

**Beyond Liturgical Architecture:
Work as a Means of Perfection and Enhancing the Value of Sacred Spaces**

by Marie Stephanie N. Gilles¹

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Abstract/ Summary of the Paper

The design of sacred spaces is an important facet in the professional work of the believer. The work of a liturgical architect is to bring God to earth through the physical expressions of piety aimed to lift man back to God. This work is of great significance as a means of human perfection, starting with the faithful adherence to the original concept, precision in timing and dimensions, careful attention to details which collectively lead towards a transcendence of design from the material to the spiritual. Its objective is to provide the occasion and the proper setting for the faithful to lift up their aspirations to God, a vertical upward movement reminiscent of the gothic spires that give testimony to the supremacy of the Highest Being.

This paper shall describe Catholic and Protestant sacred spaces, then shall set out to make important comparisons between their respective architectural features. A contrast is made between the elaborate iconography of the Catholic Tradition vs. the austere simplicity of Protestant sacred spaces, especially in the modern Philippine setting: iconoclastic, devoid of sacred images and statues of saints as well as symbols of the sacraments. The actual trend for the latter is that of resorting to transitory spaces such as multi-purpose rooms, auditoriums and concert halls for their worship sessions. This phenomenon of minimalism is evocative of the austere interdenominational prayer rooms found in secular buildings such as airports or hospitals, whereas Catholic chapels in commercial structures such as malls and office buildings continue to revive the neoclassic traditions that enrich these liturgical spaces.

A discussion of the parameters of Sacred Architecture follows: Verticality, Permanence and Iconography, with additional parameters of Dignity and Solemnity for sacred spaces in secular settings, e.g. chapels in shopping centers, as prescribed by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, to ensure meaningful attendance to liturgical celebrations.

Finally, the paper ends with some case studies of actual renovation projects undertaken by the author in her capacity as a liturgical architect, aiming to illustrate how enhancing the aesthetic value of a church or chapel contributes to its overall significance as a sacred space.

¹ Master of Architecture degree holder, PhD in Urban and Regional Planning (ongoing), University of the Philippines; Principal Architect, SNG Design Enterprise; ASEAN Architect (with specialization on Liturgical Architecture); Founding Chairperson, Guild of Liturgical Designers – Philippines; Founding Chairperson, United Architects of the Philippines Committee on Liturgical Architecture and Sacred Spaces, archsteph.aa@gmail.com.

Architecture is both Human and Divine

According to the Oxford Dictionary, the term “classic” refers to quality and excellence. In the field of architecture, that description is often applied to the buildings of ancient Greece and Rome. It is a commonly held belief that these were the places where artists have never been more successfully caught between a meeting of the human and the divine. It is called ‘classic’, because of its recognized excellence and the highest quality in both materials and craftsmanship in the execution of the design and building of their structures.

At the very core of Greek philosophy on natural environment was the belief that all architectural edifices – ranging from the sacred to the secular - must be aligned with, and respective of the ‘*landscape of the gods*’, especially when we speak of temples which were supposed to be their sacred dwellings. This presence of the deity or guardian spirit that permeated the entire landscape was called the ‘*genius loci*’.

The duty of the builder, then, was that of reaching out and identifying the sacred spirit fundamental to each location. It was only after the spirit was identified would the architecture become in partnership with the divine landscape. (McDowall, 2014)



Figure 1: The Parthenon in Acropolis, Greece
Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/da/The_Parthenon_in_Athens.jpg



Figure 2: The Pantheon in Rome, Italy
Source: <https://traveldigg.com/pantheon/>

Liturgical Architecture and Sacred Spaces

Liturgical architecture deals with designing spaces for use by the faithful, specifically those intended for liturgical celebrations. It is a discipline that requires a certain level of commitment and demands certain skills aside from specialized knowledge from its designers. It is a unique branch of architecture in the sense that it allows for transcendence, starting from the materiality of the structure into the spirituality of the sacred space, since it is designing the House of God Himself. There is an upward movement of lifting up to God reminiscent of the vertical spires of towers in gothic cathedrals that point upwards to the high heavens. There is a lot of symbolism and iconography involved, as these signs and symbols reveal a reality far greater than the material representations they convey. As it is a sublime space, its primacy stemming from the

fact that it is devoted to spiritual functions, it necessarily entails careful attention to details: precision of measurement, symmetry and classic proportions, accuracy as to implementation of the design, while fostering awareness of its significance as a work of sublime import.

