation possible. Though such policies could probably be employed more widely with success, they also do not scale beyond a certain point; parishes that draw many commuters at rely, at least indirectly, on their parishioners feeling a sense of alienation from their own local parishes. If these people felt like their local parishes had the same spiritual offerings as a church that relies on commuters, there would be far less incentive to commute.

Architecturally, this model of commuting to a Victorian church for a more “traditional” liturgical experience strengthens the associations between the “nostalgicized” understanding of a more robust Catholic culture in the United States and romantic Victorian revivalism. Ironically, buildings more heavily influenced by contemporary architectural trends and the Liturgical Movement are then underappreciated because they are seen as precursors to generic suburban architecture, despite the fact that these buildings were designed to create the best possible environment for attending the Tridentine Mass. Further research could be done on the impact of liturgical practices similar to those taking place at St. John Cantius in churches built at different times, or on parishes which celebrate the Tridentine Mass exclusively.

Twentieth century churches remain underappreciated, while the role of suburbanization on both architecture and religious practice are not widely understood. While this thesis has hopefully closed some of these gaps, there remains overall an unfortunate and ahistorical erasure of the nuanced relationship between Catholic architecture, religious practice, and suburbanization in the United States.

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Abbreviations:

UNDA: University of Notre Dame Archives

CLIT: Records of the Liturgical Arts Society

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Appendix: Transcript of Interview with Fr. Dennis Kolinski, S.J.C.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

March 18, 2020

Phone Interview

11:00am-12:15 EST

Scott Szpisjak: I recently read your interview with *Sacred Music* magazine from 2007, and you were one of the earliest members of the Canons Regular of Saint John Cantius. How did you come to be a parishioner at St. John Cantius before that, and then how did you eventually come to join the Canons?

Fr Dennis Kolinski: I was living and working in Chicago, and I'm a bit older, I'm 68. I grew up before the Second Vatican Council and I was living on the North side of the city, attending Mass at a different parish. And one day I saw an ad in a Catholic publication, I can't remember exactly but I think it was probably *The Wanderer*. And it was just a little ad that said that every Sunday at 12:30 there was a Tridentine High Mass at St. John Cantius. And I grew up serving the Tridentine Mass, so I thought "Oh, that would be interesting, to attend a Tridentine Mass again like I grew up with."

So, I found out where the church was one Sunday, and I drove here for Mass. And, as an aside, this is many years ago, it was the late seventies, early eighties, I did my graduate studies in Krakow, so I know Krakow very very well and it's a very very beloved place for me. And I walked into St. John Cantius church, which was founded by Poles from that part of Poland, and it's an exceptional church, it really doesn't look American. It looks very European, more European than American, as far as architecture and the interior atmosphere of the place, and even more so it looks

very Krakowian. So I walked in the church, I looked and I had to stop and think; I felt like I was walking into a church in Krakow. It just completely blew me away. I was there for the Mass, it was really nice, and I loved it, and I figured, why not come back next Sunday? Then I came to the next Sunday's Mass, and I just stayed. I found a home here.

That was late in the year some time, November, December of 1993. And then five years later, 1998, the pastor at that time, Fr Frank Phillips, mentioned to a number of us who had been attending Mass there, and I had been a regular parishioner, I had been serving Masses every Sunday, helping out, etcetera. He mentioned to other young men that had talked to him already about the sense that we were discerning a vocation, that he felt called to perhaps found a new community in the parish, to continue the parish life, the liturgical life, and everything that he had developed here over the time that he'd been there. Like I said I had, as a few others had, been discerning a vocation, so I and a few others signed on, because we said "Yes, we're interested." And we formed the core, the founding members of the new community, that has since grown.

SS: In your view, what role has the architecture of the building, which as you said is very unique and very different from a lot of American church architecture, what role has that architecture played in the story of the parish's renewal? Do you think things would have gone differently in a different building?

DK: Perhaps. The founding of the order was really based upon the renewal that had been taking place within the parish itself. You read the history on the website and saw that video, correct? So you know that when Fr. Phillips was assigned here in 1988, that the parish was all but dead. There was a total of about seventy people that attended Mass here on Sundays. Seven zero. And at one time in like 1920, the parish had twenty-two thousand parishioners. That's a large church. So this

