



# Guidelines for the Building and Renovation of Churches in the Diocese of Salt Lake City

**Prepared by**

The Liturgical Art & Architecture Committee

Office of Worship

Diocese of Salt Lake City

Revised 2020



*“Every church building is a gathering place for the assembly, a resting place, a place of encounter with God, as well as a point of departure on the Church's unfinished journey toward the reign of God.”  
(Built of Living Stones, § 17)*

September 1, 2020

**My dear brother priests, deacons and lay faithful,**

One of the most important and formative experiences in the history of a parish is the process of building or renovating a church. As a sacrament of God's presence and the center of worship for the faith community, building or renovating a church is not only an important spiritual journey for the entire assembly but also the opportunity for renewal of the life of the parish and of the Diocese.

It is therefore essential, before beginning any project, to study and reflect upon the liturgical principles and norms set forth in “Built of Living Stones: Art, Architecture and Worship” (USCCB) as well as in the “Guidelines for the Building and Renovation of Churches in the Diocese of Salt Lake City”.

Developed by the Diocesan Liturgical Art and Architecture Committee, “Guidelines for the Building and Renovation of Churches”, provides the diocesan procedures as well as liturgical requirements and practical considerations when building or renovating.

By working in conjunction with the Art and Architecture Committee and the Office of Worship, the completed project can truly reflect the vision of the entire diocese and not just the needs of individual pastors or parish communities.

I wish you all the best and bless you in your efforts to ensure that the process of building or renovating is a prayerful journey for the entire parish.

**Sincerely yours in Christ,**



***Most Reverend Oscar A. Solis, D.D.***  
**Bishop of Salt Lake City**

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## INTRODUCTION

- §1 *“Building or renovating a church is more than crafting a beautiful space or simply a construction job. It is about translating a liturgical theology and beauty into three dimensions. It’s about forming a holy people whose lives are transformed, motivated and sustained by their experiences in that place. And it’s an opportunity for building and renewing the community. An opportunity that calls for reflection on the identity and mission of the assembly first and foremost.”<sup>1</sup>*
- §2 Church buildings are sacred spaces where we can encounter the presence of God among us and renew our lives as Christians. We gather together in Churches to celebrate not only the Eucharist, but other liturgies that celebrate the sacramental aspect of our major life milestones, such as being initiated into the Body of Christ, being joined together in marriage, and being sent forth into eternal life. These liturgies are essential to the life of a vibrant Christian community. Parishes or other communities considering building a new or renovating an existing Church building, should view it as an opportunity to renew the liturgical life of the community.
- §3 The mission of the *Liturgical Art & Architecture Committee (the Committee)* of the Diocese of Salt Lake City is to promote the liturgy of the Church by reviewing and approving changes to the environment in which that liturgy takes place. These approvals are based on the conciliar and post-conciliar documents of the Second Vatican Council as well as the directives of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and the bishop of the Diocese of Salt Lake City.
- §4 The Committee is a sub-committee of the *Diocesan Liturgical Commission* and serves as a supervisory body that works in conjunction with the Office of Worship and acts on behalf of the diocesan bishop.
- §5 As the chief liturgist of the diocese, the bishop ultimately directs and approves the building and/or renovation of parish churches. The Committee serves parishes involved in the construction, restoration, enhancement, and renovation of liturgical space by facilitating the implementation of the design review process in collaboration with diocesan offices and outside experts.
- §6 The Committee offers the following guidelines and information for the planning of building and/or renovation of a church. It is our hope that those responsible for liturgical leadership will follow these guidelines, which express

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*1 Marchita Mauck, Places for Worship: A Guide to Building and Renovating (Collegetown, MN: Liturgical Press, 1995), 7-10.*

the Paschal Mystery and empower the full, conscious, and active participation of the assembly in accordance with the sacramental life of the Church.

§7 The documents listed below have been cited to support the text of the guidelines.

**BLS:** Built of Living Stones: Art, Architecture, and Worship

**CIC:** *Codes Iuris Canonici*: Code of Canon Law

**GIRM:** General Instruction of the Roman Missal

**RCIA:** Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

**SOC:** Sanctifying Office of the Church, Book IV: Archdiocese of Chicago

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## SECTION I: DIOCESAN PROCEDURE

§8 The following is the procedure by which a parish<sup>2</sup> gains approval for construction, restoration, enhancement, and renovation of liturgical space.

