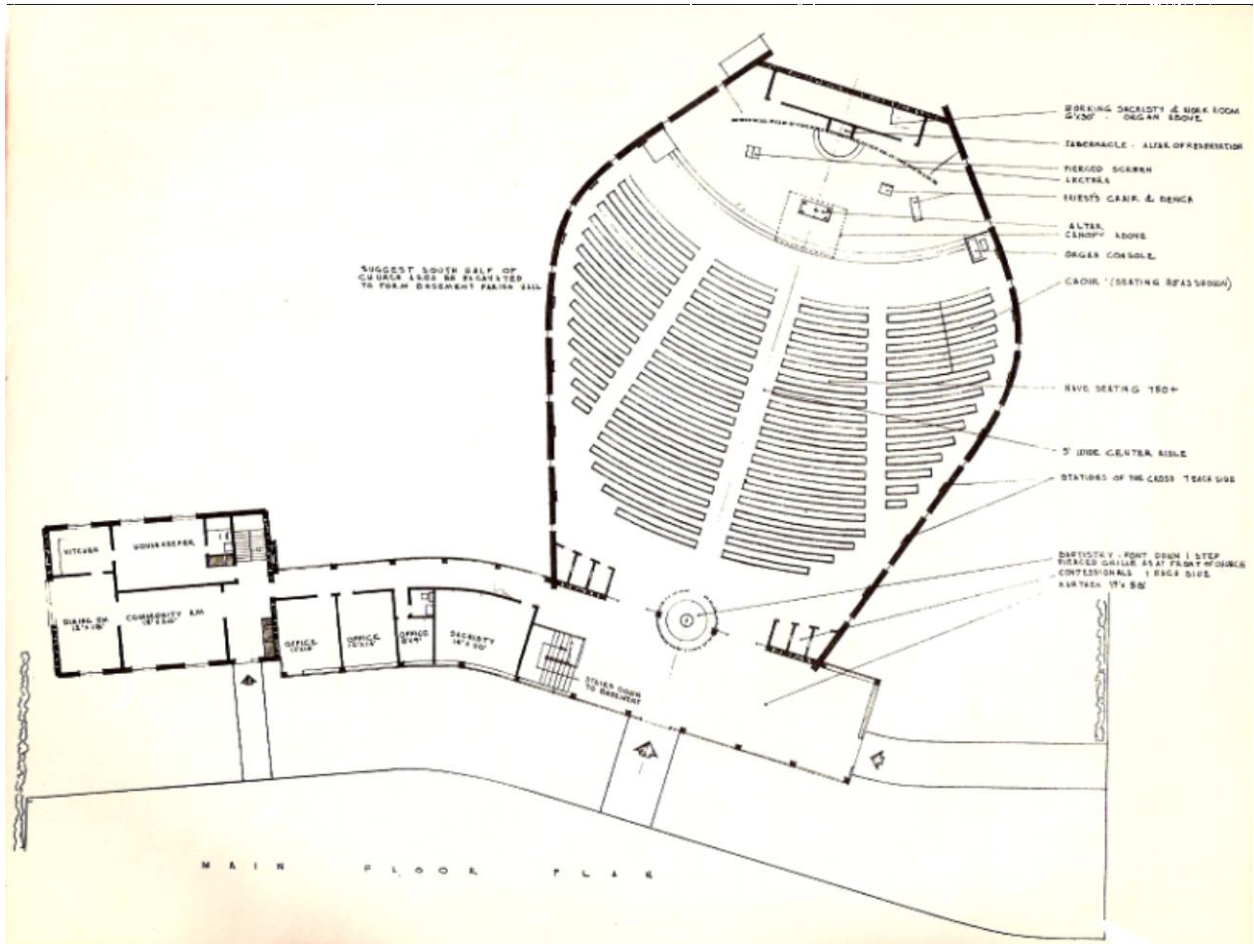


Notes On The Floor Plan

By Rev. J. McMaster, Parish Priest



ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH

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On Nov. 10, 1965 Mr. Philip Carter Johnson was commissioned as the architect for our new Parish Home, St. Andrew's Church. In this article I would like to explain some of the features of this edifice.

First a few words on the idea of a Church:

A Church is a sacred place, dedicated to divine worship. It may take, architecturally, many forms as long as it fulfills the requirements of the Sacred Liturgy. It should proclaim aloud by its very dignity, its form and beauty -- its inherent sanctity and sacred purpose.

A Catholic church is built primarily to house an altar, the church as it were, built around an altar, the altar of Sacrifice. Everything else is subordinate to the Altar of Sacrifice.

It should not only be a church, it should look like one. The visible edifice is itself a symbol of the supernatural organism, the Mystical Body of Christ, the People of God.

Mr. Johnson has achieved for us a tremendous effect in the monolithic lines of the church. It is as though the People of God called to church were cupped in two hands suggesting a forward motion to the altar, whereas the altar likewise expresses the notion of meeting the People of God halfway.