parish was very possibly, although no one had said it, slated for closure. And Fr. Phillips was kind of like a continuation of the twentieth-century Liturgical Movement. His mentors were Monsignor [Richard] Schuler in Minneapolis-Saint Paul in regard to sacred music, the importance of it and the importance of good music, and Monsignor [Martin] Hellriegel at Holy Cross outside of St. Louis, Missouri came from Germany, and they were both part of the twentieth-century Liturgical Movement, and on the basis of the legacy of Pius Parsch. Fr. Phillips didn't set out to renew the parish, he just set out to do what he felt needed to be done: beautiful liturgies; beautiful vestments; he had directed a choir at the high school that he taught before he was assigned here, and he continued to work with them and asked them to come once and a while to sing for a Sunday Mass. He tried to resurrect traditional Catholic customs, things like that. Just nothing exceptional, nothing new, nothing wild, just things that had always been a part of Catholic culture and part of the Catholic heritage. And people heard about this, and they told others, and little by little more people began to come, and they told others, and more and more, and the parish was little by little growing. And was no longer in danger of closing, and a lot of it was dependent, I think, upon the building. The building wasn't, you might say, *integral*. What was most important was what was happening inside the building, but the building played a large role because it constituted the setting. Fr. Phillips might have done something like this in another old, Polish parish, and it might have had similar success, similar results. But if he had done it in a suburban parish, built in the sixties or seventies, I doubt that it would have taken off the way that it did, because like what happened with me, there's something about walking through the doors of this church that strikes people in an exceptional way. There's something exceptionally beautiful about this church, magnificent, and there's a very very profound sense of the sacred in the church. And I think a big part of it was not being an archeologist, that heresy that Pius XII wrote about, just saying that just because something

is old it's better. But because the parish had dwindled to nothing and they had no money and Poles were often very conservative and traditional, little had been done in the church since the last decoration of the church. What you see in the church, the frescos and the paintings and everything like that, the gilding, was all done in about 1940. And they didn't have money; nothing was changed. And so the church intrinsically had a beauty about it, a striking beauty. And again, the building, the architecture, and the other things--the altars, statues and everything--gave a profound sense of the sacred, and because that was all there it strikes people. We give tours, we bring people in, or people come in to visit the first time, taken through the doors, from the vestibule into the nave, and they stand there, and their jaws drop. And many people say they've never seen anything like this before in their lives. So I think the architecture plays a large role and then provides the setting, the stage for all the sacred ceremonies and the devotions and things that go on here, so together, the sacred ceremonies, the liturgies give a heightened sense of the sacred to people because of the setting in which it takes place.

SS: How would you describe the architectural style of the building?

DK: Well there are certain Renaissance elements, but it has a very baroque flavor to it. You couldn't call it pure Renaissance, you couldn't call it pure Baroque, but I would say, if you would characterize the flavor of the building, I would say very very inspired by the Baroque. Which perhaps is what makes such a big impression on people because there are many churches built by immigrants here in the United States that were done in the Gothic style. We have a lot of those types of churches. Gothic is very common, very well-known. There's a very American style, using traditional elements, looking like very traditional buildings but at the same time being very American in style.

St. John Cantius, at least for me, the way I see it, does not have an American flavor to it. It has a very very European flavor, and even again, more specifically, a very Polish flavor to it. For me, I feel like I'm in a church in Krakow. And like I said, Gothic and the American style are very common in the United States, but you very rarely see Baroque in this country. And so, it very very much has a Baroque flavor, because Baroque has rounded barrel vaults, sometimes you can have columns, like we have, and there are certain architectural elements that are very reminiscent of Baroque. But what really strikes you are the altars.

The altars are very clearly designed in a Baroque style. They're not clean Baroque but they're very very visibly Baroque. The person that designed the altars was a sculptor from Krakow that studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow, Kazimierz Chodziński, and he was the one who designed the statue of Tadeusz Kościuszko that stands not far from the planetarium in Chicago. He's from Krakow, and Krakow is just full of Baroque altars all over the place. Baroque is very very prominent in Poland, especially in the south. So, that's how I characterize it, is very very very Baroque in flavor. Polish Baroque uses a lot of gold, too. It's very characteristic for Polish Baroque, and we have a lot of gold. When the church was redecorated in the late 30s, around 1940, it was known among the Poles here in Chicago as the quote unquote "golden church."

SS: As a priest, how would you describe the experience of celebrating the liturgy at St John Cantius?

DK: Marvelous. One feels very very conscious of celebrating Mass in a space that is permeated, that that radiates, that has a sense of the sacred to it. The Mass is the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, of Calvary, and it's a sacred act, and one has a very conscious, very keen sense of celebrating Mass

in a space that is just unambiguously sacred. It shouts the sacred. It's a beautiful place to say Mass. It's very easy to enter into the mysteries in a place like this.