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### INITIAL CONTACT

§9 Once a parish has decided to make any change(s) to their worship space, or building new, they are required to contact the Office of Worship and the Chancery Office during the preliminary planning stage of the project.

§10 **Contact Chancery Office**

§11 See “Procedure” in Diocese of Salt Lake City Construction Manual (Short form).<sup>3</sup>

§12 **Contact Office of Worship**

§13 It is required that the parish contact the Office of Worship during the preliminary planning stage of a project. Discussions with the office may include:

- Reason for and anticipated scope of the project
- Liturgical considerations and/or implications of the project
- Initial plans for the liturgical formation of the parish
- Preliminary project schedule
- Professionals needed for the project

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### PHASE I: PRESENTATION AND SUBMISSION OF THE PRELIMINARY DESIGN

§14 After initial contact with the Office of Worship, the parish will meet with the Committee to review the design proposal. This meeting is an opportunity for the parish to review and discuss the components of the proposed building design or renovation that relate to the liturgical nature of the project. The

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<sup>2</sup> By parish we also mean missions, schools, or any organization within the diocese that has a public worship space they plan to construct, modify, or renovate.

<sup>3</sup> Diocese of Salt Lake City, Construction Manual – Short Form, (Salt Lake City, UT, 2018), pg 1

pastor/administrator, representatives of the parish, and the architect or design firm are expected to be present for this meeting.

§15

**Presentation Checklist<sup>4</sup>**

- A statement describing the need or vision that initiated the design process
- A description of the design process to date
- Information about the involvement of the parish in the project
- Initial plans for the liturgical formation of the parish
- Information concerning any historically significant aspects of the project
- A list of liturgical furnishings that are being newly designed
- A list of liturgical furnishings that are being refurbished
- A description of how the parish will proceed with the design of such furnishings and fixtures
- An explanation of features for parishioners with disabilities that are incorporated in the plan
- The names of consultants and designers who have been or will be engaged in the process

§16

**For new building projects, the presentation should include**

- Site plan
- Floor plan(s)
- Exterior building elevations
- Interior elevations of the primary surfaces
- Renderings, sketches, or models that illustrate the three-dimensional character of the project

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<sup>4</sup> *Some of these items might not be applicable to small projects. Please contact Office of Worship if there are any questions regarding requirements.*



§17 **For renovation or addition projects, the presentation should include**

- Site plan (if the building exterior is affected)
- Existing floor plan
- Floor plan indicating the areas affected by the proposed renovation
- Exterior building elevations and/or interior elevations (as needed to describe the scope of the project)

§18 **Actions by the Liturgical Art & Architecture Committee:**

If there are no serious concerns, the Committee will recommend approval of Phase I to the bishop. The parish will then receive oral or written notification of approval from the bishop that may include a list of recommendations from the Committee. The parish will consider the recommendations and be asked to show resolution at a subsequent (detailed design) submission before moving to Phase II.

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**PHASE II: SUBMISSION OF THE DETAILED DESIGN**

§19 When the *design development drawings*<sup>5</sup> are complete, the parish representatives will meet again with the Committee to address and show resolution of pending recommendations and to review development of the interior spaces. Design changes that have been made since the previous submission are also presented at this time.

§20 Designs for the principal furnishings (altar, ambo, and font) and art pieces are also presented at this meeting. If design work is not complete, it must be submitted to the Committee before the artists or designers commence fabrication of the work.

§21 **Actions by the Liturgical Art & Architecture Committee**

If there are no outstanding concerns, the Committee will recommend approval of Phase II, to the bishop. The parish will receive oral or written notification of approval from the bishop. The design may then progress through the construction documentation<sup>6</sup> phase and on to the stages of bidding and

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<sup>5</sup> American Institute of Architecture, *AIA Best Practices: Design Development Checklist*, (2020)

<sup>6</sup> Construction Documentation is the phase in which final drawings and specifications are created for the project

construction. This approval is preliminary to the required approvals from the Diocesan Building Commission.

§22

If the Committee identifies significant design concerns, it will recommend to the bishop that the parish work with their design professionals to resolve the areas of concern. The parish will then be required to return to the Committee for submission of the modified design before proceeding to bidding and construction.