The spire on top of the church emphasizes exteriorly for the whole community the most important place in the church namely the Altar. During the day, the rays of natural light will accentuate the altar with resplendence. At night artificial light in the glass encased steeple will serve as a constant reminder of the exact location where the Christian people are renewed in body and spirit by God's Word and Sacrament.

The NARTHEX is an enclosed space, aptly described as the vestibule, in our church the area will be of glass and stone with colorful entrance doors expressing a warmth upon entry. One could describe this area as a forecourt in which we will prepare our souls to go joyfully, with our brothers, into the House of God, the Gateway to Heaven.

As we enter the church narthex we immediately notice the BAPTISTRY. The Baptistry was so placed to convey the message sometimes forgotten that through Baptism, we become members of Christ's Mystical Body. The church building is a symbol of the Mystical Body of Christ, His Church and just as we cannot join the People of God in the Sacrifice in the church proper unless passing by the Baptistry. Thus each time we go to offer the Sacrifice we have in the Baptismal Chapel, a constant reminder of our own Baptism and our dignity as Members of Christ.

The Holy Water Fonts will be affixed to the encircling grill work of the Baptistry, so that when we enter the church and sign ourselves with the cross of Christ in the name of the Trinity, we will be reminded to renew our baptismal vows and commitment to God made so many years before when we too shared in the Newness of Life in Holy Baptism.

The first part of the ceremonies of Baptism take place outside the church proper in the Narthex -- since only through Baptism we begin to belong to Christ's church... and for the second part we enter through the Ceremonial Door, used only for this purpose. Finally Baptism itself is administered in the Baptismal Chapel.

St. Paul tells us that in Baptism we are buried with Christ and to bring this out we lowered the floor of the Chapel a bit. After having risen to a new life with Christ, the person finally is entitled to join the people of God in its Act of Supreme Worship, and so he arises to lead his New Life and passes through another special door into the church proper.

Baptism is the sacrament of our faith in Christ, which incorporates us into the community of true believers, our death and resurrection in Christ, by which we are consecrated to the Trinity and enter as Sons into the Life of the Godhead; the sacrament which joins us to Christ the High Priest and gives us all a part in His Worship, truly Baptism is the beginning of a New Life and our transference to a new order of existence. Implicit in it is the programme for Christian living..... "And you too, must think of yourselves as dead to sin, and alive with a life that looks toward God, through Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6,11)

The Baptismal Font and the Altar of Sacrifice, both Symbols of Christ, are the two most important objects in the church. Altar and Font establish the central axis of the church around which everything else in the church is arranged.

The CONFESSIONALS flank the Baptistry and by their position show the relationship of the sacrament of Penance to Baptism and to the Eucharist. Penance restores the grace of Baptism to the soul when it has been lost through sin. Sin separates the Christian from Christ and from the members of Christ's Mystical Body. The location of the Confessionals suggests a place of reconciliation or preparation to rejoin the Eucharistic Assembly. The Confessionals will be completely soundproof.

The side walls of the church will make a natural background for the STATIONS OF THE CROSS, since narrow windows of European Cathedral Glass from the level of the floor and extending to the ceiling will separate the various panels. These windows will achieve flowing lines in keeping with the monolithic lines of the entire side wall structure. The side wall panels, each 12' x 24' and separated by 18" windows, will be covered on the exterior by a coat of off-white cement stucco, which should express the character of the whole structure for the entire community.

The floor of the NAVE slopes towards the front thus accentuating one's view of the sanctuary area. The pews will be strong and very simple in design. The seating will be so arranged that every person in the church will have a good view of the altar. There will be four preparation tables affixed to the rear pews where one will be able to put his altar bread into the ciborium as a prelude to the Offertory Procession.

The Sanctuary will be raised three steps. The simple ALTAR of natural stone directly beneath a canopy of light, will be the focal point of everything in the church. The lines of the canopy for symbolic reasons will not be rectangular as is usually the custom but rather will take the form of a triangle, expressing the Trinity.. Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

That Altar of Sacrifice being the very soul of the edifice, and the culminating spot in the entire church, all matters of proportion, design, furnishing and decorating should be subordinated to it. For this reason the soul of the worshipper is directed to the altar through eye and mind by means of the lines of the building and the position of the pews.

The ALTAR represents Christ, it is Christ the cornerstone of the Church, it has a meaning as a station from which God meets His People and from which the earth looks up to heaven. It is also the sacrificial banquet table of the People of God.

Since at the Consecration our Divine Lord becomes present upon the altar it is, even without the tabernacle, Christ's throne on earth. And since the altar is His throne, the faithful see in the altar the symbol of Christ Himself, because the throne symbolizes the person of the Ruler.

Clearly then the altar does not stand as a mere ornament of the church, but the church is the extension and the ornament of the altar. Liturgically speaking the altar should stand prominently as the center and the climax of interior architecture, in order to command the same centrality and importance in people's piety.

The fitting place for this Altar Sacrifice is in the middle of the Assembly of the People of God, because the Sacrifice is not offered just by Christ and the Priest, but by the Divine High Priest and all His People.

