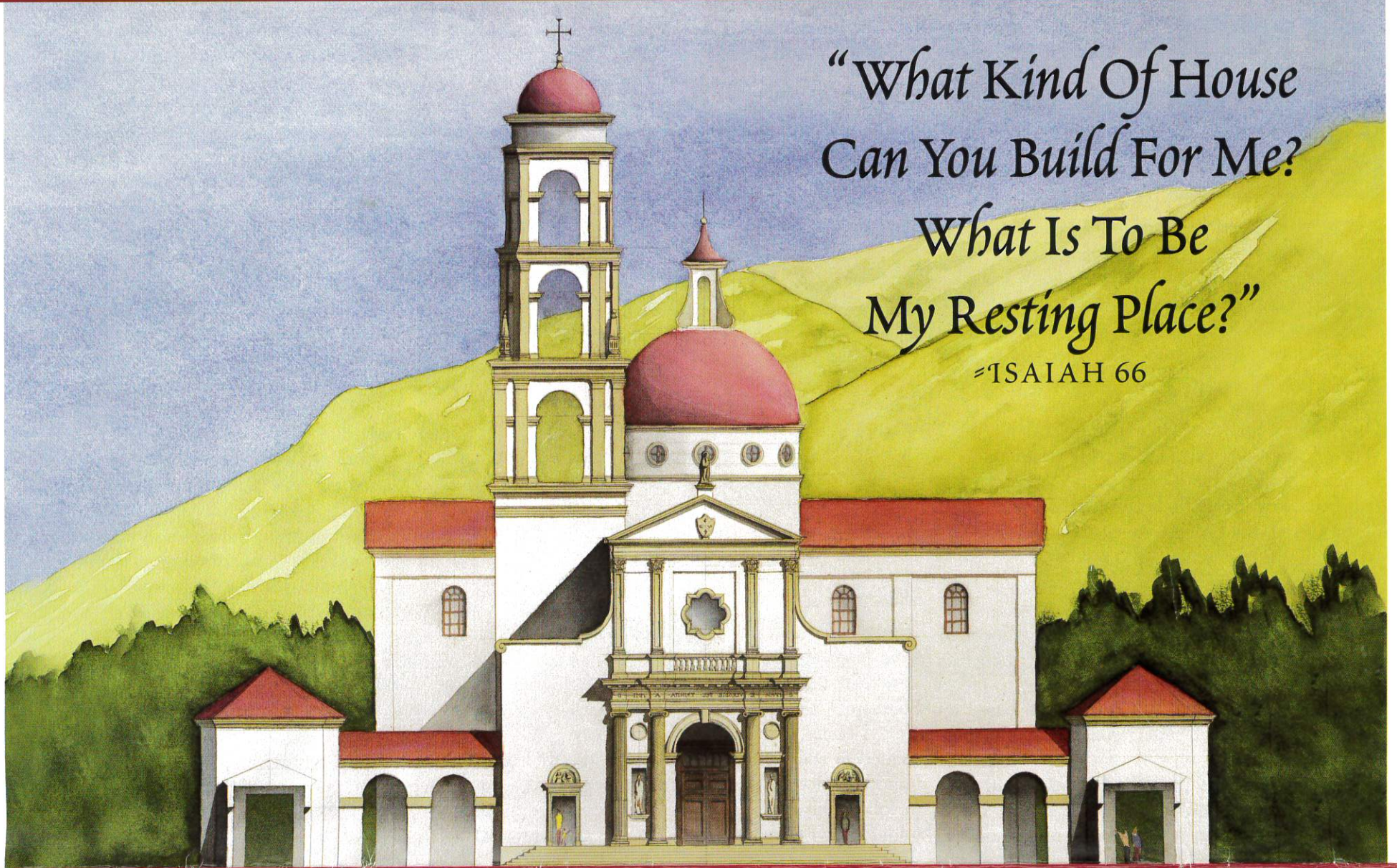




THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

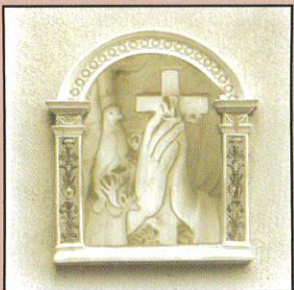
Special Edition



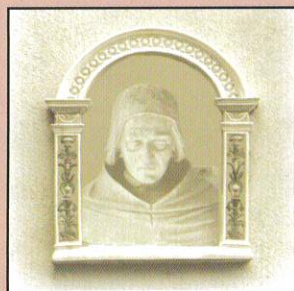
*“What Kind Of House
Can You Build For Me?
What Is To Be
My Resting Place?”*

—ISAIAH 66

Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel



*To Lift
the Soul*



*To Form
the Mind*

A treasure of beauty, grandeur, permanence, and tradition. A testimony of faith, vision, hope, and persistence. A center of worship, contemplation, and community life. A focus of academic pursuits. A synthesis of traditional Catholic architecture. A House of God. Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel – the crown jewel of our entire campus – is at hand.

In 1978, Thomas Aquinas College relocated from the leased grounds of a former novitiate and college seminary to a beautiful mountain meadow in a remote setting outside the town of Santa Paula. Fifteen major buildings were contemplated in the Campus Master Plan. The crown jewel of them all would be the Chapel – the architectural and symbolic focus of the whole campus.

*“How lovely is your dwelling place,
Lord, God of Hosts.” PSALM 84*

Nine buildings have now been completed and the burgeoning campus community has coped with a temporary chapel located in a section of St. Joseph Commons. At the same time, the College has grown from a little-known experiment in Catholic higher education to a major force in society and the Church.

In the fall of 2001, the College launched a 7-year, \$75 million Comprehensive Campaign to fully build the campus and to increase its financial aid endowment. Sir Daniel Donohue of The Dan Murphy Foundation ignited the campaign when he announced a \$10 million lead gift. That gift, along with other gifts and pledges, has put the College more than halfway to its goal and has given us the confidence to move forward with plans for the construction of a new chapel.

Through the pages of this special edition of our Newsletter, we invite you to share our excitement for these plans, which we hope will yield untold blessings for our entire College community for years to come – the *Chapel of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity* at Thomas Aquinas College.



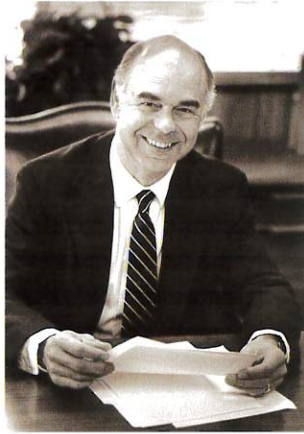
*To Move
the Heart*



*To Guide
the Spirit*

From the Desk of the President

What Kind of Church Would Blessed Junipero Serra Have Built?



For over two decades, our College has looked forward to building a chapel of its own. From the time we first planned the layout of our new campus, we have wanted a chapel that would indicate, both by its placement and its grandeur, that it is our most important

building. Just as our whole curriculum points, ultimately, to the study of God, so, too, our whole campus would point, architecturally, to our Chapel, our crown jewel.

We are now on the brink of seeing our hopes fulfilled. Through the following pages, we are pleased to display our plans for this magnificent new building, the Chapel of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity. I think you will share our delight in having retained Duncan Stroik as our Design Architect, not only because of his eye for beauty and his sense of the sacred, but because he understands so well the Catholic iconographic tradition.

His work is the fruit of a great deal of time and thought by a number of people who wanted to ensure that our Chapel would reflect four simple attributes: beauty, grandeur, permanence, and tradition. We also wanted our Chapel to reflect our curriculum – just as our program is based on “great books,” our Chapel would embody great architecture.

But we also knew that the Chapel would have to blend in with our other buildings, and reflect the modified mission-revival architectural style so prevalent in Southern California. I spent a good deal

of time looking at missions and other churches up and down California. I also visited a number of university chapels, as well as various landmark churches and cathedrals, not only throughout the United States, but in Rome and Tuscany. The hypothetical question I put to myself was, What kind of church would Fr. Junipero Serra build, had he a wider range of resources available? What was in his imagination that helped him form the missions?



Romanesque churches on Tuscan hillsides were among those that President Dillon looked to as models for our own hillside chapel.

As you will see in the following pages, we have been inspired by many different churches in answering this question – churches not only here in Southern California, but elsewhere throughout the United States, Mexico, Spain, and Italy. We also wanted to show our link to Rome. We thought it important not to invent our own symbolism, but to follow the centuries-old Catholic iconographical tradition and show our connection to the Universal Church.

I was particularly struck by the interior of two churches in Rome – St. Paul Outside the Walls and the earlier Santa Sabina. In both, the naves are flanked by columns which, in their placement, make arches that are somewhat narrower and taller than is usual. The effect of this, as one stands at the narthex and looks toward the altar, is to march the eye down to the altar, while at the same time lifting the imagination heavenward. Both churches convey the clear sense of the sacred and the transcendent that we wanted to reproduce in our own Chapel. Hence the proportions of our interior columns and arches are similarly drawn.

Naturally, this is an ambitious project. But the time is right for it. We are in the midst of a \$75 million fund-raising effort to build out the rest of our campus, to provide yearly scholarships, and to increase our scholarship endowment. We have commitments for about half of that goal over the long-term. But in the immediate future, we must build the Chapel, a women’s residence, and a faculty office building. The Chapel alone will cost \$13 million.

While we have already received some funds for the Chapel, we are now embarking on a drive to raise the rest of the funds for it. It will bring great joy to our community to finally complete a glorious chapel for the worship of God. This is by far the most important fund-raising drive in our history, and, as everyone knows, these are challenging economic times. Nevertheless, we are confident that our many generous benefactors will want to be a part of our history and help bring to life a chapel of all ages that will serve our community and the Church for a long, long time.

∞ ∞ ∞

Temporary Fix While It Lasted Current Chapel Inadequate for Campus Needs

“This is one of those problems you like to have.” Fr. Michael Perea, O. Praem., one of the College chaplains, well understands the need for a new chapel on campus. “We’ve simply run out of room for people to attend Mass here anymore.”

“And that’s with a schedule that allows for three Masses a day – 7 a.m., 11:30 a.m., and 5 p.m. Anything requiring campus-wide attendance in the Chapel is simply out of the question.”

For a school with under 400 students, faculty, and staff, many would regard it as a healthy sign that a temporary chapel with about 100 seats is hard-pressed to support the daily spiritual needs of the community, even with a frequent Mass schedule. But it’s a problem that crosses into other aspects of community life as well.

St. Joseph Commons, where students take their meals daily, was designed to accommodate the eventual maximum student body size of about 350. But since 1979 when the building was first built – and when a smaller student population was present – one-third of the dining area has been walled off to create space for a temporary chapel.

For much of the College’s history since then, the temporary chapel has served its purpose well. Simple

in design and humble in furnishings, the Chapel is the center of spiritual life on campus, not only for daily Masses, but also for Morning and Evening Prayer, Benediction and Eucharistic Adoration, nightly Rosary, and the venue for sundry processions and other community devotions.



Even with three Masses a day and an expanded lunch schedule, the temporary chapel fails to accommodate the spiritual needs of the College community.

But now, as the school approaches its maximum student body size (it currently enrolls 331 students), the pinch is felt not only in the Chapel, but in the truncated dining area, too. Indeed, serving hours for lunch have been moved up before noon to help ease the dining room crunch that occurs when the popular 11:30 a.m. Mass ends.

The main Mass on Sunday cannot hold the entire community, forcing students to seek secondary times and venues. Community-wide services, such as those during the Easter Triduum, are held in the main dining room, which is forced to be re-set altogether, at considerable wear, tear, and burden.