SS: I know that the confessionals date to relatively recently and also that there are many freestanding devotional objects in the building, especially in the transepts under the balconies. And so I was wondering if these are also original to the parish or if they were acquired at a later date during the parish's revival, and to what extent there is that.

DK: Yes and yes. First of all, let me point out again what I do when I give tours of the church, when you walk into the church the mass of what you see, the architecture, the walls, the ceiling, the murals, all of the faux art, is from about 1940. What you're doing is walking into a space that's like a picture into the past, a glance into the past, because for the most part, when you look at, just the broad sweep of the church little has changed. Not looking at details but just the broad impression, the broad view of the church, it's very very much like parishioners or anybody else would have seen if they had walked in here in 1940, 1950, 1960, etcetera.

The majority of what you see when you walk in is something that just has remained constant since 1940. And we've tried to preserve it, to clean it, to restore it, not to change it, to preserve the patrimony that was given us and, as I said, everything, all the walls, the pillars, everything, the dome over the sanctuary, all that is faux art. A lot of people think that it's gold; we'll say "Come up to the altar, that's all faux art." It just painted to look like mosaic. It's amazing work.

The altars are all original. The church was begun in 1893. There was a little hiatus there because there was an economic depression for a few years. The altars were purchased and installed in 1898, and they have been here ever since. The only major difference between then the third

redecorated around 1940 was that the altars were originally entirely black with gold ornamentation, which people might find rather strange. But for the Poles that founded this parish and that came from southern Poland, it was very reminiscent of their homeland, because black marble was very very prevalent in Poland. And especially in the Baroque era there were a lot of things made from black marble, especially altars, especially in southern Poland, they're incredible. The proliferation of black marble altars with gold ornamentation. That's what they remembered. That's what they looked like. But when the church was redecorated in the 40s, and everything was done in this faux painting, and in very warm earth tones, the pastor decided to strip the altars and refinish them in natural wood with gold ornamentation. It fits, very very well, they're very warm; I think the black wouldn't have worked in the present setting. But at the time supposedly people were horrified; they were up in arms, "What have you done to our altars!" but they got used to it.

That was changed and then, on the side altars, there are these scrolled wings that come off of each side of it. Well the high altar used to have large, scrolled wings off each side of it also. But when the church was redecorated and the altars stripped and refinished in the late 30s, in 1940, those were taken off. Because the priests complained that they stuck out too much, they got in the way, and so those were taken off and niches for the Sacred Heart and the Immaculate Heart were created and put on there, and the tabernacle was much lower. There's a huge tabernacle house which is right now over the tabernacle, and under the painting of St John Cantius, and that was made and installed at that same time. So that's the altars.

Everything else is the same. Several years ago, I'd have to check exactly what year, five years, or six years or something like that ago, the high altar was completely cleaned, restored, regilded, so the gold is pristine and shiny once again. There are a lot of things in the church that you see that are original, there are new things. I tell people on tours that there's kind of a philosophy

in American Catholicism that less is better, that's why things have been kind of cleaned out of churches, and simplified, and things thrown out, etcetera. That's another whole story. Our philosophy here is "more is better." So rather than take things out and remove things, we have just little by little added things.

The floor is relatively new. That was installed in 1997. There was a very brutal summer here in 1995, with very high temperatures and high humidity, and a lot of people died and it did bad things to old buildings. The floorboards buckled, and there was old linoleum tile floor from the 40s in the church that was kind of ugly, but it was dry and brittle and it just broke everything up and it was uneven, so Fr. Phillips determined that we had to put a new floor in, we had to take this out—we couldn't leave it that way. And the question then, as always for us, is not like some other parishes, which might say, "what can we do that can serve the purpose, and that we can do economically." We always start at the top, we say, "this is a house of God; what can we do that is beautiful, because God deserves what is most beautiful, and what is worthy of God? What is worthy of God's house?" And then we'll figure out how to pay for it. So that's how it came. One of our parishioners is a remarkable, very talented graphic artist, and he designed the floor. And then we found a company that installs inlaid wood floors and they installed the floor. 96-97. And people provided for it. It's like Mother Teresa once told Fr. [Benedict] Groeschel, [C.F.R.], who was lamenting where he's going to get money to do repairs and stuff, in this one church that they got to serve in. Mother Teresa just, with all calmness that she had, she said, "Well Father, don't worry. God has lots of money." People provide when you provide beauty. When you feed the soul, people will usually respond.