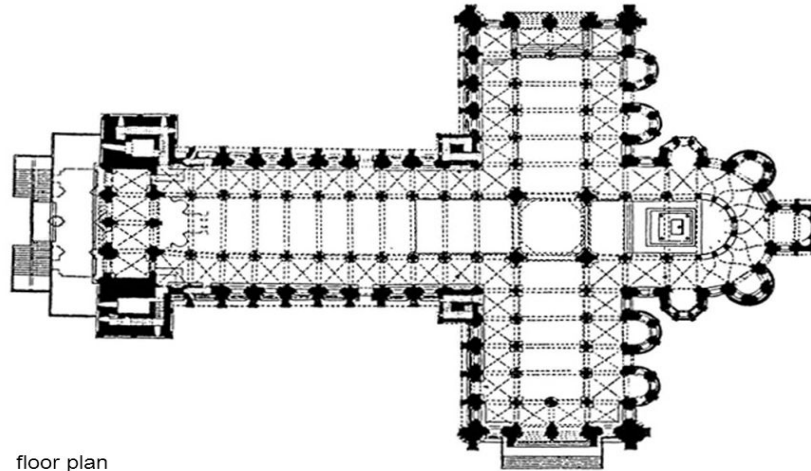
Liturgy is "the participation of the People of God in 'the work of God.'" (CCC, 1069). It is the "exercise of the priestly office of Jesus" in which God is worshipped and adored and people are made holy. God begins the work of sanctifying people in time and space and brings that work to completion. Those who participate actively by responding to God in worship and in service are given the privilege of becoming co-workers in the divine plan.

It was around twenty one centuries ago that Christ lived among us, instructing His disciples, and instituted the sacraments. The theology of liturgical space allows us to connect places of worship with the earthly places visited by Christ. (Paul VI Institute of Liturgy, Liturgical Guidelines on Church Architecture). Liturgical space brings us back to those places where Christ had walked, spoken and gathered His disciples, from the seashore to the Cenacle, teaching them the basics of the Christian faith and strengthening them in their resolve to make fishers out of men, in their mission as apostles. It allows for the celebration of the mysteries of His Passion, Death and Resurrection, and re-presents before our very eyes the signs and symbols of the sacraments that He instituted.



Figure 3: Jesus with His disciples

Source: <https://3.bp.blogspot.com/-IQnFhdsSyio/VPEeRpaijcl/AAAAAAAAAVuM/M8aW8YnW4FY/w1200-h630-p-k-no-nu/jesus%2By%2Bsus%2Bdiscipulos.jpg>



floor plan

Figure 4: Latin Cross Plan of the Cathedral, Santiago de Compostela, Spain

Source: http://images.slideplayer.com/13/3986117/slides/slide_3.jpg

Transcendence of Sacred Spaces

Religious architecture and sacred spaces evoke the ethereal, inspire awe, mystery, contemplation. Architecture has the ability to turn geometric proportions into shivers, stone into tears, rituals into revelation, light into grace, space into contemplation, and time into divine presence. A transcending architecture disappears in the very act of delivering us into the awesome and timeless non-space of the holy. The Estonian-born American-bred architect Louis Kahn called it the "immeasurable", the Swiss-French architect Le Corbusier the "ineffable", and the German theologian Rudolf Otto referred to it as the "numinous" (Bermudez, 2015). For Otto, the numinous can be understood to be the experience of a mysterious terror and awe (*Mysterium tremendum et fascinans*) and majesty (*Majestas*) in the presence of that which is "entirely other" (*das ganz Andere*) and thus incapable of being expressed directly through human language and other media. Otto conceives of the concept of the numinous as a derivative of the Latin *numen*, meaning "spirit."

In the space of congregation for Catholics as in the community's place of prayer, art evokes and glorifies "the transcendent mystery of God—the surpassing invisible beauty of truth and love visible in Christ." Therefore the "Church entrusts art with a mediating role, analogous, we might say, to the role of the priest or, perhaps even to that of Jacob's ladder descending and ascending. Art is meant to bring the divine to the human world, to the level of the senses, then, from the spiritual insight gained through the senses and the stirring of the emotions, to raise the human world to God, to his inexpressible kingdom of mystery, beauty, and life." (Pope Paul VI, Address to the Pontifical Commission for Sacred Art in Italy (December 17, 1969)

The work of designing sacred buildings leads its visitors to the experience of contemplation, to come face-to-face with the presence of the holy, embracing the eternal within the ephemeral. It is putting these people in a place where their concerns are viewed from the lens of eternity, creating an ambience for encounter with the divine, facilitating their full attention by focusing on the presence of the sublime. (Stroik, 2013)

The Beginning of the Protestant Reformation: Differences between Catholics & Protestants

Exactly five hundred years ago, dating back to 31 October 1517, the publication of Martin Luther’s Ninety Five Theses outlining the alleged abusive practices of the Catholic Church was considered the start of the schism that divided the Church in Germany and led to the founding of the Evangelical Church. However, recent initiatives started since 21 October 2016 with the theme of “500 Years of Reformation” are now geared towards the reconciling of differences between the Protestant and Catholic Churches, in a spirit of ecumenism, turning these into a common celebration of Christ with the Catholic Church. Nevertheless, differences still remain. To better understand the points where Catholics and Protestants differ, we can enumerate a few:

Table 1. Differences between Catholic and Protestant Beliefs

Theological Belief	Roman Catholic Church	Conservative Protestants
Attitude towards each other	The church considers Protestants to be Christians, but possessing only part of the truth. Catholic church means universal church under the leadership of the pope.	Some Protestants consider Catholics to be non-Christians. Protestant Christians have tens of thousands of different denominations around the world, considered equal to each other.
Authority within the church	Vested in the hierarchy of the church; primacy of the Pope as successor of Peter, the first head of the Church.	Free interpretation of the meaning of the Bible. Papal primacy is viewed as contradictory to some statements in the Bible.
Baptism, significance of	Sacrament which regenerates and justifies. Usually done in infancy; may be done later in life when the person joins the church.	Testimony of a prior regeneration after trusting Jesus as Lord and savior. Usually done later in life after person is "born again"
Bible, content	The church includes the original 73 books in the Bible as specified by the Councils of Hippo and Carthage late in the 4th century. Catholics regard the bible as a source of revelation, along with sacred tradition and Magisterium.	Some Anglicans include all 73 books. Other protestants delete the 7 books of the Apocrypha. Protestants regard the bible as the sole source of revelation (sola scriptura).
Church, structure & nature	Hierarchical, established through the sacrament of Holy Orders.	Usually democratic, except among some new religious movements (NRMs).
Clergy, selection of	Appointed; all male; almost all unmarried. Celibacy is obligatory for priests, as an imitation of the life of Christ, undivided in	Elected; mostly male; single or married. Protestants reject the obligation of celibacy for priests, Martin Luther himself demanded

	attention to His pastoral ministry.	this abolition as early as 1520.
Forgiveness of sin	Achieved through personal repentance to a priest, and -- in emergencies -- sometimes in a public communal ritual. In some Eastern Orthodox churches, it is done to one's spiritual advisor but only an ordained priest may give the absolution.	Normally achieved through prayer to God the Father or Jesus directly without any human intercessor. However, many Lutherans confess to their the pastor. Members of the Church of Latter Day Saints sometimes confess to their priesthood leader
Lord's Supper/ Eucharist	A sacrifice. Christ's body, blood, soul, and divinity are physically present and are consumed by believers.	Memorial meal. Christ's body and blood are present symbolically only.
Mary's status	Mary is regarded as the Mother of Christ, and as co-redemptrix with Jesus. Catholics believe in the dogma of the Immaculate Conception and her virgin birth.	The Virgin Mary plays a relatively minor role. Only trust in Jesus as Lord and Savior saves a person. Protestants deny the Marian dogmas since these are not substantiated in the bible.
Sacraments	The means of grace (there are seven: baptism, confirmation, penance, holy eucharist, holy orders, matrimony, anointing of the sick)	The symbols of grace (there are only two: baptism and the Lord's Supper)
Statues, venerating	Statues and images of Jesus, Mary and of individual saints are commonly found in Catholic sacred spaces and the persons they represent are venerated.	Many consider the mere presence of statues in sacred spaces to be a form of idolatry -- a violation of the prohibition in the second of the Ten Commandments.

Consequences of these Differences in Applications to the Liturgy

Of these differences, some of them have consequences for the liturgy, especially in their understanding of the Church, the Pope, Our Lady and the sacraments, given their bearing on the layout of the church floor plan, the appearance of the retablo --which tends to be iconoclastic: without images of saints, whether statues or paintings, but only the Cross (without Christ crucified). There are no confessionals nor special receptacles for holy water nor holy oils, no reliquaries, etc. The simplicity and austerity of the Protestant church partly stems from their rejection of sacred tradition and sacred art, the intercession of the saints and some sacraments, and their belief that religion is a personal relationship with God, just like penance is confessing directly to God, which obviates the mediation of a minister to absolve the penitent of his sins.

Catholic and Protestant Churches in a Setting of Religious Diversity

The Case of the United States

In the American religious landscape, cities display a scattered patterning of church buildings or affiliated structures such as shops that sell religious items, art and music (Zelinsky 2001). In recent years, various Protestant Christian congregations in the United States have been turning sacred spaces from usual church styles to megachurches (Kingsbury 2007). These spaces accommodate a multitude of congregants in an amphitheater-type structure, with the people on bleachers looking down at a large stage below, in the style of entertainment centers with live musical performances. To cater to their needs, some structures have constructed large kitchens, something which decades ago would have been unthinkable. In order to assess such a shift however, it is necessary not just to count the traditional contours of the freestanding churches, but also to take into account the possibility of non-traditional, multipurpose, and hybrid structures that incorporate religious functions. (Gomez and Gilles, 2014)

In most cases, religious groups utilizing spaces for worship and other activities entertain a certain degree of internal variation. Kevin Dougherty (2003) for instance argues that there is a certain degree of racial ethnic diversity in American Christian congregations, but Protestants tend to be more homogeneous as compared to their Roman Catholics counterparts. Philip Schwadel, John MacCarthy and Hart Nelson (2009) note that church services are increasingly attended by congregants whose socio-economic status vary, although their racial profile does not vary as much. There would thus be plenty of opportunities for social interaction across status boundaries, but fewer across racial lines.