The CANDLESTICKS and CRUCIFIX (to be carried always in the processional and recessional) will stand on the floor leaving the altar uncluttered, making it a more striking symbol of Christ around which the Community assembles. The altar is the place of the Community Sacrifice, the Community Banquet Table, the center of the Community Liturgical action, which in the Mass effects the presence of the Eucharistic Christ.

There will be no Communion Rail to divide the Community of Worshippers, Holy Communion will be received standing at the two COMMUNION STATIONS to remind us how the Eucharist is truly the pledge of Eternal Life.

The PULPIT or AMBO, from which the scriptures are read and the word of God is preached, is also a symbol of Christ. This symbolism is conveyed by the pulpit's harmony with and relationship with the altar.

The Priest-Celebrant of the Mass acts as the representative of the Bishop. He presides over the Eucharistic Community and this is manifested by the location of the chairs. The celebrant's chair is replaced by a Bishop's Throne when the Bishop is present, and at all times this chair facing the assembly is a symbol reminding us of the teaching office of our Bishop Gerald Emmett Carter, chief shepherd of this parish and of this entire London Diocese.

The layout of the Sanctuary, the apportionment of its space, its dimensions in all its parts, are determined by the requirements of the liturgical ceremonies for weddings, funerals, confirmation, and the concelebration of the Eucharist by several priests at one and the same time.

The Choir will not be separated from the rest of the Worshipping Community, but rather be an integral part of the Community. The CONSOLE OF THE ORGAN will face in such a way that the organist will have a full view of the sanctuary as well as the nave and the front of the church where the processions will originate since the priests' sacristy will be directly off the narthex. We would like to install a Pipe Organ as the church is being constructed but this will have to receive careful study since the cost would run around \$12,000.00.

The location of the Tabernacle in the private atmosphere of mystery created by the grill work with two gates open to the whole church... has the advantage of making a more accurate distinction between the Community Action of the Mass which effects Christ's presence, and devotion to Christ already present in the tabernacle.

Our church will present a sculptured impression inside and out. Every line, every bit of space, every object in this church will portray clearly and directly its theological meaning and liturgical use. This church is designed to promote Community participation in as well as an

understanding of the liturgy. At the same time, the private devotion of the faithful and the spirit of contemplation will be fostered by the proper location of aids to devotion.

There will be no sheer ornamentation just for decorative purposes, no superficial display, to distort or distract from the fact that this church was designed with its primary function in mind as a shelter for the People of God gathered around an altar, so that all who worship therein may attain to full awareness of their own calling to co-operate with the clergy in teaching through evangelism and in the active works of the Apostolate which are to be described elsewhere in this publication.

Our Parish Home, Gateway to Heaven, will be a strong church, a sacred structure, that will convey a profound sense of the presence of God, and of the unity of the Christian people. This church will teach us and it will no doubt form and deepen our spiritual lives by its presence. It will be a powerful church that will speak of God and of Christ to the entire community. Our church will conform in every detail to the requirements of the renewed liturgy. The church as a whole and in all its parts is so sound and reasonable that we believe all will come very quickly to understand and appreciate it and that this church will enrich the spiritual lives of all of us.

The estimated cost of the church, without organ or other furnishings will be around \$320,000.00. Completely furnished, including a full basement which of necessity will be unfinished save for light and heat... the cost will approach \$380,000.00. At present we have some \$20,000.00 with some more to come by way of dowry payments. The rest of the monies will be borrowed. We will have twenty years to retire our loan... payments will be made every six months on the interest and principal. The men of St. Andrew's Finance Committee, do the thinking, planning and work to raise money to run the parish and to build this church. We already owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to the members of this committee for their careful analysis of the financial status of St. Andrew's Parish. We should give them our wholehearted co-operation. No doubt they will give thoughtful consideration to all suggestions offered to them in their field of endeavor.

Every parishioner should have a part in building our new church. The ideal parishioner will gladly share in this undertaking as each Sunday at the Community act of Worship, he acknowledges to God that all he has and is and ever shall receive is God's gift to him. Moreover in recognition of God's supreme dominion over him and in gratitude for God's goodness to him, the ideal parishioner will want to display his love for God and His works by returning at the Offertory of the Mass his acceptable sacrifice. Such a sacrifice will be a living indication of his faith in God and his desire to see that His works are accomplished here and now.

Some parishioners may wish to give special memorials. Special memorials should be over and above regular contributions. A suitable plaque, appropriately located in the narthex will record the major memorials according to the norms that will be established after consulting the various organizations in the framework of our Parish Council.

Soon when we come to mass in our temporary location and pass the site whereon at present there stands only a sign... we will see the progress in the building of our church. My dear people... I call upon you to make this church represent your faith, generosity and gratitude to God!

Site:- Gift of Mr. J.J. Fallon in memory of his dear departed wife, Mrs. Alice Fallon.
Sod Turning Ceremony:-

Monsignor A.P. Mahoney, D.P.V.G., Rector of St. Peter's Seminary officiated at the Blessing of the Church site and the turning of the sod on Sunday, May 8, 1966 at 3:00 p.m. It was most fitting that Monsignor Mahoney officiated since our parish received the name Andrew in recognition of the long and sterling service of this distinguished prelate.