There are some things in the transepts that are changed. Most of the statues in the transepts had been there in the past, but there were substantial altars there that were taken out quite a few

years ago, and there's little devotional altars that were put in their place, because the other ones were just taking up too much room. There was a different Pietà, a plaster Pietà. There's a very nice wooden carved one now. That came from St. Boniface church, which is about a mile to the west of us, which was closed down in the 80s, and we were able to get a number of things from that church. That Pietà was one of them; it was nineteenth-century, probably made in Munich, Bavarian art, and the Art Institute of Chicago looked at it and assessed it and said it's a very very high quality.

The Divine Mercy painting, we acquired on a pilgrimage to Poland one time, we brought it back and installed it there. On the other side of the church, the south transept. Again, the three statues are original to the church, just in different places. There's the Fatima altar on the right side there. The altar is old, but it's relatively new here in that space. The altar itself comes from a closed church in Quebec, Canada. It's a very very characteristically French-Canadian in style. And then the statue of Fatima is from Fatima.

The sanctuary, the communion rail is original. It's never been taken out. When the floor was redone, there used to be three steps leading up to the communion rail. We had it redesigned so that people wouldn't have to walk up steps. All that's original but it's been lowered. The pulpit is original, it's never been taken out, it's always been there, nothing's been changed in the pulpit.

The confessionals, as you mentioned, are relatively new. They were made and installed about fifteen, seventeen years ago, something like that. Every year there's this huge expo in Poland. It's called Sacro Expo, of sacred art, of liturgical items, church furnishings, just anything a priest could want. And we would go there occasionally, and Fr. Phillips had been thinking that we needed new confessionals; the old ones were old and rickety, and we happened upon this one company. It's a Salesian woodworking shop that does altars and church furnishings and different

things. There's a workshop of the Salesian fathers, Don Bosco. They had beautiful work, very very high quality good work, and we visited them in their workshop in southern Poland, and talked over everything and we ordered these confessionals, this style. They made a couple things to order, custom made, and they shipped them over, and we installed them. The cost of the confessionals and shipping was a fraction of what it would have cost for us to have new confessionals made here. Especially carved wood ones like that. So it was remarkably cheap. What else? There are some changes in the vestibule, nothing significant.

You've seen the chapel in the back? With the replica of the Veit Stoss Altarpiece? If you look at the front of the church, there are huge steps that go up to the three main doors, then at each side there's a statue of St Peter, St Paul. At one time the steps were configured differently, and where those statues are, those niches, those were actually other doors that went into the church. And so that back chapel was originally like another vestibule. But those were closed off a long time ago, the stairs were reconfigured, the statues were put there, the doors closed off, and that was a passageway to a doorway that went up to the choir loft, and it was used for various different things. We had an altar there, and there was a huge display case with relics, and it was kind of a multipurpose space for a long time. We had that replica made, and it was originally up in the far right south transept where the Fatima altar is now, but remarkably, a lot of people didn't even notice it was there. The church is so huge and there's so much going on and a lot of people didn't even notice it. So we decided we needed to do something because it needed it's space; it was such a remarkable work of art. It's a replica, but on its own it's an amazing work of art. Not anybody could have made something like that. And so we decided to turn that back, at one time, vestibule into a separate discreet chapel, close off the doors, no longer a passageway to the choir loft, because there was another entry from the main vestibule. Close that off, stencil all the walls, put a coffered

wood ceiling in, and install the altar there, and it found its place. People walk in and it receives the due honor that it is due. The stenciling on the walls is a pattern from St Mary's in Krakow, where the original altar stands.

The choir stalls are newer, probably nineteenth-century, but gothic style, same period, from Belgium, and there are other things there that were added. I think that's the majority of things. There are some statues that we've added: Padre Pio, St Cecelia, different things like that. The grand sweep of the place is the same as it's looked for decades, but little elements, little details have been moved around or we've added to them. So the feel is the same, the general look is the same, but again, certain details have been added or changed.

SS: How would you describe the devotional life of parish, especially aspects that go beyond the liturgical activities of the Mass and Office?

DK: Well very rich, very rich and very fervent. For instance, the first Saturday, first Friday devotions are very much alive, the rosary. We are canons regular, and one thing that characterizes canons regular as a type of religious is the public celebration of the Divine Office every day, and so our Divine Office is done in the church and open to the public. We recite the first hours and we chant all the rest, and we encourage the laity to take part in it. It is a liturgy, but you could call it part of the devotional life too. Before Vespers we do the daily rosary and people always join us for the rosary and Divine Office. St. Monica Novena on Wednesday evening before Wednesday evening Mass. We have various devotions throughout the year, of course. Very very fervent devotion to St Anne, who was the secondary patron of the parish. It's very unusual because we have two patrons: St. John Cantius the main, St. Anne the secondary patron. Devotions to Padre Pio, devotion to St Joseph, the parish has always had a very fervent devotion to St Joseph.