The new Chapel will eliminate these problems. But, perhaps more importantly, “the Chapel will be the dominant building on campus, a sign to all-comers that God is the most important thing in our community, our curriculum, and our lives,” said Fr. Michael.



Since 1979, when St. Joseph Commons was first built, about one-third of the dining area has been walled off to create space for a temporary chapel.

What’s In A Name? Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity

All of St. Thomas’ work – all of his natural philosophy, all of his theology – is aimed, ultimately, at understanding and revering the God-head, Three-in-One. Indeed, the doctrine of the Trinity is one of the final objects of study at the College.

In turn, “the Church has been justified in consistently proposing St. Thomas as a master of thought and a model of the right way to do theology,” as Pope John Paul II reminds us in his encyclical, *Fides et Ratio*.

Significantly, the Holy Father concludes *Fides et Ratio* (itself a fitting motto for our College) by invoking the life and example of the Blessed Virgin as a “true parable,” illuminating the relation between faith and reason. “For between the vocation of the Blessed Virgin and the vocation of true philosophy there is a deep harmony.”

It is therefore particularly fitting that the Chapel of Thomas Aquinas College be both Trinitarian and Marian. To honor Mary with the name “Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity” is to honor her as the perfect daughter, spouse, and mother.

A religious congregation founded under this title (the Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity) explains it succinctly: She is the perfect daughter of the Father through the redemptive Incarnation and passion of the Son; she is the spouse of the Holy Spirit through the will of the Father and continues to be the most perfect of all mystical spouses; she is the most perfect mother of the Word through the will of the Father and the work of the Holy Spirit; and she is also the most perfect creation of the Father through the Son.

The naming of our new Chapel involved the consultation of College founders, tutors, and leading benefactors. It represents the work of our patron and the mission of our school. With great joy and appropriateness, it will be named, *Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel*.

A Plan From The Beginning

Faith, Vision, Hope, Persistence



Shortly after Larry Barker donated the 131-acre Ferndale Ranch to Thomas Aquinas College in 1975, College administrators began to imagine how the new campus would look. According to the Campus Master Plan they developed, the campus would be modeled after the style of a small European village.

Just as villagers would dwell on surrounding hillsides and enter the town square for social and civic life, so here, students would dwell in halls rimming the upper and side perimeter of the campus and would enter the center quadrangle for academic and social life. Dining and recreation would occur on one corner, academic affairs in the other buildings around it – in a library and a science building, in mirroring classroom buildings, and in an auditorium opposite a faculty office building.



At the far end of the quadrangle, and as the focal point for the rest of the campus, would stand the College's most august building – the Chapel. As the most prominent building on campus, the Chapel would signify the ultimate goal of the College's academic and social life, namely, life in and with God. The Chapel would be the most majestic building on campus. It would be the largest and highest, the most prominently placed, and the most architecturally beautiful building on campus.

Today, this vision for the Chapel is about to become a reality. No other building on campus will rival the Chapel in appearance. St. Bernardine Library, while comparable in size, was designed intentionally with a modest façade. The two buildings that will sit adjacent to the Chapel – the faculty office building and the auditorium – will be slightly off-set from the quadrangle so that the Chapel will stand out from all other buildings.

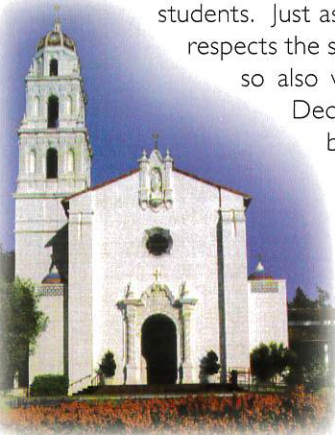


Beauty, Grandeur, Tradition, Permanence . . .

“This Truly is the House of God,”

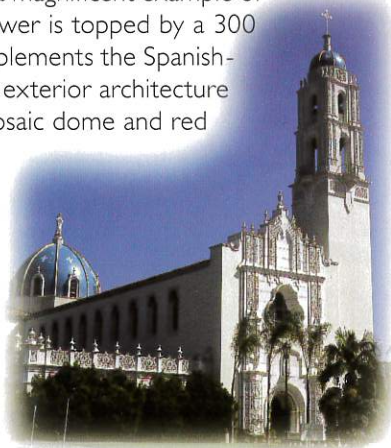
The Chapel at St. Mary's College in Moraga, CA, is a fitting inspiration for our own Chapel. Most of our College's founders hailed from St. Mary's, either as professors or students. Just as St. Mary's College was in many respects the springboard for our own College, so also will its Chapel be for our own.

(c) St. Mary's College, Moraga

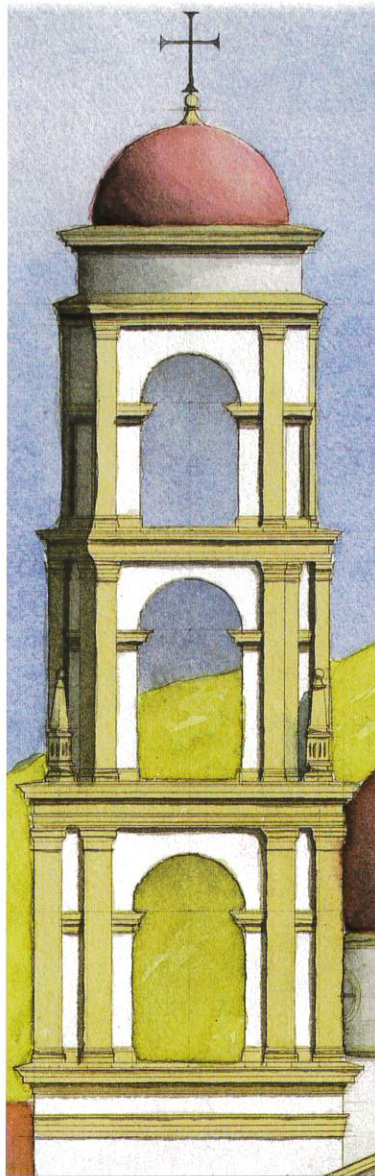


Dedicated in 1928, St. Mary's has a bell tower modeled after that of the Cathedral of Cuernavaca, just outside Mexico City. This type of bell tower—three-tiers, decreasing stages, changed volumes, open spaces—is the hallmark of many centuries-old Spanish and Mexican bell towers. Indeed, the bell tower of Cuernavaca Cathedral, which Cortez first commissioned in 1533, resembles even more ancient church towers in Spain, such as those at Santiago de Compostela, Santo Domingo de la Calzada, and Ecija.

Many churches in Southern California retain this distinctive bell tower style. The Immaculata Catholic Church at the University of San Diego, built in 1956, is a magnificent example of this style. Its 167-foot bell tower is topped by a 300 pound cross. The tower complements the Spanish-styling that is dominant in the exterior architecture of the church with its blue mosaic dome and red Cordova tile roof. The church was originally designed to serve as the main chapel of the University and of Immaculate Heart Seminary. Today, it is a separate parish encompassing Alcalá Park and the surrounding community.

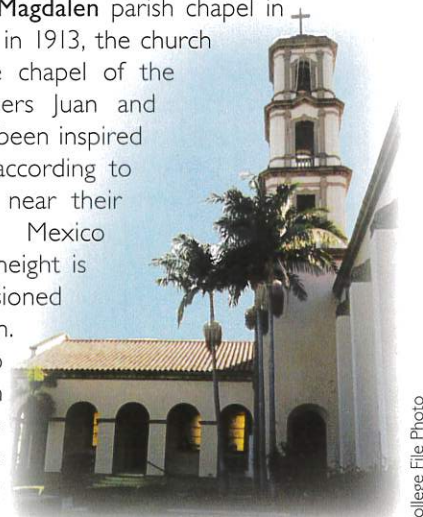


THE BELL TOWER

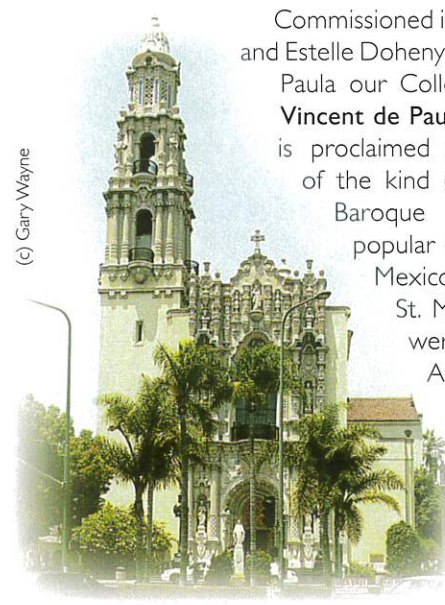


(c) Immaculata Church and University of San Diego

A more modest, but equally striking, example is the bell tower of St. Mary Magdalen parish chapel in nearby Camarillo. Built in 1913, the church was initially the private chapel of the Camarillo family. Brothers Juan and Adolpho Camarillo had been inspired to build and design it according to a mission style church near their father's birthplace in Mexico City. Its elegance and height is comparable to that envisioned in our bell tower design. In 1940, the Camarillo family gave the church to the Los Angeles Archdiocese, and it has been used as a parish church since then.



College File Photo



(c) Gary Wayne

Commissioned in 1923 by donors Edward and Estelle Doheny (on whose ranch in Santa Paula our College is now located), St. Vincent de Paul Church in Los Angeles is proclaimed as a stunning example of the kind of ornately detailed late Baroque architecture that was popular in 18th-century colonial Mexico. Both St. Vincent's and St. Mary Magdalen's churches were designed by architect Albert C. Martin, whose son, J. Edward Martin, helped produce the Campus Master Plan, and is a member emeritus of our Board of Governors.

Our Chapel will convey beauty, grandeur, majesty, and permanence. It will also convey tradition, not only because traditional church architecture reflects such fundamental attributes, but because the Chapel will reflect the connection of the College's classical program to tradition. Indeed, the very structure of the Chapel will exhibit various aspects of the faith as drawn from well-recognized symbols within the Roman Catholic tradition, such as a cruciform plan and a domed transept.

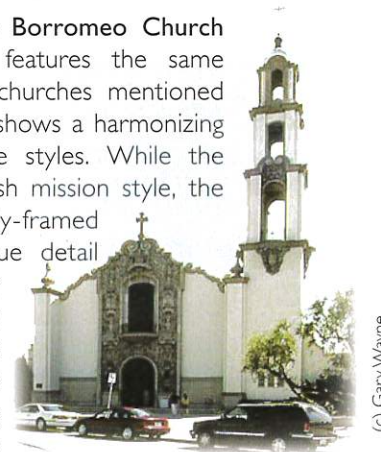
The arches of the arcade in front of the Chapel will be taller and grander than in the rest of the arcade and will be flanked by pavilions on the corners to mark the importance of that end of the quadrangle. This design will serve as a natural stopping point for the procession of the colonnade from east to west.

While the Master Plan did not detail the style of the Chapel, it did contemplate that the style would complement the other buildings on campus. Just as with the other buildings, the Chapel has been

THE FAÇADE



Built in 1959, St. Charles Borromeo Church in North Hollywood, CA, features the same tri-staged bell tower as the churches mentioned above. In addition, its façade shows a harmonizing of both Spanish and Baroque styles. While the church is predominantly Spanish mission style, the façade consists of a centrally-framed portico of ornate Baroque detail set against a plain Spanish mission style surface. Such contrast highlights the thematic elements of each style, while preserving their complementary relationship.