The Case of the Philippines

In the Philippines, religious diversity and its expression through church design and location variability have unfolded in interesting ways. After the exclusive dominance of Roman Catholicism during the Spanish colonial period (1595--1898), the Philippines opened up to influences from various Protestant denominations during the transition to American colonialism. Methodists particularly supported the annexation efforts in order to push for Protestant Evangelism among Filipinos. Methodist ministers closely coordinated with the United Brethren, Baptists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Disciples of Christ and Mormons to realize this missionary impulse (Herbst 2005). In the contemporary period Christl Kessler and Jurgen Rüländ (2007) note how the rise of Evangelical and Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity worldwide occurred simultaneously with the “pentecostalization” of Philippine Protestantism and Catholicism (the latter through the Charismatic Renewal movement). This trend toward pentecostalization revolves around religious innovation grounded on literal belief in the Bible and aversion to Liberation Theology.

In response to these new religious movements, the Vatican issued in 1986 a statement acknowledging how sects and cults appear to be satisfying genuine religious desires especially among young people. Catholic parishes could offset this phenomenon by stepping up a more responsive and holistic community building and religious education without coming into conflict with the new religions (Saliba 1992). Various groups eventually commence building churches,

community centers, and other facilities also found in Roman Catholic communities, thus leading to the characteristic landscape that it is today.

Still within the Philippine context, there is an observable trend toward diversification in response to contemporary forces in the urban landscape. Mainstream Catholics who turn to charismatic Eucharistic celebration and other rites performed in nontraditional “church” spaces do so because practical or affective needs are being met in such spaces (Gomez and Gilles, 2013).

The Case of Metro Manila

This study records the spatial manifestations of the increasing plurality of religious groups in Metro Manila, which is home to an estimated 12 million (almost 10%) of the country’s population. Metro Manila thus possesses the largest mixture of various religious congregations. While Roman Catholic churches are ubiquitous here, they are co-located with Protestant churches and Mosques. This study is confined to data pertaining to Metro Manila. It is believed, however, that looking at other Philippine cities reveals only slight variations in terms of the physical concentration and urban landscape and design. It is focused on Makati City, the city of Manila and Quezon City; from the basic patterns perceived in these cities it extended the findings to other cities in the metropolis.

The analysis is qualitative in focus, its primary objective being the location of representative religious structures and juxtapositions of different religious structures in Metro Manila. Fieldwork was done in the city within a span of 6 months. Religious sites chosen in the course of fieldwork were assessed in terms of their architectural qualities and integration into its broader surroundings. Data were gathered through observations, pedestrian and windshield surveys, and key-informant interviews. This ambulatory method and on-site observation is rooted in the district assessment methods of the Chicago School of urban sociology, from which seminal literature on spatial arrangements of ethnic neighborhoods was derived. Key informant interviews were used to validate known reasons for the design and positioning of religious structures in particular sites; and to elicit the perceptions of civilian congregants or persons of authority regarding religious structures and spaces. Data were compiled to aid in crafting representative descriptions of religious landscapes, which includes the nature and size of sacred spaces; their buffer zones; and the land uses adjacent to them.

Religious spaces in the city (Daniels, 2008; Iannacone, 2003; Wilson, 2008; Henn, 2008; Kearns & Forrest, 2000)

Regardless of which city the religious site may be located in, all such sacred sites tend to share certain characteristics. As Levi & Kocher (2010) put it, sacred places may be defined as an experiential phenomenon, a behavior setting, and an aspect of place identity. These three definitions are not mutually exclusive; they are used together to understand why a place is considered sacred. Whether one focuses on the process or the setting itself, one cannot discount the importance of the design element, which often emphasizes order and harmony, strong vertical elements, and a clear delineation between the central sacred space and the outside. In regard to these elements, architecture plays a crucial role, in that is typically utilized as a means that is both separated and connected to its contexts. More precisely, the architecture of spaces for

religious purposes includes: a clear delimitation of place or a buffer zone, an articulate approach, entry and path sequence, the ordering of the place through geometry and proportion and the use of diverse representational and symbolic media, which is termed as iconography (Barrie, 2012).

The Church Building respects the culture of every time and place: Modernizing vs. reviving Traditional Church Architecture and Inculturation (McNamara, 2009; Rose, 2001; Stroik, 2012)

The issue of modernizing and keeping the church up to date, of *aggiornamento* as the term which best describes this view of church renewal, has had multiple consequences ranging from pastoral service to doctrinal-religious formation in the seminaries to physical layout and character of sacred places. This restlessness of catching up with the times had reached its peak at the advent of the Second Vatican Council of 1962, which attempted to address the relations between the Roman Catholic Church and the modern world, and which concluded with a series of recommendations for revising liturgical, theological and pastoral norms. The direction of Vatican Council II was to empower the local church authorities and the episcopal conferences to decide on matters within their territorial jurisdiction, hence the proliferation of solutions and the variety of applications. This was especially seen in the way churches were “modernized”, doing away with what some found to be non-essentials, stripping these sacred places of ornamentation and artistic style which as they claimed, belonged to the archives of the past centuries.