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## SECTION II: LITURGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

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### THE PLAN OF THE CHURCH

- §23 *“The People of God which is gathered for Mass is coherently and hierarchically ordered, and this finds its expression in the variety of ministries and the variety of actions according to the different parts of the celebration. Hence the general arrangement of the sacred building must be such that in some way it conveys the image of the assembled congregation and allows the appropriate ordering of all the participants, as well as facilitating each in the proper carrying out of his function”. (GIRM 294)*
- §24 The parish<sup>7</sup> church is a structure that symbolizes and embodies the presence of God in the local assembly. The community at worship (i.e., Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours) is the Body of Christ giving praise and worship to God the Father, through Christ the Son, in the power of the Holy Spirit. The parish church should reflect the local community’s image of the living God and its mission of proclaiming the Good News. It should invite and challenge the community to offer worship and service with a hospitable disposition.

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### THE SANCTUARY

- §25 *“The sanctuary is the space where the altar and the ambo stand, and “where the priest, deacon, and other ministers exercise their offices. The special character of the sanctuary is emphasized and enhanced by the distinctiveness of its design and furnishings, or by its elevation. . . The sanctuary must be spacious enough to accommodate the full celebration of the various rituals of word and Eucharist with their accompanying movement, as well as those of the other sacraments celebrated there.” (BLS 54)*
- §26 **The principal furnishings in the sanctuary:**
- The Altar
  - The Ambo
  - The Presidential Chair
- §27 The sanctuary should be accessible for people with disabilities to enable them to carry out ministry roles. (See Accessibility Considerations §79)

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<sup>7</sup> By parish we also mean missions, schools, or any organization within the diocese that has a public worship space they plan to construct, modify, or renovate.

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**THE CONGREGATION'S AREA (NAVE)**

§28 *“The space within the church building for the faithful other than the priest celebrant and the ministers is sometimes called the nave. This space is critical in the overall plan because it accommodates a variety of ritual actions . . . The body of the church is not simply a series of unrelated sections. Rather, each part contributes to the unity of the space by proportion, size, and shape.” (BLS 51, 53)*

§29 **Design Considerations for Nave**

- The **congregation's area** should allow ample room for liturgical processions and rites (Easter Vigil, immersion/submersion baptism, funerals, etc.).
- The **seating** for the congregation may be either fixed or flexible but should allow for those who use wheelchairs or walkers to be accommodated.
- **Aisles** should allow ample room for wheelchair maneuvering and spaces for wheelchairs should be included throughout the assembly area in accordance with local code and regulations, not solely at the front or rear of the Nave.
- **Kneelers** should be provided for all seating, both fixed and flexible.
- **Antiphonal seating**, while originally designed for monastic churches, may be used where deemed appropriate by the parish and the diocese.
- **Children's area.** Every effort should be made within the parish to welcome and include faithful of all ages and abilities within the congregation's area. A children's area may be provided contiguous to the congregation's area. If included, this area should be designed with materials and finishes that are consistent with the nave.
- **Public address systems** should be accessible for the deaf or hard of hearing, including use of FM, infrared or other systems, which include personal amplification for individuals.
- **Lighting** should be provided that enhances the sacred environment and provides appropriate illumination for reading, movement, and full participation in the liturgy.

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**THE ALTAR**

§30 *“The altar is the natural focal point of the sanctuary and is to be freestanding to allow the [priest] to walk around it easily and Mass to be celebrated facing the people. Ordinarily it should be fixed . . . with a table or mensa made of natural stone . . . The pedestal or support for the table may be fashioned from ‘any sort of material, as long as it is becoming and solid.’” (BLS 57; GIRM 298, 300, 301)*

§31 **In the Diocese of Salt Lake City:**

- The altar can be fashioned from solid wood, marble, or granite. The use of other material requires the approval of the Bishop. It is encouraged that the selected material be sourced locally if possible.
- The altar must be the center of attention in the worship space and should normally be immovable.
- A cross with a corpus should be placed on the altar, next to the altar, above the altar, or on the sanctuary wall. (BLS 91)

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**THE BAPTISTRY**

§32 *“The rites of baptism, the first of the sacraments of initiation, require a prominent place for celebration... The baptismal font and its location reflect the Christian’s journey through the waters of baptism to the altar.” (BLS 66; RCIA 25)*

§33 The location of the font, the design and materials should be important considerations when planning the design of the church. The font should be on axis with the altar, visible and easily accessible to all while entering the church building to facilitate its use as the sole source of holy water in the making of the Sign of the Cross. This location serves as a reminder to all that our journey to Christ began in baptism. Because of the relationship to the celebration of the Eucharist, the font should never be located in the same area as the altar.