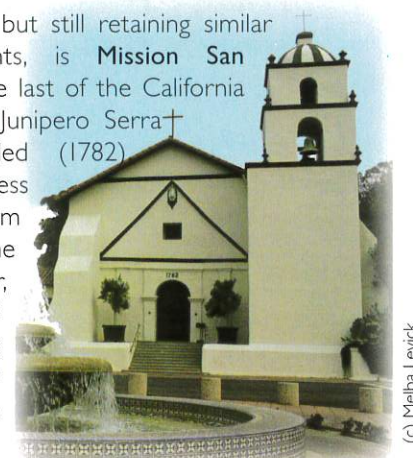


(c) Gary Wayne

The façade of our Chapel will introduce Roman elements that complement the Spanish mission style. This can be seen in the two tiers of tall, slender columns that grace the entry of the façade, which is capped by a triangular frame called a pediment.

Such blending of architectural styles is found even in some Spanish mission style churches. Indeed, a breathtaking blend of styles—Moorish, Baroque, Byzantine, and late Mexican Renaissance—is presented seamlessly in what is regarded as the finest example of mission architecture, Mission San Xavier del Bac near Tucson, AZ. The contrasting tones of the façade is one hallmark of that style and will be introduced in our Chapel as well.

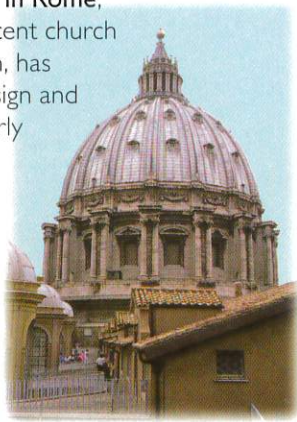
Less detailed, but still retaining similar thematic elements, is Mission San Buenaventura, the last of the California missions that Bl. Junipero Serra personally founded (1782) and located less than 20 miles from our campus. The side bell tower, the pediment, and red tiled roof are hallmarks of many of the California missions and will be hallmarks of our Chapel as well.



(c) Mielba Levick

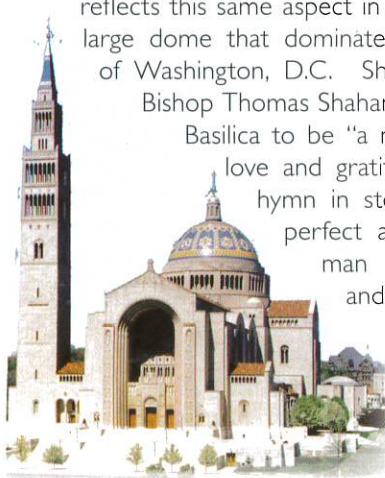
... A Chapel For All Ages and the Gate of Heaven." = GENESIS 28

St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, the most magnificent church in all of Christendom, has influenced dome design and construction for nearly 500 years. Its brick dome, 138 feet in diameter, rises 452 feet. This type of domed architecture was known as a "martyrium" and typically marked the place where a saint was buried, its domical form representing the cosmological symbol of Heaven. Built over the tomb of St. Peter, the dome has come to reflect not merely the martyrdom of the first pope, but the teaching authority of his successors as well.

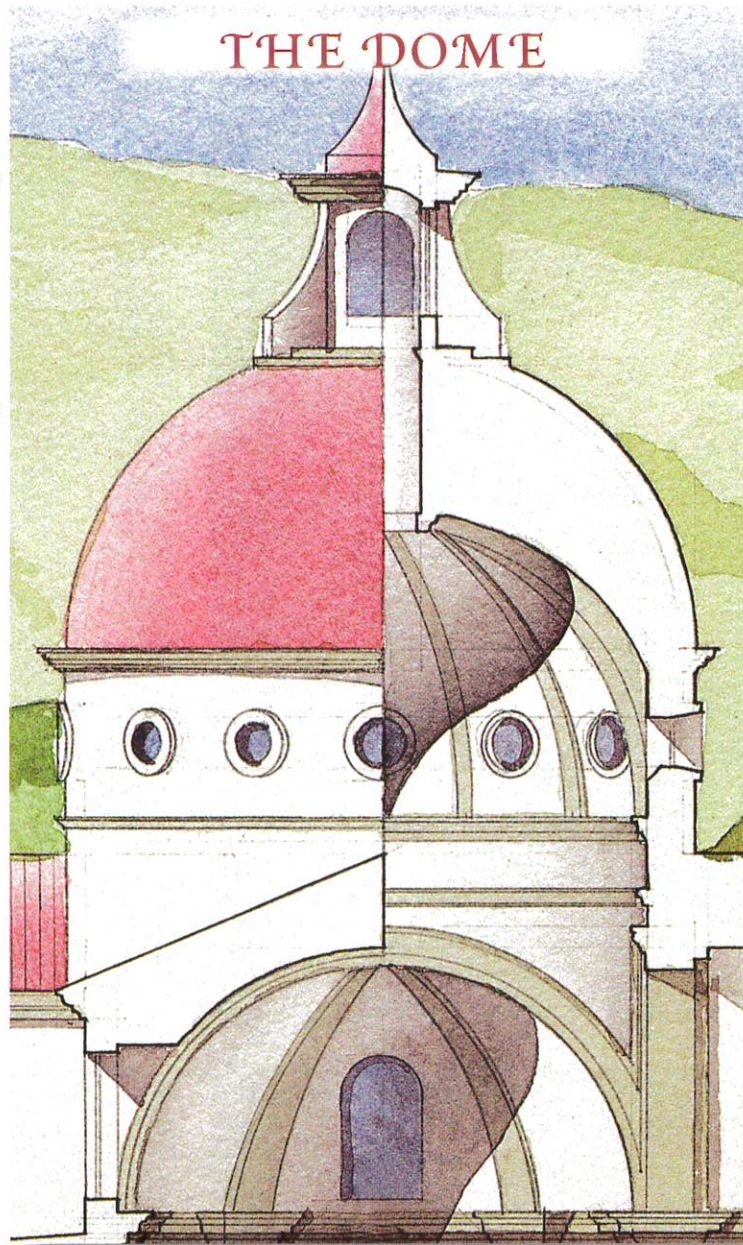


(c) Howard Davis / GreatBuildings.com

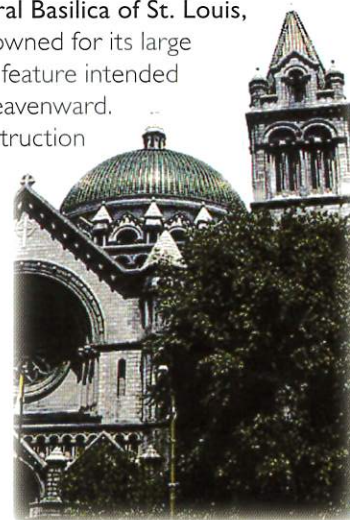
The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception (dedicated in 1959) reflects this same aspect in its distinctive large dome that dominates the skyline of Washington, D.C. Shrine founder, Bishop Thomas Shahan, wanted the Basilica to be "a monument of love and gratitude, a great hymn in stone . . . as perfect as the art of man can make it and as holy as the intentions of its builders could wish it to be."



(c) National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception

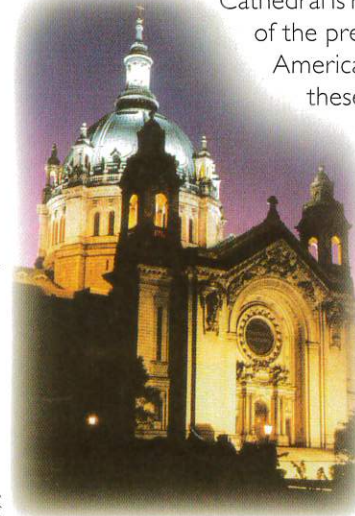


The Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis, MO, is also renowned for its large central dome, a feature intended to lift the eye heavenward. First under construction in 1907, the Cathedral offers a unique design that combines a Romanesque exterior with a wondrous interior in the Byzantine style.



(c) Jim Steinhart of www.PlanetWare.com

Under construction that same year was the Cathedral of St. Paul, MN, an astonishing example of classical renaissance architecture, featuring a massive central dome more than 300 feet high. The Cathedral is recognized as one of the premier churches in America. Drawing on these same themes, our own dome is intended to lift the eye heavenward, to testify to our love and gratitude, and to declare our allegiance to the authority of St. Peter and his successors.



(c) Jim Gallo / Cathedral of St. Paul, MN

designed according to the modified mission revival style of architecture commonly found throughout Southern California and the Southwest. But the Chapel will also reflect a style worthy of its primacy, prominence, and placement in the hierarchy of buildings and will convey beauty and grandeur.

To give the Chapel this primacy of architectural significance, our plan calls for a mix of Spanish and Roman elements – Spanish, to preserve the style of our other buildings and our California mission heritage,

and Roman, to signify our connection to the Universal Church.

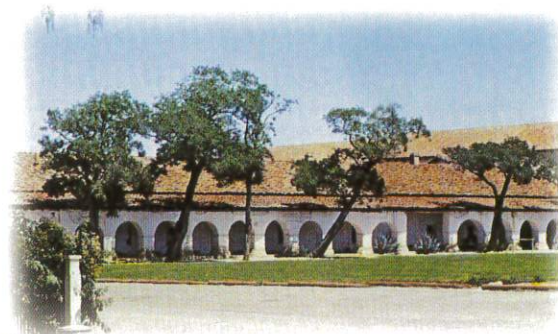
T*o preserve the Spanish element, the Chapel will draw from the many Spanish mission style churches found throughout the West. To preserve the Roman element, the Chapel will draw from the many exquisite Roman basilicas, whose beauty is foremost in the simplicity and elegance of their lines. Such basilicas are revered not because of their ornate decorations, but because of their intrinsic majesty and beauty.*

THE ARCADE

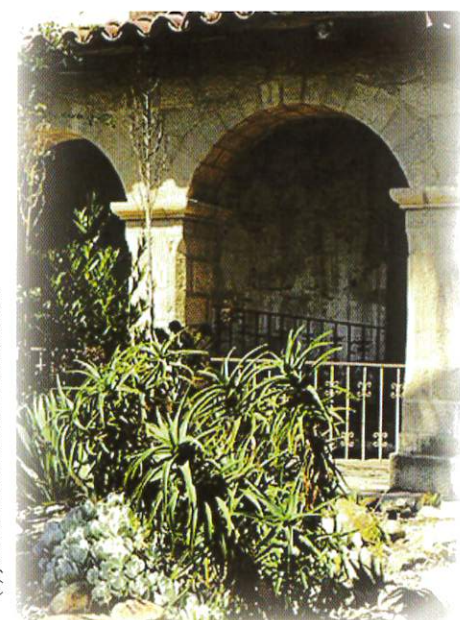
One of the hallmarks of Spanish mission design is the semi-circular arch that graces colonades. The arches, made of brick or stone are simple yet elegant, and are found in great variety not only in the American West and Southwest, but in Spain and Italy. Well-recognized representations of this style include (clockwise from right), the colonnade of arches at Mission San Juan Bautista, Mission San Juan Capistrano, Mission Santa Barbara, and the many church cloisters in Rome.