In the light of these reformations, several traditionalists have expressed their strong sentiments over this excessive simplification of churches. Michael Rose in his book “Ugly as Sin”, vehemently decries the new-style churches for being not just ugly but that they actually distort the Faith and lead Catholics away from Catholicism. In terms that non-technical people can understand, Rose shows that far more is at stake: modern churches actually violate the three natural laws of church architecture (*verticality, permanence, iconography*) and lead Catholics to worship, quite simply, a false god. Stroik, on the other hand, proposes a more subtle way of recovering a sense of the sacred in liturgy and architecture, discussing why it was lost in the twentieth century, and prepares us to expect the signs of hope for the future. Addressing himself to architects, artists, pastors, and all who see the urgent need for renewal, Stroik commences his work by re-emphasizing the nature and purpose of the church building. He then considers how the Classical Tradition can inform contemporary churches, analyzes the impact Modernist philosophy has had on architecture, and concludes by looking forward to renaissance and renewal. With his vast academic and practical experience that spans two decades, this Professor of Architecture tackles these questions and gives principles of design, myths of contemporary sacred architecture, orientation for priests, and theological insights from the last two Pontiffs prior to the current one, Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI. Attempting to find the middle ground between differing and sometimes conflicting theories of liturgical architecture, McNamara delves into the deep meanings of liturgical art and architecture in church design, and by association, the Sacred Liturgy itself, going back to the founts of tradition, to have a renewed outlook at its importance vs. the view that anything outdated loses its meaning.

Inculturation is the incarnation of the Christian message within particular cultures which have their own sense, artistic expressions, vocabulary and grammar, and conceptual frameworks. All ancient and modern evangelizing strategies in art and architecture are acts of inculturation to

enable church buildings to proclaim the creative and redemptive meaning of the Gospel in every time and place. This cultural diversity can be expressed in the various architectural styles, art forms, stained glass window, elaborate or simple decorations, sculpture or bas relief, and can be adapted to the style of art or architecture prevalent in that place, translated into the vernacular art, so that the people who have recourse to that sacred space can more easily relate with the images of paintings or sculpture presented.



Figure 5-7: Stages in the painting of retablo by Iwag Palattao from concept to final product

Case in point: In La Castellana Oratory in Bacolod, Southern Philippines, as suggested by the liturgical architect-designer, the painting used for the retablo depicted a Filipino Holy Family, with St. Joseph as a farmer, Our Lady as a woman dressed in local attire and the baby Jesus a typical Filipino child playing with the birds, bearing the image of Mt. Kanlaon at the background and the sugar fields as the tilling ground.

The Role of Religious Art

In the Christian community's place of prayer, art evokes and glorifies "the transcendent mystery of God—the surpassing invisible beauty of truth and love visible in Christ." Therefore the "Church entrusts art with a mediating role, analogous, we might say, to the role of the priest or, perhaps better, to that of Jacob's ladder descending and ascending. Art is meant to bring the divine to the human world, to the level of the senses, then, from the spiritual insight gained through the senses and the stirring of the emotions, to raise the human world to God, to his inexpressible kingdom of mystery, beauty, and life." (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*)

The central image of Christianity is the cross, calling to mind the passion, resurrection, and Christ's final coming in glory. Every work of Christian art or architecture shares in this image and embraces the ambiguities of suffering and death, healing and resurrection. Such art draws from the mystery of redemption a unique power to provoke and invite the world more deeply

into the mysteries of our faith. Likewise, Christian art is also a product of "spontaneous spiritual joy" that challenges believers to complete the reign of God for which they hope. Born from an ecstatic love of God, Christian beauty proclaims something new and original, manifesting itself as an echo of God's own creative act.

Components of True and Worthy Art: Beauty as manifestation of the “splendor of truth”

Philosophy, through its branch of metaphysics, deals with the transcendent properties of being which are unity, truth, goodness and beauty. Aesthetics is a branch of art that focuses on achieving beauty, order and harmony, thereby leading the beholder to experience an exhilarating feeling that uplifts and moves it to transcend what it merely sees in its environs, making it aware of a divine presence.

“Authentic art is integral to the Church at prayer because these objects and actions are “signs and symbols of the supernatural world” and expressions of the divine presence... Quality is perceived only by contemplation, by standing back from things and really trying to see them, trying to let them speak to the beholder. Quality is evident in the honesty and genuineness of the materials that are used, the nobility of the form embodied in them, the love and care that goes into the creation of a work of art, and the person. Quality art draws the beholder to the Creator, who stands behind the artist sharing his own creative power, for the “divine Artist passes on to the human artist a spark of his own surpassing wisdom.”(USCCB, Guidelines, 162-163).