Devotional life is very very strong, very fervent here, processions, things like that. People love these things. They got rid of them in the sixties and seventies, the “old fashioned,” or this and that, whatever. But people *loved* them, and it feeds their own personal devotion, their faith, and many people flock here because this has become a haven for them, because this feeds their faith.

SS: What is daily Mass attendance like, and how many people typically come to confession weekly?

DK: We have two Masses in the morning: we have our conventional Mass, which is the Ordinary Form in English, at seven. Eight o'clock is the Extraordinary Form. We generally have maybe twenty, twenty-five people for the conventional Mass, and the conventional Mass means that the [religious] community [of the Canons Regular] attends it. We pray the Office, and to complete our daily liturgical life, the community worships together. So all told, there are maybe thirty-five people together with us. The Extraordinary Form at eight o'clock varies from day to day. It could be ten to fifteen. And that maybe seems very small, but our weekends, our Sundays, are much much bigger.

And the reason we have small daily Masses is the reason that the parish kind of nosedived, and lost parishioners. The second or third generation, when they began to move up the socio-economic ladder, they wanted to move out of these densely populated, and quickly becoming kind of poor, immigrant inner-city neighborhoods. They wanted to buy a single-family house with a yard in other parts of the city or in suburbs. And so little by little children and grandchildren began to move out, the parish numbers began to go down. There's this big street that's in front of us here, this diagonal street, Ogden Avenue, that was put in in the forties, which is the beginning of Route 66, which was a very heavily trafficked street, which necessitated tearing down parishioners'

homes. It was hazardous for children to cross the street because there were no stoplights, so many parishioners left the parish because of that. The Kennedy Expressway tore down more parishioners' homes, and the sixties were a flight to the suburbs. What happened is that most of the homes here were torn down, and you look at this neighborhood and you see a lot of commercial buildings. "What's this big church here doing here when there are hardly any homes?" Well, it used to be exclusively residential and very densely populated, and after people left you could buy the land here, the real estate, for a pittance, and they would tear down the homes and build these commercial buildings, whatever, around here.

And gentrification didn't begin until the late nineties. There's a whole townhouse complex kitty-corner from the rectory, other new homes that were put in. But the problem is that we don't have a large residential population, because of that history. And most of the people that have moved into the neighborhood, into the new apartments and the townhomes, either are not Catholic or they're not practicing. We have really very few neighborhood parishioners, and that's part of the trend: two young professionals, nominally practicing or not practicing at all, most often no kids, and they live their own life in other ways. So the majority of our parishioners drive in from elsewhere. They drive in from other parts of the city, from suburbs, we even have parishioners that occasionally drive in from Wisconsin, from Indiana, and we have large numbers on Sunday, increasing numbers. We see our numbers increasing, little by little, but they're not neighborhood parishioners. On weekdays, the traffic makes it difficult for people to just drive in for morning Mass, because the traffic is very heavy here in Chicago. If they want to go, they go to their local parish and they'll come here for Sunday.

And they come here in great part because of confessions. Not only Mass, not only beautiful Mass, reverent Mass, but confessions. And we have confessions on Wednesday evening during

Mass, Saturday morning during Mass. On Sunday, it depends on the Sunday, some Sundays have more, some less, but I would say, three to five hundred confessions a Sunday.

SS: Could you talk about the recent events with the Broken Mary statue procession and any other elements of parish devotional life that regularly go beyond the grounds of the complex?

DK: Well, we don't set out to do something exceptional, remarkable, try to look for the highest ratings or anything. Something like that, it just happens. We just do what we do here and we want to feed people spiritually. And when the opportunity arises, we jump on it. It's not a minimalist approach; we like to think outside the box. Going back, this was, I can't remember exactly when it was, ten years ago? Ten years ago, the relics of St. Maria Goretti made a pilgrimage through the country. And we heard about this and decided "Hey, that would be a great thing to do." We got in touch with the person that was organizing this tour of relics, and we were put on the schedule as one of the sites, and she was welcomed here. There was full police escort, honor guard, her relics were here for twenty-four hours straight, the church was open non-stop for the entire time. We had our priests, and visiting priests come in to hear confessions nonstop around the clock. We had like twenty thousand people go through the church in twenty-four hours. Masses, confessions, visiting the relics, etcetera. These things resonate with people. They were taken away from people, and when people are given the opportunity once again for devotions like this, and for opportunities for prayer, intercession of the Saints, connection with Saints, they just eat it up. They flock here because it fulfills a spiritual need in them. And it enlivens their spiritual life and feeds their souls. We have a whole relic collection off the side of Mary's altar. I don't know if you've seen that. We have thousands and thousands of relics. And people are there all the time, and it feeds their devotion, feeds their faith. So we had St. Maria Goretti, and again, we didn't set out to break

records or anything, we just said, “This is a great thing; let’s do it,” and we had no idea how many people would come, and by time it was done, it was just, “Oh my gosh,” it’s amazing.