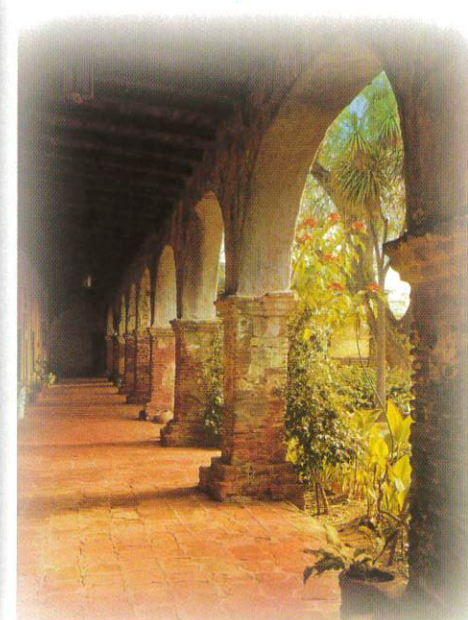
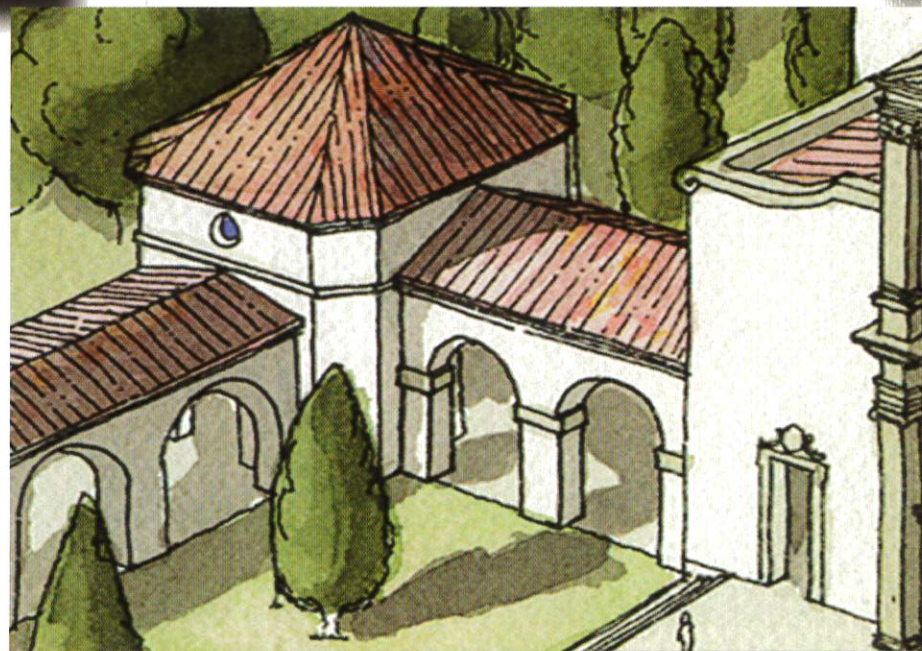
(c) Tripolitographia Trullo, Roma



(c) Hubert Lowman / Lowman Publishing Co.



(c) Jim Steinhart of www.PlanetWare.com



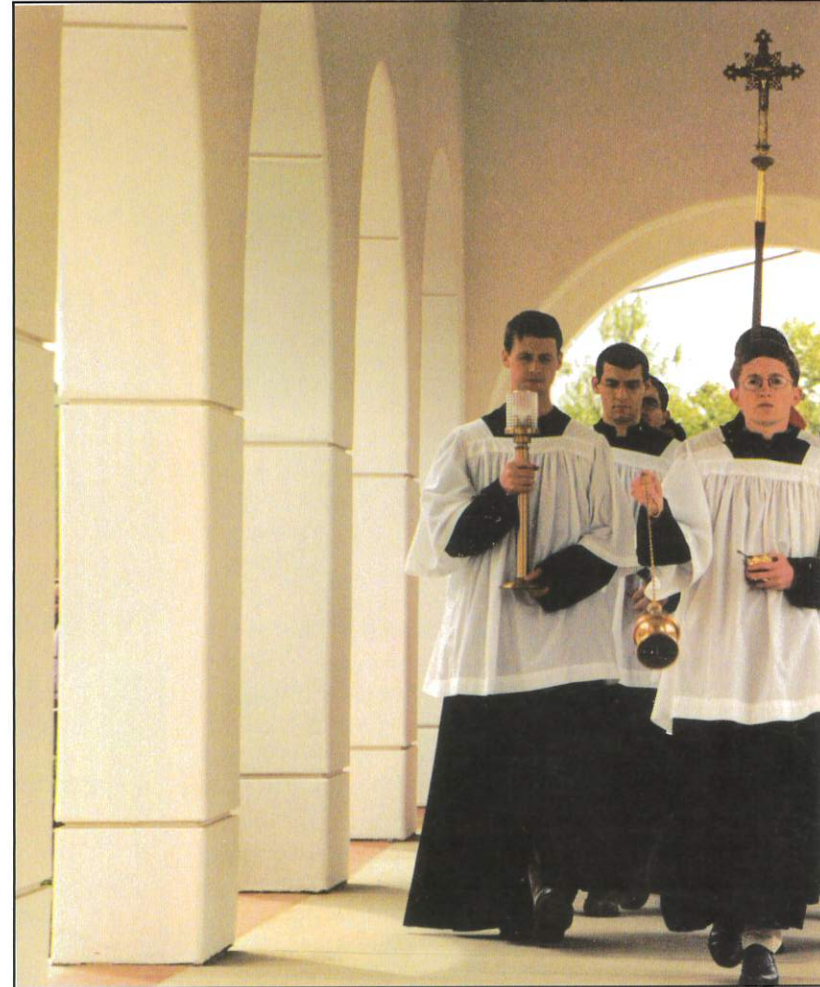
(c) Hubert Lowman / Lowman Publishing Co.

For Worship - For Contemplation -

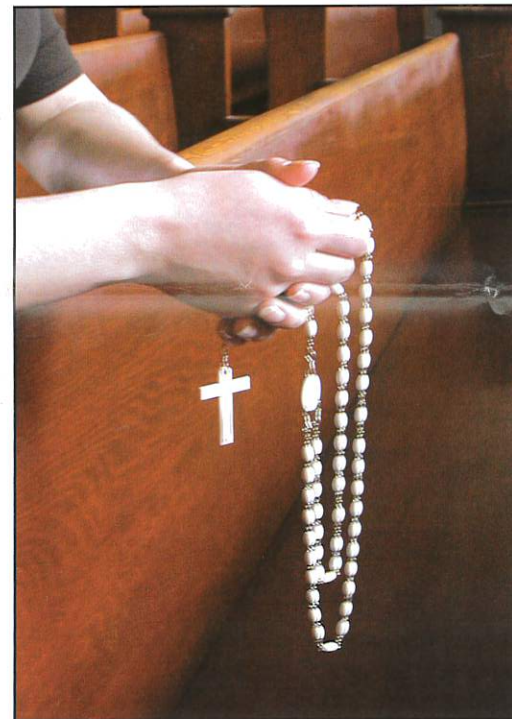
“Not to Us, O Lord, Not to Us, But to



Prayer is central to the academic undertaking at the College. All classes begin with a prayer to the Holy Spirit: “O God, who didst instruct the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant us in that same Spirit to be truly wise, and ever to rejoice in His consolation.”



Marian feast days are celebrated with flourish and often with a procession to the College Grotto. And every night at 9:15 p.m., students gather in the Chapel to recite the Rosary, a student-led tradition observed since the founding of the school. Legion of Mary chapters also have an active presence on campus.



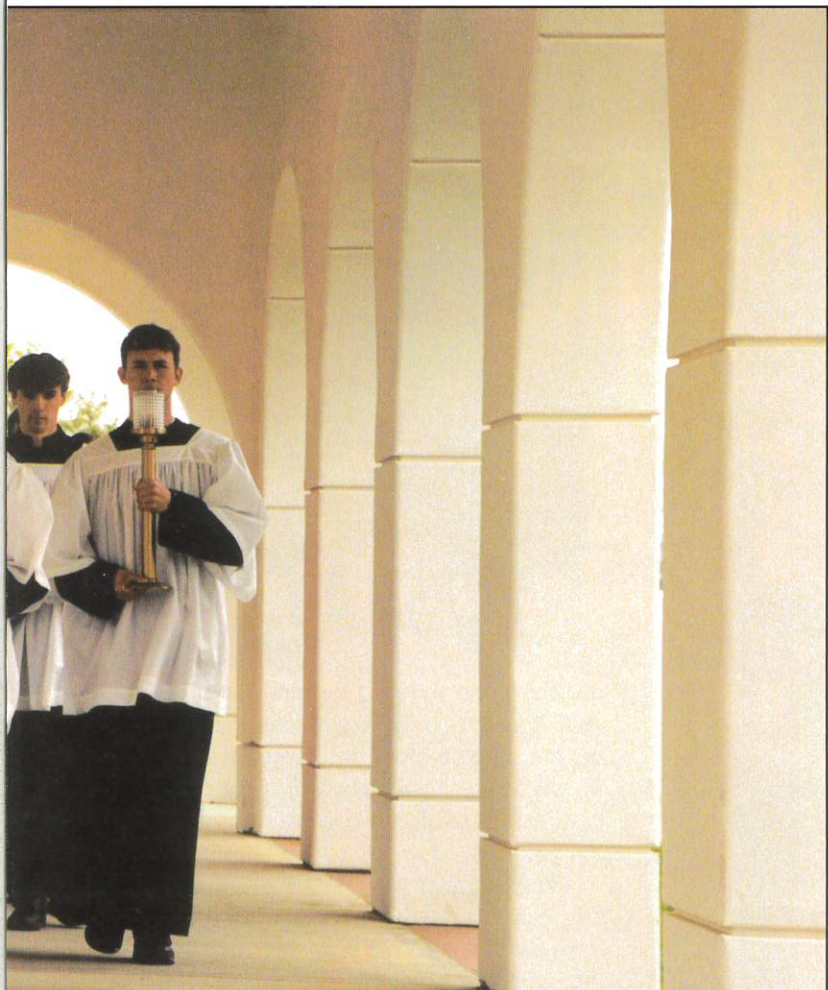
A sense of spirituality pervades campus life, extending even to athletic and other social activities. Dormitories are consecrated each night to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, grace is said before meals, and Catholic moral life is observed in the conduct of students.



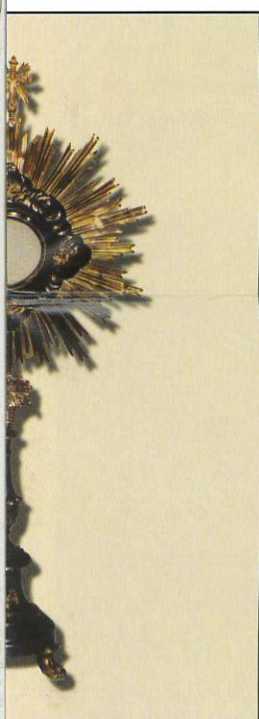
The new Chapel will be a welcome addition to the campus community, with an abundance of spiritual activities, including three daily Masses, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and the presence of Catholic chaplains. By the time they graduate, they are eager to put their faith into

For A Flourishing Catholic Community

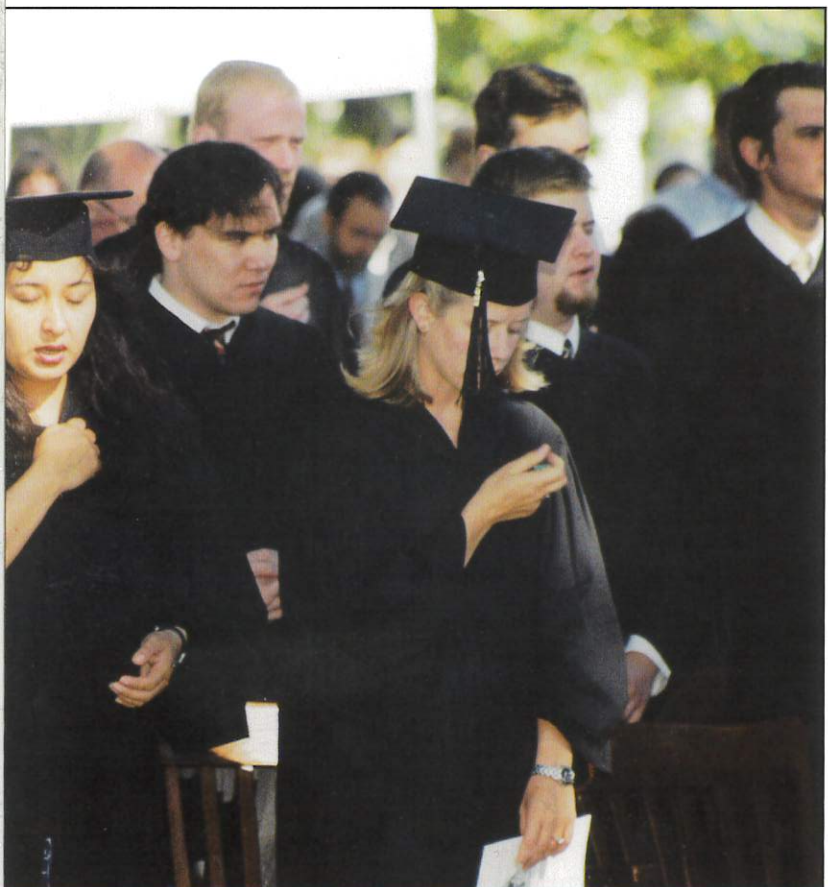
Your Name Give the Glory = PSALM 115



The College Choir is acclaimed for its Gregorian chant and polyphonic traditional Church music. The new Chapel will feature a choir loft and pipe organ to allow the Choir to continue singing for Sunday Masses and special liturgical events.