It then proceeds to define the nature of art as a gift from God which is to be used to bring men back to Him. *Art that is used in worship must therefore evoke wonder at its beauty but lead beyond itself to the invisible God. Beautiful, compelling artworks draw the People of God into a deeper awareness of their lives and of their common goals as a Christian community as well as of their roles and responsibilities in the wider world. Art that fulfills these qualities is art worthy of the Christian assembly.*

Each and every detail of art and architecture has to be in order: from the paintings, images, furnishings, sculpture, vestments, musical instruments, windows, doors, everything has the potential to express the wholeness, harmony, integrity and radiance of eternal beauty. There has to be sufficient space around the altar and sanctuary for the priests and ministers to move about, the seating has to be comfortable and ergonomic to facilitate piety and focusing on the liturgical rites, the view should be unimpeded by columns (otherwise, screen monitors may be installed to allow for a view to the altar), kneelers with cushions or kneeling pads have to be provided to facilitate this movement of adoration, the seating arrangement should be such that it is an elegant array of the assembly while not giving the impression of a theater or arena. At the same time, care should be taken so that those in wheelchairs are given a proper space (preferably in front or at the sides of the aisles instead of the back where their view could be covered by people standing in front of them).

It is important that there be an integrated project delivery approach in the process of designing and building the church, such that all consultants up to the end users be properly asked for their inputs and recommendations, given the needs of the community. The architect as the prime professional plays an important role in creating a space that will encourage the active participation of the faithful as well as a fruitful liturgical celebration, artistically drawing

attention to the more essential elements, focal points of the design, from the tabernacle or monstrance to image of Christ on the Cross, to the altar, the ambo and the backdrop of the retablo. It would be best that the architect is at the same time a liturgical architect, who, aside from his/her professional credentials, possesses the knowledge, skills, formal liturgical education and artistic insights needed to engage in the parameters of liturgical design, taking into account the acoustics, appropriate lighting for each that brings out the best of each decorated space, circulation paths for processions, requisites for elements found in the sacristy, vestment cabinets and counters, sacrarium, among others.

Case Studies of Renovation Projects (before and after) and how the sacred spaces were enhanced

The Catholic Conference of Bishops in every country is tasked with setting the guidelines for the design, construction, operations and maintenance of churches and chapels, depending on the conditions, culture and a host of other factors. In the parishes, the parish pastoral councils assist the parish priest in the task of constructing or renovating the church, as the case may be. Caution is made for those tasked with renovating, that they should be mindful to preserve heritage features and know how to blend the modern elements being introduced with the prevalent style of the sacred building. Below are case studies of actual renovation projects carried out by the author in her capacity as a liturgical architect.

Our Lady of La Paz Church, Makati

This church needed renovation as it was literally an oven, not allowing for natural ventilation to flow, as the windows on both sides were blocked by concrete buildings. With the archdiocese of Maniila having donated 400sqm of land at the back of this church, we took advantage to demolish the existing concrete wall, replaced it with seven (7) panels that allowed for air to pass through, with windows placed diagonally so as to create positive wind pressure that would force in the wind to flow through the sanctuary. The result was remarkable in the sense that the priest as well as the parishioners felt the difference in ambient temperature: the coolness facilitated their attendance to the liturgical celebrations with ease and dignified participation.