§34 Except in extraordinary circumstances, the baptismal font is to be fixed in place. “The font should be large enough to supply ample water for the baptism of both adults and infants.”<sup>8</sup> Additional criteria for choosing the design of the font can be found in *Built of Living Stones*, paragraph 69.

§35 In the Diocese of Salt Lake City, whenever a new church is built or renovated, provisions should be made for a font that allows for the

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<sup>8</sup> United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *“Built of Living Stones”*. (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2001), 27.

immersion/submersion of infants and adults if possible. (see SOC IV 103.10.2; RCIA, 25, 213).

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## THE LOCATION OF THE TABERNACLE

- §36 *“There are a number of possible spaces suitable for eucharistic reservation . . . The bishop is to determine where the tabernacle will be placed and to give further direction. The bishop may decide that the tabernacle be placed in the sanctuary apart from the altar of celebration or in a separate chapel suitable for adoration and for the private prayer of the faithful. In making his determination, the bishop will consider the importance of the assembly’s ability to focus on the eucharistic action, the piety of the people, and the custom of the area. The location also should allow for easy access by people in wheelchairs and by those who have other disabilities.” (BLS 74)*
- §37 Parish churches are at the same time places of liturgical action as well as places of public devotion. Ordinarily, the Blessed Sacrament should be reserved in a separate chapel. This direction is to be followed in the design of new churches and renovation of old churches. Consideration for alternate locations will be given in cases where existing conditions might suggest otherwise.
- §38 **New and Renovation Church Design**
- The Eucharist must be reserved in a part of the church that is *“distinguished, conspicuous, beautifully decorated and suitable for prayer”*. (CIC, c.938)
  - The separate chapel should be configured of appropriate size for the congregation, allowing adequate area for the placement of seating and kneelers as well as placement of wheelchairs.
  - The décor of the separate chapel should include appropriate art, beautiful, simple, worthy of the Blessed Sacrament and representing *“the rich treasury of symbolism that is associated with the Eucharist.”* (BLS 73)
  - The tabernacle location should be clearly visible from all areas in the worship space.
  - It must be immovable, made of solid, opaque, and inviolable material and capable of being locked.
  - The location of the tabernacle should be “marked” by the presence of an oil or wax candle clear sanctuary lamp. Electric lamps are not appropriate and therefore prohibited.

- The tabernacle is not to be placed on the altar at which Mass is celebrated.
- There shall only be one tabernacle for reservation in a church. (CIC 938 §1; See exception to the requirement that there be only one location for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament §41-42)

§39

### **Special Considerations in the Renovation of Churches**

§40

If physical conditions do not allow the addition of a separate chapel, the following guidelines are to be followed (see BLS 79- 80):

- The placement of the tabernacle should permit and not interfere with the actions and movements of all the liturgical rites.
- The placement of the tabernacle must allow for a focus on the tabernacle for those periods of quiet prayer outside the celebration of the Eucharist.
- There should be some distance between the tabernacle and the altar.
- If the tabernacle is located directly behind the altar, consideration should be given to using distance, lighting, or some architectural device that separates the tabernacle and reservation area during Mass, though allowing the tabernacle to be visible at other times. Lighting, distance, and screening (as demonstrated at the Cathedral) are appropriate considerations.
- The area for the reservation of the Eucharist must be worthy and distinguished, never temporary, makeshift, or difficult to find.
- The tabernacle may be left on the former main altar, especially if the entire church was built with that as its designated location. (BLS 250)

§41

### **Exception to the requirement that there be only one location for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament:**

§42

It is recognized that there may be projects involving the renovation of existing worship spaces or projects where there is a new worship space contemplated on the same parish site of an existing worship space and, as such, the parish may be considering having two locations for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament. While having two locations for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament at any parish location is strongly discouraged, the Bishop may review, under special circumstances, the consideration for the possibility of having two locations for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament.