And then, in 2017 we decided to do a series of Masses and processions for the hundredth anniversary of the apparitions of Fatima. We had a Mass and then an outdoor procession with a statue of Our Lady of Fatima on the anniversary of every apparition, from May through October. And a huge Pontifical Solemn High Mass on the anniversary of the last apparition on October 13th, with Bishop Joseph Perry, and, you know, people love Our Lady. They love Marian devotions, they love the rosary, they love all these things, they love Our Lady of Fatima. You give them the opportunity--we didn’t do this to create numbers. We just provided an opportunity. We should do this in honor of Our Lady. And when people hear of this, they love it, they come. They just flock here. In other places if they would do these things they would flock to those places too, because people love these things and they have a hunger for it.

Corpus Christi processions: every year they’ve been growing, every year. Corpus Christi processions were cancelled, because at a certain point, “Oh, this is just an old-fashioned custom,” everything. Well, people love them! And when you do them beautifully, and it’s reverence, and it’s devotion to our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, it’s something that again, feeds their faith, feeds their emotion.

And then Mary of the Broken. One of our priests, who is now our new Superior General, somewhere along the line made the acquaintance of Kevin Matthews, and they would get together and talk once and awhile, and he was a fallen-away Catholic. Fr. Joshua Caswell, our superior, never misses an opportunity. Maybe, he thought, somehow, eventually, he would come back to the Church. Work with him, you don’t beat him over the head, you don’t throw a Bible at him, you don’t say “Get to confession,” you just be there. And just by your own witness and talking with

them and being who you are, being a priest, and its witness to the Faith, this has an impression on people. And little by little, Kevin Matthews began to come in. He's come back to the Church. He told Fr. Joshua about the statue that he found, and that had a huge impact on his life, and it changed his life entirely, turned it around. And he had begun to have a great devotion to Our Lady, and he told Fr Joshua that he takes this statue to different places, and people come for devotion, and began to talk about having a procession in Chicago. And so it just began by the two of us sitting down and talking about this, and little by little, thinking outside the box, it evolved into this huge procession. We didn't know how big it would be. We knew it would be big based on the previous year's Fatima processions, but we didn't know exactly how big. We provide the opportunity. And we were able to arrange so that the police would escort us down this major artery, Chicago Avenue, from St John Cantius Church all the way down to Water Tower Place, where the procession was ended. And there was a blessing, there was a Mass, and the procession, and again, three thousand people showed up. So these things just happen: word gets out, and again, people have a hunger for this. You have a hunger, and it feeds their faith, feeds their souls. And when you provide the opportunity, provide the setting, the devotions, the Mass, the beautiful liturgies, they're going to come.

SS: Do you know if those sorts of events have drawn out more local people or not, or is it still mostly commuters?

DK: There's some local people that will come. But it's still mostly people that drive in, commuters. Cardinal George liked to call this "an intentional church," rather than a territorial church. Meaning that people come here because they intend to come. But because it feeds them, because it feeds their spiritual life, their souls, their devotional life, they will drive a distance to come here, and

week after week after week. The youth, and the young adults' groups and activities that we have here--you've always got young people and kids running around this place. They come in for a choir rehearsal, choir practice, for sports, for this and that, and parents will drive them in special for that. We've got over a hundred altar boys, and they come in for practice from the suburbs. It's what they do. They belong to St John Cantius; this where they're fed spiritually, and when the need is there, they have to come in, they come in. We'd like to have more local people, but like I said unfortunately they're mostly people that are either not Catholic or they've fallen away, or they're nominal Catholics. That's a whole different story. There are a significant number of crossovers from Holy Trinity church just up the ways a bit. Those people, again, aren't really neighborhood parishioners either, because they drive in, because that's the Polish mission, so they drive in from the area too. But we get a lot of crossovers, a lot of them will come here also, on occasion. They come here mostly because of the Extraordinary Form of the Mass. So if you want to call that "neighborhood," you could, but they don't really live in the neighborhood.

SS: Do you know anecdotally if anyone has ever moved closer to the parish in order to attend more easily?

DK: Yeah. I seem to recall that there are a few people that have. There are a lot of people that would like to, but the real estate prices here are very high. That's the major obstacle for people, why more people haven't done it.