Figure 8-9: Before and after photos of the Church of Our Lady of La Paz, Makati

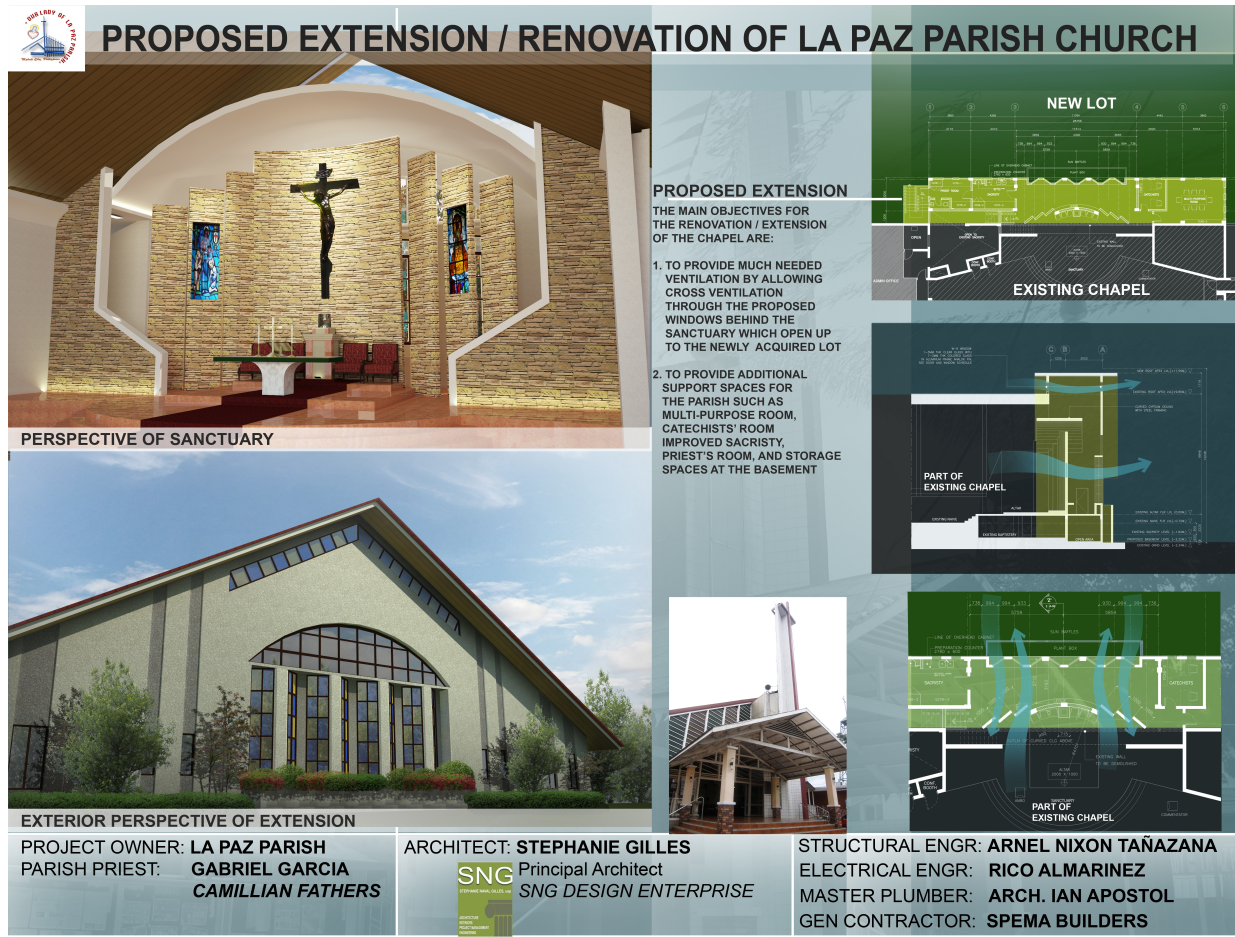


Figure 10: Renovation/ Extension Scheme of La Paz Church in Makati City, Philippines

In addition to these, a dropped ceiling made of gypsum board was installed as a cantilevered canopy, a modern baldequin right above the altar. It has 10 pinlights, which symbolize the 10 commandments. The stained glass panels of Our Lady and St. Camillus replace the paintings on the either side of the altar piece, while the image of the Paschal Lamb is represented under the altar.

Chapel of Our Mother of Perpetual Help, Bataan



Figures 11-14: Before and after renovation of Kapilya ng Inang Laging Saklolo in Bataan, Philippines

This was a small chapel that was entrusted to an agricultural community, donated by the family of the mayor and governor. The family decided to have it renovated. Only the columns and walls were retained, the ceiling and the roof had undergone transformations from a flat to a barrel vault ceiling, covelighted. The retablo was changed into a stained glass image of Our Mother of Perpetual Help. The windows were changed from jalousie to awning type colored glass windows which transformed the interiors competely. The townsfolk and the family appreciated so much this renovation work such that they decided to award plaques of appreciation to the design architect and to the contractor.

Heaven's Gate Memorial Gardens Chapel in Antipolo



Figures 15-16: Before and after renovation of Heaven's Gate Chapel in Antipolo City, Philippines

The Heaven's Gate Memorial Gardens Chapel in Antipolo City was an old structure that needed renovation and upgrading. From a flat ceiling it was transformed into a cross-vaulted cove-lit ceiling with colored panels for an optical illusion of depth. The windows were changed into stained glass, and the flooring was changed from tiles to marble slabs of 20mm thick. The owners appreciated the renovation work and, according to them, they had more clients using the newly renovated chapel.

Chapel of La Castellana, Bacolod



Figures 17-18: Before and after renovation of La Castellana house showing exterior

The project consisted in an adaptive re-use of an ancestral home that dates back to 1812. The complex was converted into a conference center with classrooms and a chapel. The space occupied by the new chapel at the ground floor used to be the storeroom, and during construction became the staging area for the materials (plywood, cement bags, etc.). Since it was an ancestral home and we wanted to preserve the antique look, we resorted to using machuca tiles for the flooring (thick baked ceramic tiles with imprinted designs that are custom-made).



Figures 19-20: Before (as a storeroom and staging area for materials) and after renovation of La Castellana

The Sanctuary in Heaven's Garden, Baguio

The Main Chapel in this memorial garden had to undergo a massive expansion due to recent development directions. The owners deemed it best to have the former existing chapel demolished to give way to a chapel with a much bigger seating capacity and in two levels. Here are photos of before (left) and after (right) the intervention work. The new structure is more modern as its arch serves both as the column (clad in natural stones) and as the beam. There is oneness with nature as the mountain view serves as the backdrop. The retablo is reminiscent of the hearth in most Baguio homes, the tabernacle niche being the source of light and warmth for the entire chapel.