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## THE GATHERING SPACE (NARTHEX)

- §43 *“The narthex is a place of welcome – a threshold space between the congregation’s space and the outside environment. In the early days of the Church, it was a “waiting area” for catechumens and penitents. Today it serves as gathering space and as the entrance and exit to the building. The gathering space helps believers to make the transition from everyday life to the celebration of the liturgy, and after the liturgy, it helps them return to daily life to live out the mystery that has been celebrated. In the gathering space, people come together to move in procession and to prepare for the celebration of the liturgy.” (BLS 95)*
- §44 An adequately sized gathering space should be provided to accommodate visiting of the faithful and aid in keeping the congregation’s area (nave) reverent. When designing the space, consideration is to be given for the movement of people using wheelchairs or walkers, and people with vision impairments.

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## THE RECONCILIATION SPACE

- §45 *“In the sacrament of penance, God forgives sins and restores broken relationships through the ministry of the Church. The Rite of Penance does not describe the place for the celebration of the sacrament except to say that it be in the space ‘prescribed by law.’” (BLS 103)*
- §46 The Diocese of Salt Lake recommends that the reconciliation space (sometimes referred to as a confessional) shall be located within the nave of the church. It should be accessed from the nave, not an adjacent hallway or room. Just as the Sacrament of Reconciliation is important to the Church, so should the reconciliation space be in a prominent location. Its location should reflect the sacrament of reconciliation’s relationship to the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist
- §47 The reconciliation space should be visible and accessible for all persons. It should be sufficient size to accommodate the necessary furnishings for penitent and confessor. It should contain a screen or fixed grille to ensure the option of anonymity for all penitents; but it should also allow for face-to-face confessions for those who wish to do so.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “Revised Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities.” (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2007), Introduction.



- §48 Consideration is to be given in cases where space is limited due to existing conditions. Visibility into space for safety / security, particularly during a renovation of existing reconciliation space, or during a new space in an existing nave.
- §49 Design consideration should also be given to security for the penitent and the confessor. Potential visibility and physical separation should be considered.
- §50 The space should be a soundproof<sup>10</sup> place with a chair for the priest and a chair and kneeler for the penitent.
- §51 Space for wheelchairs, possibly through moveable furniture, shall be considered for both penitent and confessor. Refer to local accessibility code and guidelines (See *Accessibility Considerations* §79).
- §52 Lighting should be warm and inviting. Braille signs and some form of amplification should be provided to aid those with visual or hearing disabilities, but not compromise the confidential nature of the sacrament.
- §53 Sacred art that expresses the wonderful gift of God’s mercy, a crucifix symbolic of Christ’s victory over sin and death, and icons or images reflective of baptism and the Eucharist should be considered to enhance the atmosphere of prayer.

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## A PLACE FOR MUSIC MINISTRY

- §54 *“Music is integral to the liturgy. It unifies those gathered to worship, supports the song of the congregation, highlights significant parts of the liturgical action, and helps to set the tone for each celebration”. (BLS 88)*
- §55 The space chosen for the musicians should express that they are part of the assembly. The musicians should be visible to the music director, cantor, and the assembly of worshipers. Ideally, they should be located to enable their own full participation by seeing and hearing the liturgy. Music ministries will vary from parish to parish. Accommodations should be made for various configurations of choir, instruments and sound reinforcing equipment so that these elements do not cause distraction.
- §56 A stand for the song leader is to be distinct from the ambo, which is reserved for the proclamation of the Word of God, i.e. the Responsorial Psalm.