Outdoor Stations of the Cross, Morning and Evening Prayer, Advent and Lenten retreats, and other voluntary spiritual activities all help create an atmosphere in which faith can flourish. The new Chapel will provide a magnificent new venue for these and other spiritual activities.



Here a rich liturgical and prayer life is found. Students take advantage of an abundance of Masses, Eucharistic Adoration, and spiritual direction from our three College Chaplains, knowing that Christ is the true center of their lives.



About 12% of all alumni pursue vocations to the religious life, many becoming priests and nuns. More than 30 alumni priests have already been ordained in as many years; nearly as many women have taken final vows as nuns. Chaplains are readily available on campus for spiritual direction.

To Take The Imagination . . .

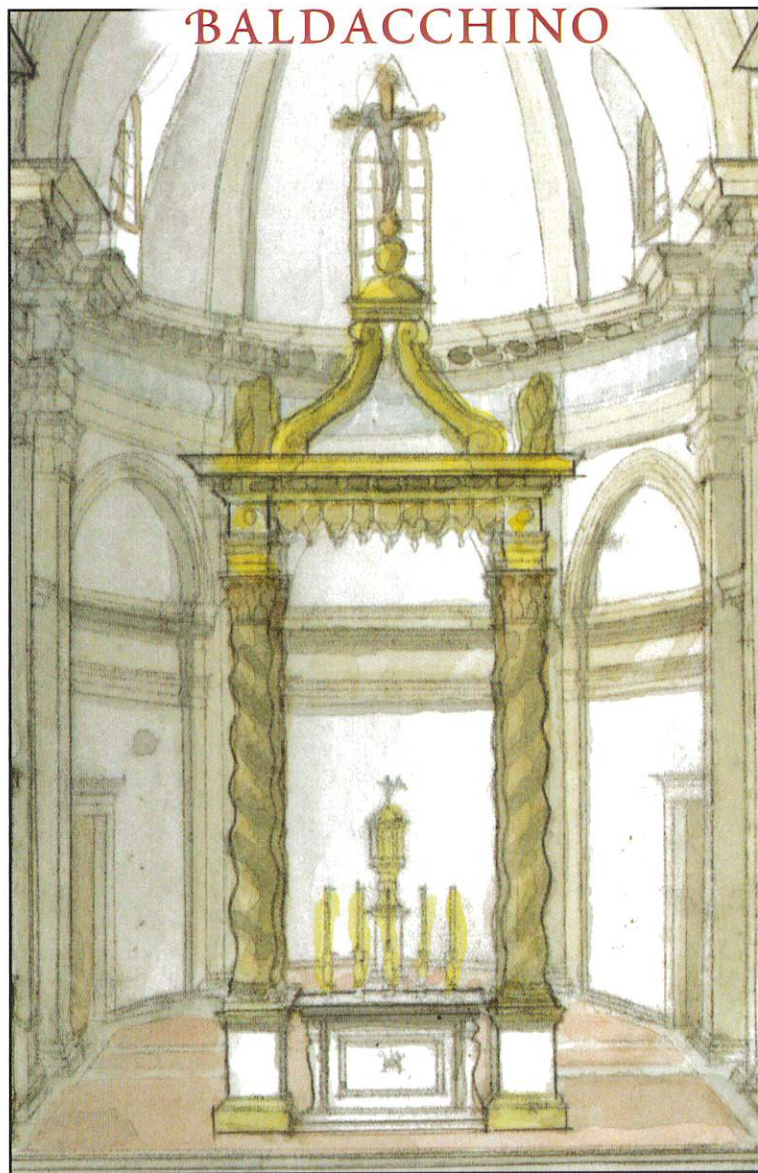
“Blessed Are You in the Temple of Your Holy Glory,

A baldacchino (pr. 'bal-da-key-no') is a dome-like canopy made of wood, stone, or metal, and erected over the free-standing altar of churches since antiquity. It is generally supported on four columns or sometimes suspended by chains from the roof. Its purpose is to enhance the sacredness and architectural setting of the altar. While the canopy itself heralds from early Christian times, the name is late medieval – from *Baldocco*, the Italian form of Baghdad, from which came the precious cloths that were used in later developments of such canopies.

The world's most magnificent baldacchino is in **St. Peter's Basilica in Rome**, the ten-year



(c) SCALA Istituto Fotografico Editoriale, S.p.A., Florence



BALDACCHINO



College file photo

project of the architect Bernini. Completed in 1633, the work is the largest known art work in bronze. Its nine-story high canopy is supported by four twisting columns, which are decorated by branches of olive and laurel spiraling toward the top.

Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Glendale, CA, has a baldacchino which is thought to be from **Santa Sabina's** in Rome and was given by the Pope to the Doheny family in the 1920s. Its marble pillars support an elevated frame which was used to accentuate the high altar.

Our own baldacchino will more resemble that of St. Peter's, and will feature four Solomonic columns to emphasize the significance to the altar underneath.

A dome is one of the distinctive marks of many churches in Rome. Our Chapel's dome will be the distinctive element marking the building as of a higher order than our other buildings. It will also be the most prominent, symbolic link to Rome.

The Chapel will be cruciform – the apse will represent the head of Christ and the nave will represent His body. The nave in this case will be relatively narrow, and yet dramatically high. This configuration emphasizes the prominence of the altar

and tabernacle and the transcendence of God; it also serves as an icon of the Christian journey toward Heaven – thus why we process in.

Two Roman churches are especially good models of this nave: St. Paul Outside the Walls and Santa Sabina. While St. Paul Outside the Walls is a large, ornate church, Santa Sabina is older and relatively simple. Yet, in both of these churches, the columns are placed relatively close to project a taller, narrower arch. Columns separate the nave from side aisles. The effect of tall, narrow arches,

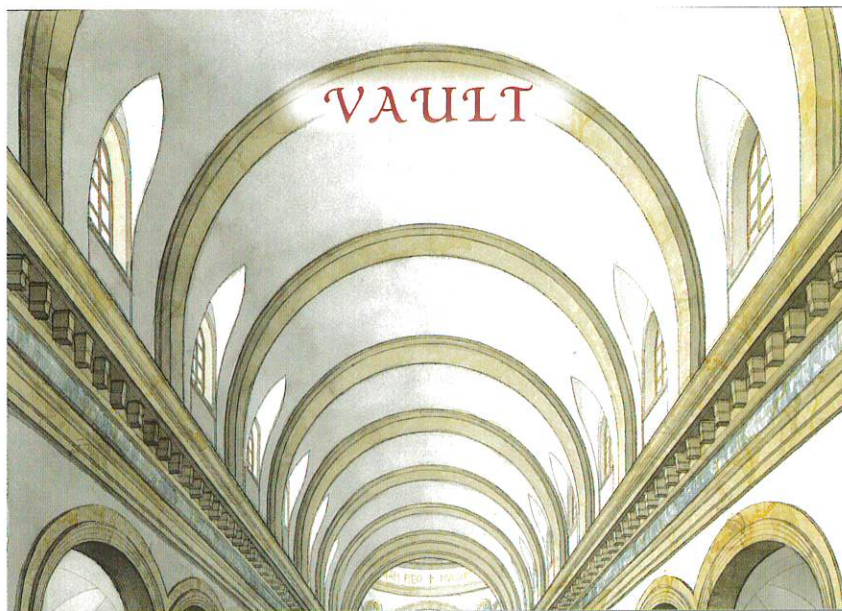
The Romans erected large buildings known as "basilicas" which they used for transacting business and conducting legal matters. The building was rectangular with a roofed hall, an interior colonnade, an apse (at one or both ends), and a wide central aisle with flanking aisles that allowed light to penetrate through clerestory windows. In the

50-foot-high vault runs the length of the nave and transept areas and then ascends 105 feet into the sanctuary dome.

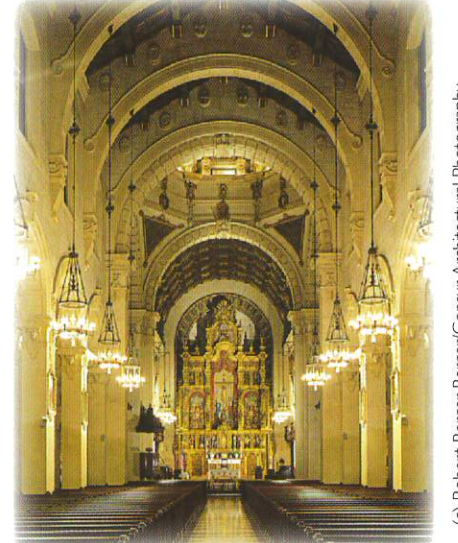
St. Vincent De Paul Church in Los Angeles is another magnificent example of a church that retains the classic elements of basilica design while incorporating both Spanish



(c) Immaculata Church and University of San Diego



VAULT



(c) Robert Berger, Berger/Consur Architectural Photography

fourth century, Christians began to build churches according to this same form. Such basilicas were built throughout Western Europe and in Greece, Syria, Egypt, and Palestine. Later, when Romanesque churches emerged, the same fundamental plan of the basilica was retained.

An exquisite blend of styles is found in the **Church of the Immaculata at the University of San Diego**. It's Spanish-style exterior is complemented by an interior that features elements of basilica design – interior colonnade, apse, wide, central aisle, with flanking aisles. Its large barrel-vaulted ceiling reflects the Romanesque style as well. The

and Baroque styles. Designed according to the late Baroque ecclesiastical style popular in 18th-century colonial Mexico, the church features a long interior nave that opens into a large sanctuary dome. The ceiling, which will share many similarities with the College Chapel's, is tall and features intermediate arches that act like ribs. These arches and the upper walls are supported by an arcade of tall pillars that divide the main nave from the side aisles. The church also bears another connection to the College – the Doheny family, who built St. Vincent's, built their summer home on the ranch that is now the College's campus; that home, the Doheny Hacienda, serves as the President's residence.