SS: I know that the Canons Regular also staff a parish in Volo and in Springfield. Is there anything you can say about what has made these contexts different or similar to that in Chicago? I'm especially interested in the role played by suburbanization and urban renewal in Springfield versus a small village context that was not affected by those same forces as dramatically.

DK: Well, everywhere that we went, everywhere that we've gone, the other parishes, and every place that we will go in the future as we grow, we won't try to make clones of St John Cantius parish because there are many things we do here because the size and our donor base and everything, that we can do here because we're in the middle of a big city, and the resources, many things that we can do that smaller parishes just can't. We don't intend to go out and create clones, but our charism includes certain things. We try to do as much of what our charism involves and what our charism includes as is possible in the other parishes. With certain adaptations to the parish itself, because when we go into a new parish, they've had a life of their own for a certain period of time, and it's a different group of people, it's a different setting. Volo is a rural setting, so we do much, in those parishes, of what we do here, but on a smaller scale. Here we have what is it, six, seven choirs? A place like Volo, or Springfield, isn't going to have seven choirs. They're not as big, they don't have the donor base, etcetera. But we try to cultivate good sacred music. That's an integral part of the liturgy, so that's always one of our very very important points, to try to cultivate little by little, without ramming down people's throats, but as much as possible, as quick as possible, good sacred music. Everywhere we go we have beautiful vestments, the bishops that have placed us in these parishes have been very kind and understanding of us, and the churches that we have received, St Peter's, given to us by Cardinal George, and Springfield by Bishop Paprocki. The churches are older churches that are beautiful that still retain their traditional furnishings and everything. We are not in new seventies parishes, you know. We could adapt, I guess, but the places that we are have age, and have traditional heritage, traditional flavor to them.

St Peter's in Volo was the easiest transition to do what we do. I was the first Canon's pastor to be assigned up there, and I had to proceed, baby steps, little by little, little by little. But once we began to give them things and to cultivate little by little the choirs, with good sacred music, and

give them devotions, and they had never experienced the full range of the observances of Holy Week, all the ceremonies, and the first years that I did that there it just blew people away. And it wasn't anything wild and spectacular; this is just what the Church does, and they had never experienced it before, and we just did what we're supposed to do. And it just blew them away. And it has an effect on people, it changes them. It was a parish very similar to St. John Cantius as far as the parish base. Most of the parishioners drove in from some distance. Not as far as for here, but they drove in from the surrounding fifteen, maybe twenty mile radius. A lot of big homeschool families, had it been known as probably the most traditional parish up there in that Lake County area. People of a very similar cross section, Catholic mentality. So we were dropped in a place that was very similar to the situation which we have here.

Springfield's a little different. Again, a beautiful old church, but the parish was very very small. It didn't have large numbers coming to Mass there so, the progress there has been slower, because it wasn't a parish base that was as similar to St. John Cantius as St. Peter's was. But they're making progress, little by little. And people are responding. We've had to make adaptations too, because of both places; there was a Spanish Mass, that's not something we do here, but again, we try to do what the Canons Regular of Saint John Cantius do, but then adapt accordingly to any given parish setting. We've been very very lucky to, like I said, be placed in beautiful old churches, and that certainly plays a role in what we do, just as it does here.

SS: Since it has not had a major impact on local involvement with the parish, would you say that gentrification has had a neutral impact on the parish, or is it more complicated than that?

DK: Not neutral. It hasn't brought a lot of new parishioners, but it's had a certain positive impact on us in that, when I joined the parish in 1993 this was really a somewhat seedy neighborhood in

the city, and the gentrification and the changes that have taken place here have really brought up the socioeconomic level of the neighborhood, and the whole character of the neighborhood has changed, and for the better. It's very nice, it's not exclusive, but it's a lot nicer than it was, and more restaurants and bars, and things like that. Not a lot but more of those types of things. Coffee shops, etcetera.

There's been a certain negative impact in that this used to be a relatively quiet neighborhood, but with the developments that have taken place over the last twenty years and with gentrification and not just that, but developments in the city center in general, it's become a highly trafficked neighborhood. The intersection here of Chicago, Milwaukee, and Ogden is probably one of the busiest intersections in the city. So we have a lot of traffic, and there are some new high rise apartments going up just at the south of us, which are changing the neighborhood, the look of the neighborhood, the feel of the neighborhood. That's neutral. There might be some people that are moving there that are coming to Mass here. We'd have to do research on that to find out how many it is if there are any like that.