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<sup>10</sup> Consult with design professional. This can be achieved by providing walls / dividers with a certain sound transmission coefficient (STC) or sound masking technology (such as white noise or a fan)

- §57 Consideration should be given to the acoustics of the congregation space to eliminate or reduce the need for sound reinforcing systems, as these systems can be expensive and require specialized knowledge to operate correctly.
- §58 If Sound Reinforcement Technology (SRT) and instruments are required, special care should be given to the design, selection and placement of this system and its components so as not to be a distraction to the congregation visually or acoustically.
- §59 Mixing boards and amplifiers should be concealed yet be readily available for the music director to adjust during services. Microphone cables should be considered in the planning/ design phase and provisions made to conceal cables to prevent tripping hazards and to avoid clutter.
- §60 Musical instruments should be of high quality and selected for their sound quality, construction, and beauty. Consideration should be given to piano and organ size and location to avoid direct sunlight. If an organ is to be purchased, consideration should be given to the quality, size and special requirements demanded of this instrument. Suitable covers for these instruments should be provided.
- §61 Additional directives concerning music can be found in the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* and *Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship*.

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## RELIGIOUS/LITURGICAL ART

- §62 *“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.’... artworks truly belong in the church when they are worthy of the place of worship and when they enhance the liturgical, devotional, and contemplative prayer they are inspired to serve”. (BLS 142 & 143)*
- §63 The creation of a noble worship space should be fundamental to the building and restoration of churches. Each church in the diocese should strive to include an image of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the patron saint of that parish. Duplication of images of saints (e.g. Marian images) is strongly discouraged.
- §64 Sacred images should add to the overall cohesiveness of the architecture and not distract from the central experience of the liturgy. Commissioned or donated art should meet certain criteria identified in Built of Living Stones (BLS 146,147,148) as authentic, of quality, and appropriate.
- §65 *“Art chosen for the place of worship is not simply something pretty or well made, an addition to make the ordinary more pleasant. Nor is the place of worship a museum to house artistic masterpieces or artistic models. Rather, artworks truly*

*belong in the church when they are worthy of the place of worship and when they enhance the liturgical, devotional, and contemplative prayer they are inspired to serve.” (BLS 143)*

- §66 The location of sacred imagery within a church should always be the result of thoughtful deliberation and part of the formation process. (See Appendix I: *Commissioning, Purchasing, or Accepting Donations of Religious/Liturgical Art §126 - §130*)
- §67 When considering the acceptance of donations of religious art be clear that the art must meet certain criteria for religious/liturgical art such as the criteria identified in *Built of Living Stones* (BLS 146, 147, 148)

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#### DISPOSITION OF ART AND FURNISHINGS

- §68 *“Sacred art that is no longer useful or needed or that is simply worn out and beyond restoration deserves to be treated with respect.” (BLS 166)*
- §69 Bishops, as stewards of the Church’s artistic heritage, encourage pastors to consult with experts to create a list of objects that have artistic or historical value for any given church.
- §70 Valuable historical objects or those donated to the Church as the result of a vow may not be sold without permission of the Holy See. In the events that there is a desire to dispose of such objects, the bishop should be contacted so that the concerns of canon law and the donor are fulfilled.
- §71 There may come a time when certain materials become worn or are no longer suitable to serve the needs of the liturgy. In those cases, the Office of Worship or the Chancery Office should be consulted regarding policies addressing disposal of such items.

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#### VESSELS AND VESTURE

- §72 *“Sacred vessels may be in ‘a shape that is in keeping with the culture of each region, provided each type of vessel is suited to the intended liturgical use and is clearly distinguished from [utensils] designed for everyday use.’” (BLS 164)*
- §73 Materials and design of sacred vessels should reflect reverence for the nature of the Divine Presence, which they are intended to hold. Liturgical vestments and vessels should be made of materials that are worthy, durable, and not easily broken.

- §74 Domestic-style vessels (e.g. ordinary wine decanters) should not be used in liturgical settings. Sacred vessels should be made of noble metal. The interior of chalices and other Eucharistic vessels should be gilt-lined.
- §75 Vestments should symbolize the minister's functions and add beauty and nobility to the celebration.

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## ACCESSIBILITY

- §76 *"The Church recognizes that every parish community includes members with disabilities, and earnestly desires their active participation."<sup>11</sup>*
- §77 Parishes should emphasize inclusion of people with physical, mental, or emotional disabilities into all aspects of Liturgy. All new construction and renovation work must integrate the requirements of the Liturgy with current laws, codes, and ordinances for accessibility. It should also find solutions that allow individuals with disabilities to participate in all ministries of Liturgy where permitted.
- §78 Representation from the community should include parents of small children, the elderly, and the disabled in the planning process.
- §79 **Accessibility Considerations**
- §80 Accessibility issues that should be considered include (but are not limited to):
- Impaired physical mobility (lack of balance, canes, walkers, strollers, toddlers, etc.)
  - Wheelchair users (manual, electric, and scooter)
  - Limited use of hands
  - Visual impairment (lack of site, braille, glare, contrast, color blindness, etc.)
  - Auditory impairment (deafness, hearing aids, etc.)
  - Mental and Emotional Impairments

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<sup>11</sup> United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, "Revised Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities." (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2007), Introduction.