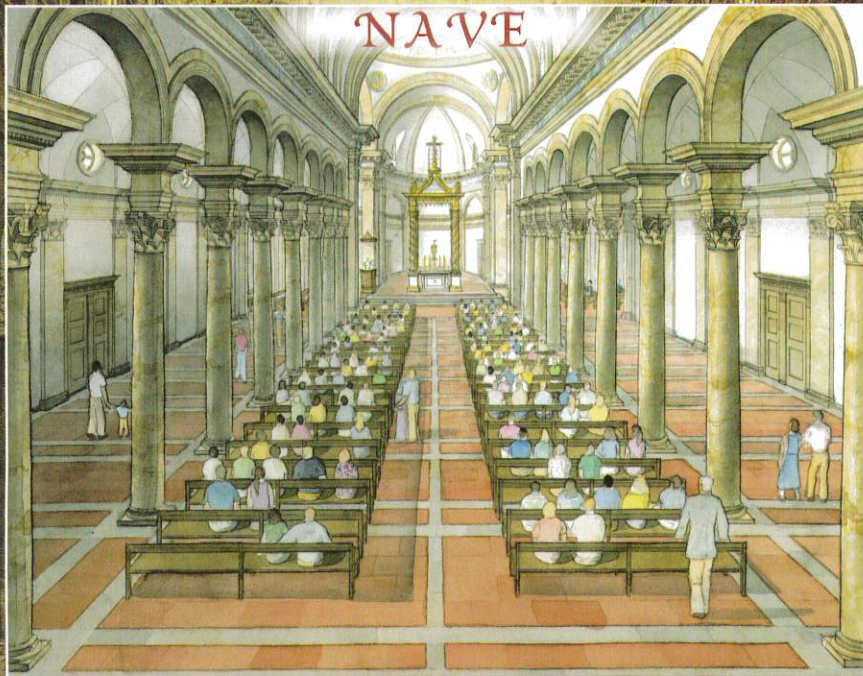
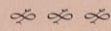
... And Lift It Heavenward

Praiseworthy and Glorious Above All Forever. ~ DANIEL 3

Two churches in particular are models for the interior nave of our Chapel – **St. Paul Outside the Walls** and the Church of Santa Sabina, both in Rome. Both churches are known for their high, narrow, interior columns that flank the nave, creating high, narrow arches. The effect is to give prominence to the altar when viewed from the vestibule. The design of the church, in other words, emphasizes the altar, where the sacrifice of the Mass is offered.

St. Paul Outside the Walls is, after St. Peter's, the largest church

in Rome. Constantine first erected the church on the spot indicated by tradition as the tomb of the Apostle Paul, and subsequent emperors sought to rebuild it with greater magnificence. Consecrated in 390, the new basilica was an imposing structure divided into a nave and four aisles, marked off by 80 colossal marble columns. A fire in 1823 almost completely destroyed the church, but later restoration efforts preserved its traditional design.



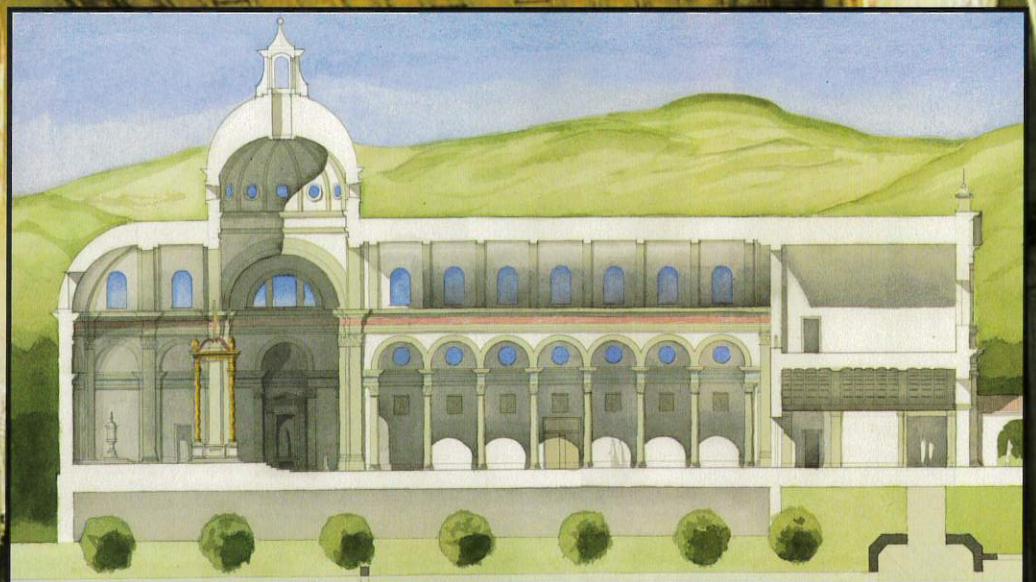
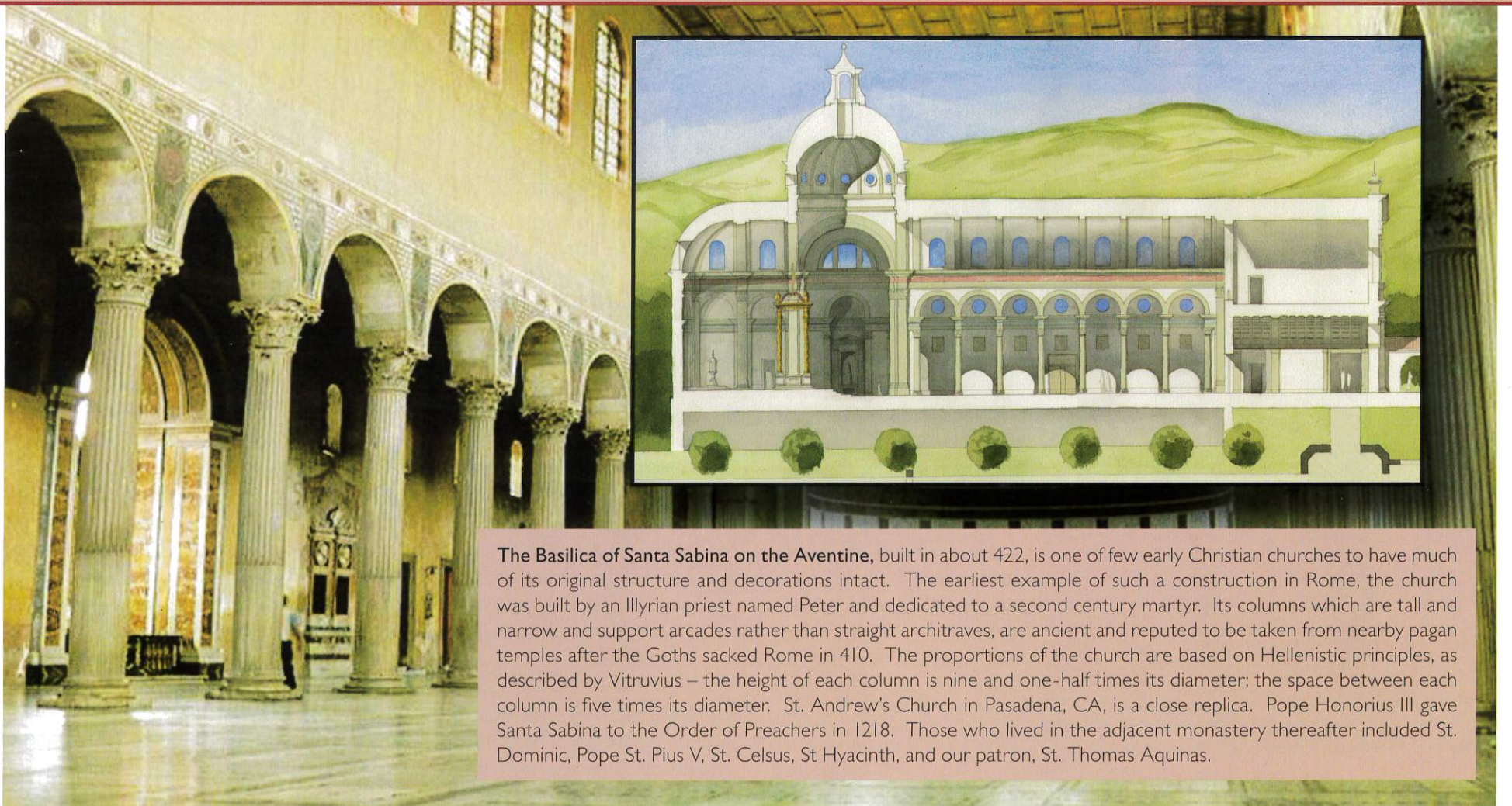
(c) Pontificia Amministrazione della Patriarcale Basilica di San Paolo

when viewed from the vestibule, is to take the eye from column to column and march it to the altar and to take the imagination and lift it heavenward.

To complement the arches and columns along the nave, the ceiling will be vaulted, not flat. The curvature of the vault will magnify the elevation of the nave and inspire thoughts of transcendence. And the curvature of the apse will allow the Chapel to rest gracefully on the hillside, as do many similar churches in Tuscany.

Pews in the nave and transept will seat 370. The generous side aisles, like many Roman churches, have no pews, but folding chairs can be brought in for special Masses to increase the seating to 700. A magnificent tabernacle will be located on the center axis at the back of the sanctuary; the altar will be distinguished with a beautiful baldacchino graced by Solomonic columns.

Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam.



The Basilica of Santa Sabina on the Aventine, built in about 422, is one of few early Christian churches to have much of its original structure and decorations intact. The earliest example of such a construction in Rome, the church was built by an Illyrian priest named Peter and dedicated to a second century martyr. Its columns which are tall and narrow and support arcades rather than straight architraves, are ancient and reputed to be taken from nearby pagan temples after the Goths sacked Rome in 410. The proportions of the church are based on Hellenistic principles, as described by Vitruvius – the height of each column is nine and one-half times its diameter; the space between each column is five times its diameter. St. Andrew's Church in Pasadena, CA, is a close replica. Pope Honorius III gave Santa Sabina to the Order of Preachers in 1218. Those who lived in the adjacent monastery thereafter included St. Dominic, Pope St. Pius V, St. Celsus, St Hyacinth, and our patron, St. Thomas Aquinas.

(c) Monica Mairs

Reflecting the Broad Tradition

Early Christian, Romanesque,

Duncan Stroik, Professor of Architecture at the University of Notre Dame and principal of Duncan G. Stroik Architect, LLC, a firm specializing in ecclesiastical design, was selected as the Design Architect for the Chapel project. Following is an interview with him by former College tutor, Ben Wiker.

A version of this interview appears in the February, 2003 issue of Catholic World Report.

Obviously, you've deviated from the normal trend in church architecture. Could you explain what you were trying to accomplish in designing Thomas Aquinas College's new Chapel?

The new Chapel will be an alternative to the novelty and shock value of contemporary architecture in the news today. Rather than designing it to have maximum shock value, which seems to be endemic in commercially-driven architecture, we have sought to design something for posterity. This is a chapel which will be built to last hundreds of years and designed not to go out of style.

Ultimately, we are designing something which should be "timeless" rather than merely of its time. Of course, a truly antique building is very new today, and if it is based on timeless principles and human proportions, it will be seen as "ever ancient, ever new."

A good building is like a ballet by Tchaikovsky, a sculpture by Rodin, or a painting by Raphael. It is never dated by time, always remaining current and allowing us to discover new things in it continuously. This is the principle of reading the Great Books over and over again. Some ideas, motifs, and sounds do not go out of style; they speak to all generations.

How does the design of the Chapel fit into the architectural theme of the College?

The Chapel is designed to fit in with the existing buildings and Master Plan of the campus, which is quite strong. The campus is made up of an arcaded quadrangle at one end, with dormitories, parking, and playing fields on the periphery. The architecture is Mediterranean in character with stucco walls, red tile roofs, and deep-set window and door openings, thanks to Rasmussen and Associates, the architectural firm in Ventura that designed the buildings.

The Chapel is appropriately sited at the head of the quadrangle, much like the library is the head of the lawn at the University of Virginia. The topography of the campus slopes down toward the Chapel so we have raised it up on a podium with a front terrace and steps appropriate for graduation ceremonies. The views of the Chapel and the location of the bell tower, or campanile, were studied from different points on the campus, including from the hills up above.