It's a transit route for many people going downtown to work, and west of us, northwest up there, there are a lot of places where many young adults and young professionals live, and they transit through here to go to work, and as I said, there are coffee shops, restaurants, different things, that a lot of young people that hang out around here, subway stop, which is a gathering point for people as they go to work or come back. Again, this is just anecdotally, we'd have to do a study, but that I think has probably brought a number of young people here to St. John Cantius. We have a large number of young people that for one reason or another, just wander in. They come in because a friend brings them in for Mass, or for the Wednesday evening devotion, for the young adults group on Wednesday evenings, or they're transiting through, or they're waiting for the

subway or the bus and they see this huge old church here and they're intrigued, and say "Well, let me just go in and take a look, see if it's open," and they walk in and get blown away. And then some of these people come back. We have all of our Masses, stuff on the boards outside the front of the church next to the steps. So we have a lot of young people, a lot of young adults that come here. And the changes in the neighborhood, that it's a transit point, is probably part of that.

SS: Would you say that the young adult population is typically coming more from within Chicago?

DK: Yes, and beyond Chicago, or further neighborhoods and suburbs, that's mostly families. The young adults are for the most part, I would say, people that live within the city, and not far away. Because of lot of these neighborhoods that were in the core of the city, that were immigrant neighborhoods, that went into depression, that nosedived, that then began to come back up, have become very trendy neighborhoods, neighborhoods that surround us. So there are a lot of young people that live in those areas.

SS: Have there been any direct local outreach efforts?

DK: We do have outreach, but we don't have things like neighborhood mailings. Our outreach is primarily electronic and experiential, and a lot of the outreach also is by means of our parishioners. There are many people that come here for the first time because they know somebody that's a parishioner here, they encourage them to come. Experiential, meaning people that live in this area or transit through see processions, they see large groups of people processing and doing things, and that might intrigue them, and they come along. But we're very savvy, and we have a very large electronic presence. A website, Facebook, different things like that, Instagram, and people log on and they follow it. We have people that follow us all over the city; we have people that follow us

regularly all over the country and all over the world. We have enormous numbers of people that visit our electronic sites, so that's our primary outreach. It has a big impact. There was one person that was travelling from one point in the country to another point, and consciously made plane reservations so that they would fly over and have a layover in Chicago and have a layover long enough so that they could come here on Sunday to Mass. And we're right on the blue line, which goes straight out to O'Hare, so if they have a long enough layover they can just hop on the blue line, come down here, and then they're right in front of the church. So these are people from other places in the country.

SS: My last question is, is there anything else that strikes you as particularly relevant to my thesis that I didn't ask about?

DK: I can't think of anything offhand. But just in general, summing things up, we've lived through an era, fifty, sixty years, began in the sixties, maybe some people might say in the fifties, this era of, "It's a new time, it's a new era, get rid of the old, bring in the new, you know, all this old-fashioned stuff doesn't mean anything, it's irrelevant," gutting churches, throwing away vestments, getting rid of devotions, processions, etcetera. "And do new things that will revitalize the faith," and it hasn't revitalized the faith. In fact, people have left the Church.

And the fact of the matter is that when you get rid of these things, human nature has intrinsic need for these things. Intrinsic need for ritual, for things that have physical meaning. Not just cerebral. Everything's become too cerebral. We are a body-soul composite. And so they need things that are also physical, that that appeal to the senses. And the Church has always had these. The Church understands human nature better than anybody else. You get rid of these things, and they're going to begin to search for something, and others are going out there looking for all kinds

of things; they're wandering into other religions, or Eastern mysticism, or something like that, or drugs, or sex, or whatever. And when you give Catholics these things—even non-Catholics, we have Protestants, we have Atheists, we have Agnostics that come here, and eventually they become Catholic, enter the Church. You wouldn't believe the people, the young people that walk through our doors that, you know, were not Catholic that become Catholic because of this place. We experience the world through our senses. That's the entry point, you know what I mean? This is not "Church stuff," this is not theology. This is human nature. The entry point for us in our knowledge and experience and things, and in the way we live, is the senses. That's where you have to start, with the senses. If you give them a setting that is beautiful, that reflects beauty, that reflects God. People walk in, they say they feel God's presence here. If God is beauty, you give them something that's beautiful. You give them something that appeals to the senses, visually, beautiful music, aurally, incense, you give them processions. People have a need to do things, and then little by little they begin drawing them into the life of the soul. You give them these things, and it resonates with people. And you find this not just here, but all over, parishes, even seventies churches. Pastors that are reviving traditional Catholic practices and customs, that resonates with people, and they love it, and they want more. If you have an old church, if you have beautiful vestments and great choirs and everything, it's all the better, but just in general people have a hunger for this.