- §81 Primary travel routes to the church building should be free of stairs whenever possible, creating one common entrance for all God's people, including those with mobility impairments or health conditions.
- §82 Ample accessible parking should be near entrances. Accessible entrances welcome all God's people equally.
- §83 Adaptations to existing buildings can be expensive, but failure to make the community's places of worship accessible will exact a far more costly human and ecclesial toll. The goal is always to make the entire church building accessible to all of God's people.
- §84 *The National Catholic Partnership on Disability* provides extensive resources for parishes and dioceses. More information, including accessibility inventories is available at [www.ncpd.org](http://www.ncpd.org) or by calling (202) 529-2933. The *Diocesan Commission for People with Disabilities* is also available to assist parishes as they build or renovate worship space and facilities.
- §85 Refer to local jurisdiction's applicable codes and requirements and *ADA Standards for Accessible Design*.

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## SECTION III: PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

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### PERMISSION TO BUILD

- §86 *“Within the process of building or renovating a church, the diocesan bishop has an irreplaceable role and final responsibility. The construction of a new church requires the permission of the bishop, who must consult and determine that the building will contribute to the spiritual welfare of the faithful, and that the parish has the necessary means to build and care for the church.” (BLS 34)*
- §87 In the Diocese of Salt Lake City, the bishop has several groups to advise, guide and support his decision in ensuring that all construction and capital improvements are appropriately fulfilled. He exercises his authority through the guidelines and procedures established by the Diocesan Finance Council, the Diocesan Building Commission, and the Committee.
- §88 *The Chancery Office* assists those involved in building and renovating, from concept to completion. The Diocese of Salt Lake City Diocesan Construction Manual is available from that office.

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### DIOCESAN PROCESS AND COMPETENCY

- §89 *“In constructing or renewing a place of worship, it is the bishop who, in his role of fostering and governing the liturgy, must assume primary responsibility and authority for the regulation and direction of such projects. The diocesan liturgical commission or diocesan commission on liturgy and art assist with liturgical education and the development of the liturgical and artistic components of the building’s design.” (BLS 178; GIRM, 387; SC, 124)*
- §90 In the initial stages of the project, the parish should be in communication with the Chancery Office to work together in developing a budget for the project as well as a financial plan. It can provide a construction manual, with procedures and policies that parishes must follow for all building projects. When a parish project involves the building of a new church or any renovation to an existing church, the Office of Worship is to be consulted.

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### CONSULTATION AND COLLABORATION

- §91 *“Since no single pastor or parish possesses the totality of expertise or vision required to execute a project of such great scope, the congregation and the clergy will need to recognize the areas of their own competence, the role of the diocesan bishop and diocesan personnel, and their limits beyond which the assistance of experts will be required.” (BLS 177)*

- §92 During the building process, the parish may find it beneficial and sometimes necessary to consult with and or to engage the services of architects, lighting and acoustical consultants, interior designers, artists, landscape architects, and liturgical consultants.

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#### THE ROLE OF PROFESSIONALS AND VOLUNTEERS

- §93 *“In deciding to employ professionals, and in hiring specific people, the parish must be aware of any diocesan directives and requirements for contracts and licenses and is encouraged to utilize the expertise of diocesan staff with experience in this area.” (BLS 196)*
- §94 Parishes should employ contractors who are licensed and insured, and who exhibit the appropriate skills for the scope and magnitude of the project. *The Diocesan Construction Manual* has specific guidelines and requirements regarding contracts, finance issues, insurance, etc.