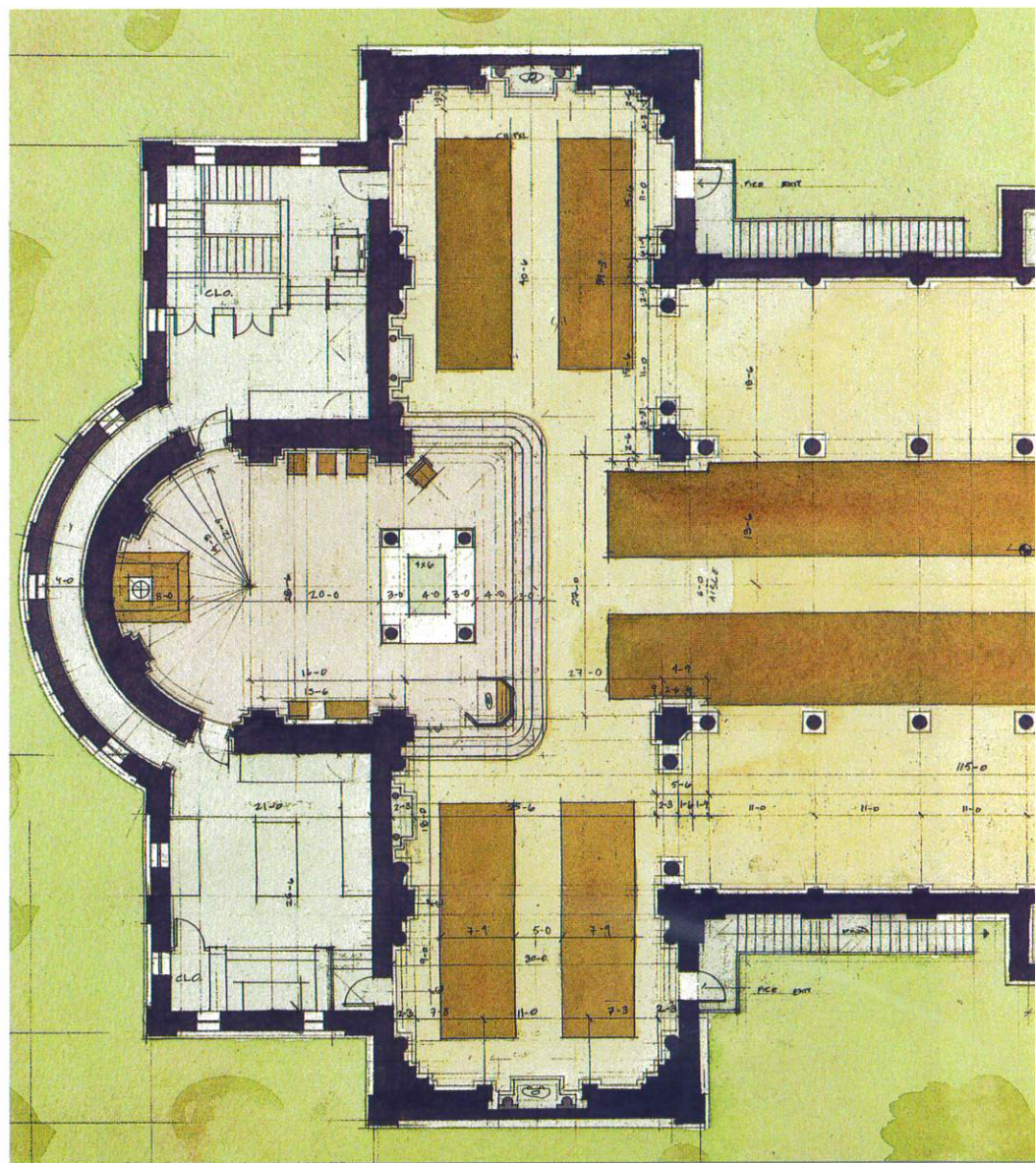
"Ultimately, we are designing something which should be 'timeless' rather than merely of its time . . . it will be seen as 'ever ancient, ever new.'"



One shrine in the new Chapel will be dedicated to St. Thomas Aquinas, the "Angelic Doctor."

The façade, tower, and dome were always conceived in relation to the hills beyond. They are vertical, soaring, and seem to grow out of the landscape like most traditional architecture. The new Chapel has a very deep porch, what would be an exo-narthex in Rome, which allows for a covered entrance and the possibility of walking to the Chapel under cover from the other buildings.

The positioning of the Chapel and the arcade have allowed us to create a series of terraced gardens next to the Chapel which will provide more intimate places for students to study or relax. With a new gateway and entrance road, the Chapel will be the first thing visitors see when they



come up to this academic "acropolis."

The Chapel of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity is conceived of as the completion of the campus, the focal point, similar in a way to the golden dome with the statue of the Virgin at Notre Dame.

How would you classify the design of the Chapel?

The design partakes of the broad tradition of Catholic architecture including Early Christian, Romanesque, Italian Renaissance, Spanish Baroque, and the churches of Southern California.

To what extent does the design manifest that tradition?

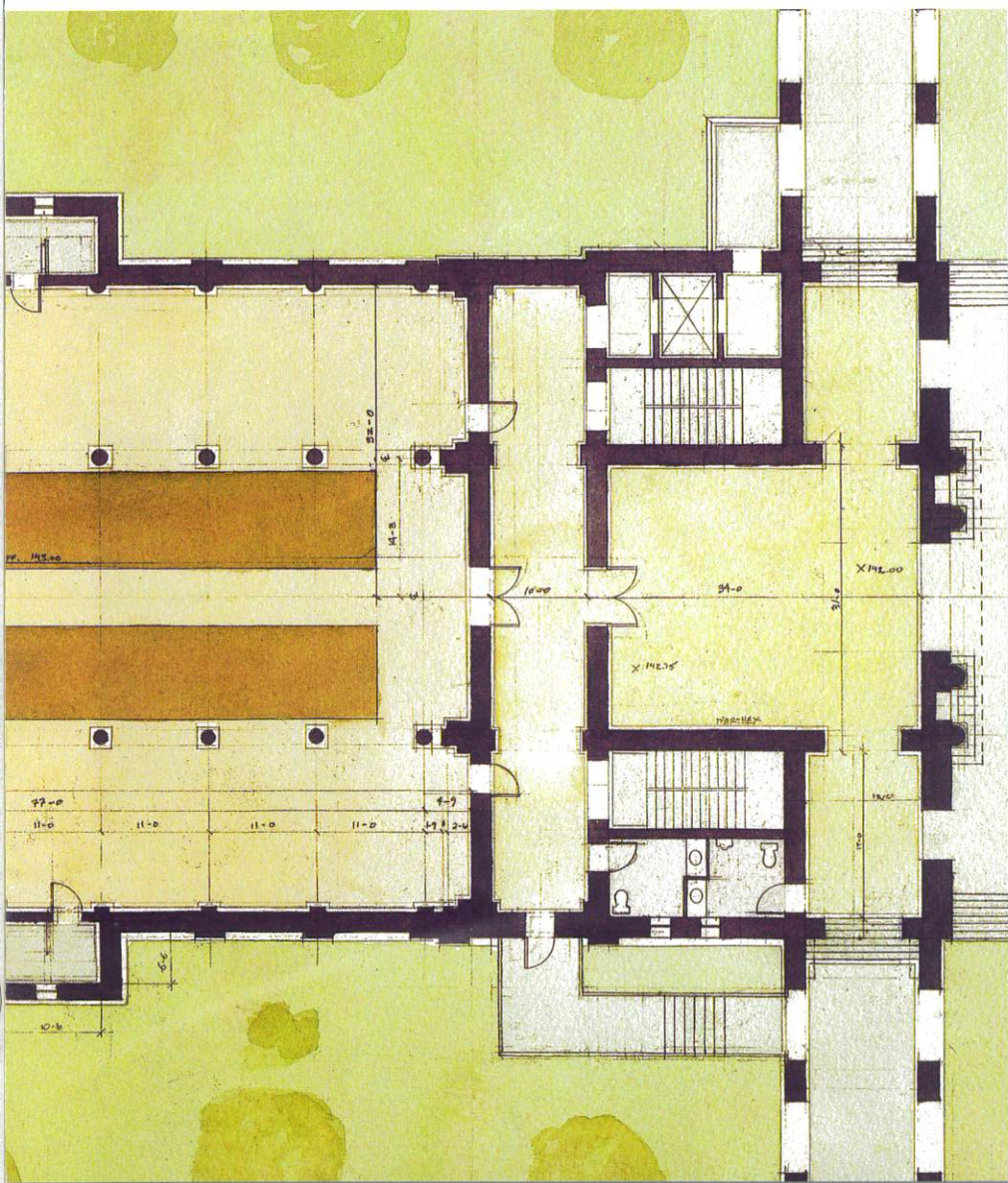
The Chapel design is based on the same philosophy as the College's Great Books curriculum. By studying the finest examples of church architecture from the last two millennia, we sought to understand both universal principles as well as specific architectonic and iconographic details. The Chapel is a twenty-first century classical building and will employ all the benefits of modern technology as they apply to structure, earthquake codes, sound systems, lighting and cooling. And much like our forbears five hundred years ago in the Italian Renaissance, we have sought to look both to the architecture of the city of Peter and Paul, as well as the architecture of our own backyard.

Specifically, the interior of the Chapel is part of the two-thousand-year tradition of the basilica type. We have modified the ancient basilica by adding transepts, dome, and campanile, and this causes us to look at a variety of later examples. Brunelleschi's churches built in Florence during the fifteenth century are very helpful in understanding how to modify the basilica form as well as in making the architectural syntax more sophisticated. It is said that Brunelleschi did for classical architecture what Dante did for the Italian language.

Later architects such as the theorist Leon Battista Alberti invented the church façade as a transformation of the triumphal arch, while Palladio and Michelangelo are the first to master the relation between large and small columnar orders. The dome and campanile have a wide and varied bloodline mainly in Tuscany and the Veneto, along with clear references to major buildings in Pasadena and downtown Los Angeles.

Of Roman Catholic Architecture

Italian Renaissance, Spanish Mission



In what way is it both in continuity with the best church architecture, but also carrying church architecture forward? Is the design based on the design of any existing chapels in Europe or America?

One of the wonderful things about working in the classical tradition is that one finds commonalities between twentieth century American architecture, seventeenth century Spanish and Mexican architecture, and fifteenth and sixteenth century Italian architecture. We have looked at all of these time periods and innumerable masterpieces, always trying to find better and more expressive solutions, and details which are appropriate for a chapel at the College.

‘The classical impulse is interested in both tradition and innovation, and so this Chapel will be part of an evolutionary tradition.’

The classical impulse is interested in both tradition as well as innovation in architecture, and so this Chapel in its own way seeks to be part of an evolutionary, as distinct from a revolutionary, tradition. Today we are in a modern day Renaissance and are coming out of a modernist “dark ages.” Thus, this Chapel should be seen as a bold answer to the modernist project. Following T.S. Eliot, I believe that a work of art which embodies the Western tradition will not only be changed by the past but itself will help us see the past in a new way.

Where did you look for inspiration in the School’s “own backyard?”

Just as we were interested in looking at the best from the classical tradition, we also spent a lot of time researching the architecture of Southern California where appropriate models for the Chapel seemed to be and to which the faculty were personally drawn. We visited and measured many of the churches of the Los Angeles region, such as St. Vincent de Paul, St. Andrew’s in Pasadena, St. Mary Magdalen in Camarillo, the Immaculata in San Diego, as well as a number of the missions. We also looked at modern churches, such as the new church of San Juan Capistrano done by Neuerberg, the same person responsible for the original Getty museum. Through all of this study, the faculty committee, and in particular President Tom Dillon, has been intimately involved, and this has allowed the project to develop very successfully.