Figures 21-22: Before one-storey chapel) and after renovation of The Sanctuary at Heaven's Garden, Baguio



Figures 23-26: Before and after renovation of The Sanctuary at Heaven's Garden

Guild of Liturgical Designers (GOLD) and the United Architects of the Philippines-Committee on Liturgical Architecture and Sacred Spaces (UAP-CLASS)

In Metro Manila, a group of architects, engineers, specialty contractors, priests and chaplains who are into liturgical projects, have initiated forming a group called the “Guild of Liturgical Designers” or GOLD, for short. It was launched last 8 September 2017, after the blessing of a huge chapel inside a mall, Mary Mother of Hope Chapel in Landmark Trinoma, that has a seating capacity of more than 2,000, comparable to that of the Manila Cathedral. Its aim is to come up with a special committee to unify the practice of church architects and designers of sacred spaces by aligning with the standards of liturgical architecture, live the liturgy in architecture and culture as expressed in spaces and the physical form, and to provide a platform for designers of sacred spaces to share experiences, bring up concerns, lobby for common causes and advocacies. This group was put up with the blessing of the local ordinary of Cubao, Bishop Honesto Ongtioco, and of Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle of the Archdiocese of Manila.

Among its objectives is that of: (1) coming up with a membership directory as a starting point for collaboration and networking of like-minded professionals, starting with designers of sacred spaces, followed by allied professionals like specialty contractors and installers for church and chapel projects, (2) to offer initial technical services (assessment of church structures and design for renovation, retrofitting, or new structures) in the form of design charettes, pro-bono (with per diem and travel allowances to be provided by client) for bishops, parish priests, private owners

of chapels, etc., (3) to offer capacity-building courses and seminars which entail producing modules, similar to those of the Paul VI Institute of Liturgy, the CBCP Committee on Church Heritage and Liturgical Spaces for interested professionals and allied service providers, and (4) to network with allied professionals and related entities involved in liturgical design, such as the Advocates of Heritage Preservation, Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), National Commission on Culture and the Arts (NCCA), etc.



Figure 27: The Core Group Members of the GOLD during the launch last 8 Setp 2017 together with some

In order to achieve these, the core group members should undergo training and formation in the basics of liturgical guidelines and sacred spaces, both for local training, such as courses in Paul VI Institute of Liturgy and CBCP and international workshops, conferences and design collaboration, such as that of the Pontifical University of Santa Croce (PUSC in Rome, Italy), University of Navarre (Pamplona, Spain) and Talleres de Arte Granda (Madrid, Spain) .

The long-term goal is to make the practice of Liturgical Architecture and design of Sacred Spaces a Highly Specialized field, to be recognized as Liturgical Architects, to make people aware of what is Liturgical Design and the Proper Way of doing it. Eventually, the guild could be inclusive and all-encompassing of other faiths, to form sub-committees from other religious architectures, e.g. mosques, temples, columbaries, memorial parks, etc.

Conclusion

It is noteworthy that in many parishes in the Philippines, the priests have the constant concern to maintain and upgrade their churches or chapels, especially those that are heritage structures endangered in terms of structural integrity due to disasters, e.g. earthquakes, storms, and other calamities. As custodians of the Church's sacred heritage, architects, artists, and clergy must be educated in the appreciation of sacred art and in its purposes within liturgy. The chaplains' or parish priests' leadership often will provide the initial inspiration to communities seeking to build new churches, to design new liturgical art, or to renovate existing worship spaces. The Second Vatican Council clearly states that "*Clerics are to be taught about the history and development of sacred art and about the sound principles on which the productions of its works must be grounded. In consequence they will be able to appreciate and preserve the Church's treasured monuments and be in a position to offer good advice to artists who are engaged in producing works of art.*" (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 129).

Corollary to this, it also states that: "All artists who, in view of their talents, desire to serve God's glory in holy Church, should ever bear in mind that they are engaged in a kind of sacred imitation of God the Creator and are concerned with works destined for use in Catholic worship and for the edification, devotion, and religious instruction of the faithful." (*ibid.*, 126)

This paper had sought to emphasize the importance of designing liturgical spaces in the spirit of bringing people towards contemplating the mysteries and discovering the divine and the sacred behind the living stones, moving up in its transcendence towards the Creator. In the light of the 500th year after the Protestant Reformation, it briefly tackled how Protestant worship spaces differ from Catholic Churches. It outlined the importance of work as a means of perfection and enhancing the value of sacred spaces, descending into the details of design and illustrating with case studies of actual renovation projects, comparing the quality of spaces before and after the intervention.

Lastly, it presented an emerging group of lay professionals in the Philippines, the Guild of Liturgical Designers, whose aim is to capacitate these professionals and uplift the standards of religious architecture in this country which has received the mission to be the vanguard of the Catholic Church in Asia, by preserving the requisites for maintaining the dimensions, symbols, the transcendent nature and approaches to a community's sacred ground.

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