What about the influences from Rome?

I was fortunate to have traveled in Italy with Tom Dillon a few years ago and he has pushed me to study particular buildings that we both loved, such as Santa Sabina and St. Paul Outside the Walls. President Dillon realized that to build a chapel at the College was a major project and necessitated the highest level of preparation. He has taught himself the history of Catholic architecture as well as the importance of proportion, human scale, and iconography. He and Peter DeLuca are continually challenging us to maintain the highest standards while keeping the design to a reasonable budget.

Could you explain some of the ways in which you have integrated theology into the architecture of the Chapel?

The front façade is seen as a *Porta Coeli* – or “Gate of Heaven” – with a triumphal archway that the faithful enter through. It is flanked by niches with two saintly mentors, St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas. The pediment above, referring to the church as a Temple of God, or *Templum Dei*, frames the coat of arms of the College and is surmounted by a statue of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity. Inscriptions in Latin announce the dedication of the Chapel and its consecration for divine worship.

The campanile (or bell tower) has three levels with three bells, symbolic of the triune God. The front doors have a bas-relief of the ancient name *Maria Sedes Sapientiae* (Mary Seat of Wisdom), which is a name associated with academic endeavors.

The seven arcades of the nave symbolize the seven sacraments, the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, the seven dolours of the Blessed Mother, her seven joys, and the three theological and four natural virtues. They will also provide locations for the fourteen Stations of the Cross in the side aisles. The Corinthian columns which line the nave are associated with the Virginal and will employ theological symbols in their capitals.

The ceiling is vaulted with ribs and symbolizes the vault of Heaven. The windows in the clerestory are translucent, allowing the Chapel to be filled with the timeless light of Heaven, which we pray will illuminate our hearts and minds. The umbrella dome has twelve segments with round oculi symbolic of the twelve apostles, while the four piers which support the dome will have images of the four evangelists. Shrines to saints (the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Thomas Aquinas, among others) are placed at the crossing in their own niches.

The focus of the interior is the sanctuary, with its altar and tabernacle. The marble altar is framed by a four-columned baldacchino in the tradition of the Early Christian basilicas. The composite marble columns are Solomonic and reference the temple in Jerusalem, with a canopy and exalted cross above. The tabernacle is designed as an elegant marble tower located behind the altar and, in its composition, refers to the altar.

Do you think the Chapel might help bring about a rebirth of classically-inspired architecture?

I do. The Chapel is part of a burgeoning renaissance of both secular and sacred architecture taking place today. Just as the College has spearheaded a return to a classical education in contemporary America, so its Chapel will offer one blueprint or one vision for the future of Catholic architecture.

When do you expect the Chapel to be built?

We hope to begin grading this coming summer and, God willing, to begin the construction of the actual building in the fall. It will take approximately two years to complete.



Another shrine will be dedicated to Our Lady, Seat of Wisdom, patroness of academic endeavors.

Meet Our Design Architect

≠Duncan Stroik, AIA≠

Our Design Architect for the Chapel Project is Duncan Stroik, Professor of Architecture at the University of Notre Dame and principal of Duncan G. Stroik Architect, LLC, a firm specializing in ecclesiastical design.

Stroik's architectural practice grows out of a commitment to the principles of classical architecture and urbanism. For over a decade he has focused on the design of ecclesiastical, civic, and residential buildings which are well built, convenient, and beautiful. His education and career have closely paralleled the evolution of the international classical movement, and over the past decade his work has participated in the new renaissance of sacred architecture.

He received his architectural education from the University of Virginia and Yale University. Following graduation, he served as a project designer for the architect Allan Greenberg, with whom he designed a number of prestigious civic, institutional, collegiate, and residential projects. In 1990 Stroik was invited to help form and implement a new curriculum in classical architecture at the University of Notre Dame, later hailed by the *New York Times* as the "Athens of the new movement."

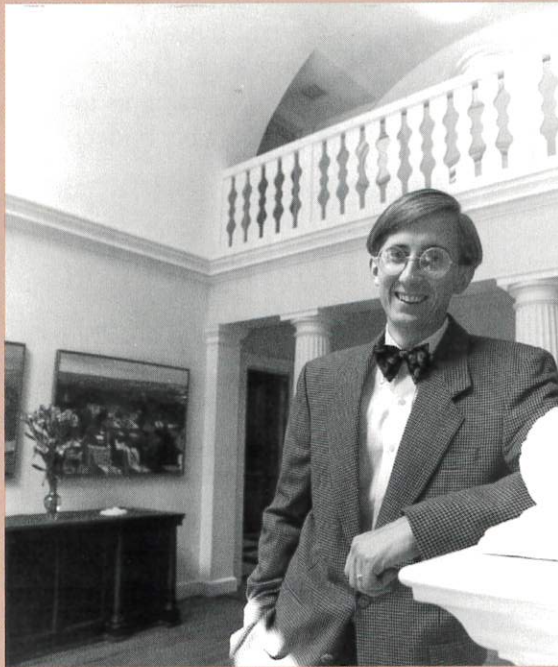
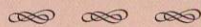
Villa Indiana, Stroik's award winning home, grew out of his research into Palladian architecture in Italy and is an example of how classical principles can be applied to a contemporary house with a

limited budget. *The New Republic* has described it as "an exquisite small pavilion with a barrel-vaulted central room and a gentle, almost Jeffersonian air." In 1998 Villa Indiana and Stroik were featured in the Arts and Entertainment Television series "In Search of Palladio" hosted by Bob Vila.

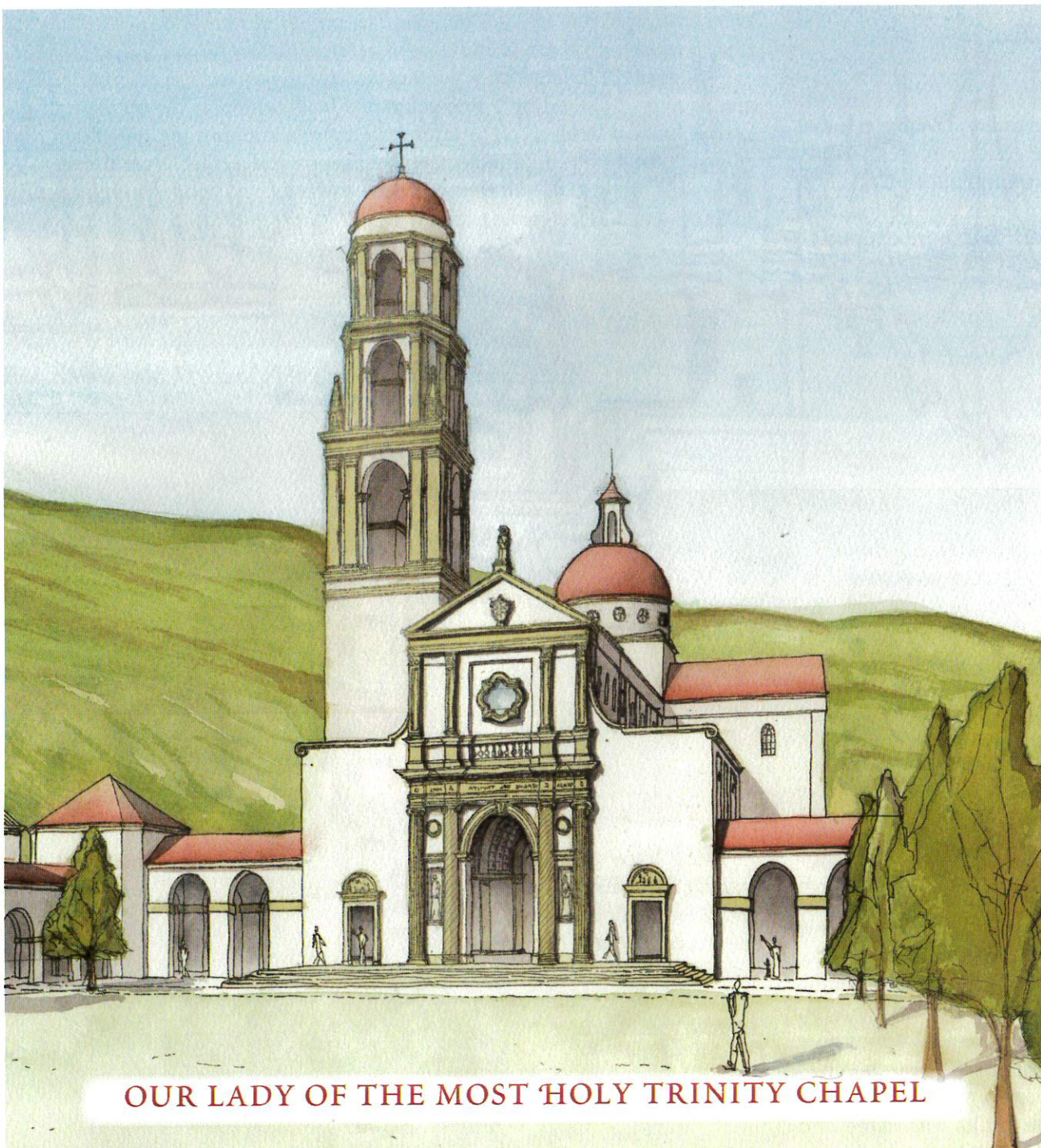
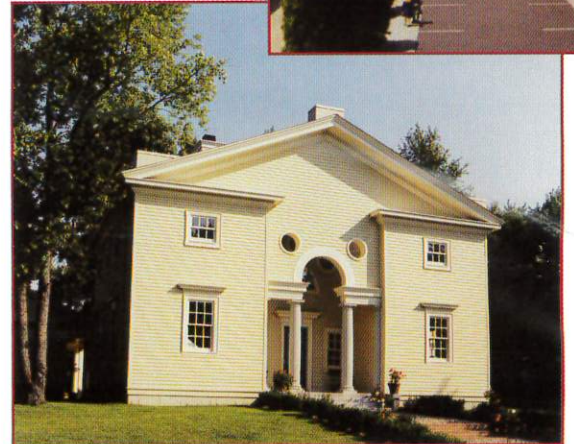
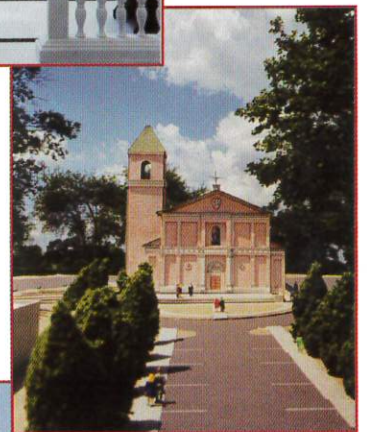
Stroik's involvement in the new renaissance of sacred architecture has led to the formation of the Society for Catholic Liturgy and the *Sacred Architecture Journal*, of which he is editor. It is Stroik's belief that a revival of sacred architecture is central to any true renaissance of architecture and civil society.

In addition to publishing and lecturing, Stroik has also organized conferences on sacred architecture, led seminars in Italy, and been featured on a number of television programs. He has designed projects for houses in

New England, Chicago, and Ireland; churches in California, Nebraska, Arizona, and Kentucky, as well as other civic buildings. He is presently engaged in ecclesiastical projects in Wisconsin, Minnesota, New Hampshire, and California, along with an elementary school in Virginia and a monastery in Chicago. Stroik continues to develop his practice with a focus on sacred, residential, and civic architecture.



Stroik's work includes Holy Family Chapel, Omaha, NB (above), All Saints Church, Walton, KY (right), and Villa Indiana, South Bend, IN (below).



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