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#### LITURGICAL CONSULTANT(S)

- §95 When building or renovating worship spaces, many parishes have found it helpful to hire a consultant for liturgical space. The consultant assists the pastor, building committee, architect, and parish staff to provide liturgical catechesis about the importance, role and value of worship, the impact the church building has on worship and the principles and norms of liturgical design.
- §96 *“The liturgical consultant(s) selected by the parish work(s) with the architect and other members of the design team from the earliest stages of the process to help them apply the principles and norms of liturgical design to the practical and liturgical needs of the parish being served. This includes examining the acoustics, the flow and movement for processions, appropriate styles for liturgical celebrations, the interrelationships within the Eucharist as well as the relationship of the Eucharist with the other sacraments, and all the elements required by the Church’s liturgy. In addition, the consultant may have expertise in design and can help to coordinate the design and fabrication of appropriate furniture and other objects to be used during liturgical services, as well as the liturgical art to be placed within the church.” (BLS 200)*
- §97 The following parishes have benefited by working with a consultant during their building and/or renovation project.
- Christ the King, Cedar City
  - Holy Family, Ogden

- Saint Christopher, Kanab
- Saint John the Baptist, Draper
- Saint Mary of the Assumption, Park City
- Saint Thomas Aquinas, Hyde Park

§98 Hiring a consultant for liturgical space, early in the project (before the architect), is an investment that in the long run can save time and money by eliminating costly delays or modifications after construction. The consultant can assist in architect / artist selection. If you would like further information on hiring a liturgical consultant, please contact the Office of Worship.

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#### FORMING A BUILDING COMMITTEE

§99 The parish building committee should represent the various and different groups of your faith community. A committee whose members only reflect one ministry, culture, or economic status may be viewed as not having the best interest of the entire community at heart. In addition to representation from the parish council, the liturgy community, and finance board; Pastors should also invite longtime parishioners, families with children, the elderly, and disabled. A committee of 10-12 members is recommended, with a balance between men and women, of all ages, and should seek to represent the diverse ethnic backgrounds of the parish.

§100 As a parish begins the building process, it is recommend to consult a designer or liturgical consultant that knows how to evaluate your ministries, building spaces, and vision; then translate that vision into a well thought out master plan and floor plan. They can provide information on both liturgy and architecture and help the parish prepare to make important decisions about the building process.

§101 Parishes should be aware of any diocesan directives or requirements for contracts and licenses and be sure that all legal and insurance requirements are met. See *Diocesan Construction Manual* for specific guidelines and requirements in matters dealing with contracts, finance issues, insurance coverage, etc. This manual can be obtained from the Chancery Office

§102 The architect in collaboration with the pastor, building committee and the liturgical consultant will help to develop the master site plan. "The Master Site plan will look at the location of the new building in relationship to existing structures, including the orientation to the entire site and their relationship to



the surrounding environment.”<sup>12</sup> The master site plan is important in developing the schematic design of the worship space.

§103 The bishop has several groups to advise, guide and support his decision in ensuring that all construction and capital improvements are appropriately fulfilled. He exercises his authority through the guidelines and procedures established by the *Diocesan Finance Council*, the *Diocesan Building Commission*, and the *Diocesan Art and Architecture Committee*. Each has an important role and is available to assist you during the building process.

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## ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

§104 Evaluation and assessment of your current liturgical practices as well as your current space is important. The Office of Worship can provide you with an assessment form to assist in this process. The assessment looks at the worship area and environment, the assembly, ministries, music and celebration of the Liturgical Rites.

§105 **An assessment of your current space should include:**

- Office, meeting, and educational spaces
- Hospitality spaces
- Outdoor spaces, playgrounds, green areas
- Technology needs for worship and educational purposes
- Parking issues, traffic patterns, service deliveries and garbage pickups
- Security and safety issues
- Storage

§106 Taking time to revisit or develop the parish’s mission statement will assist in the assessment and planning process. In addition, the following considerations may be explored:

- What is the history of the faith community?
- Does the building fill the spirit and make parishioners feel good to be there?

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<sup>12</sup> Mauck, Marchita, *Places for Worship: A Guide to Building and Renovating* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1995), 59.

- Does the architecture of the building/space say something about the assembly's culture?
- What technologies were used to save energy or protect the environment?
- How well does the church reflect Gospel values ?

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## CATECHESIS AND FORMATION

- §107 One important component to any building or renovating project is parish-wide formation. Catechesis can provide a solid base for general knowledge and awareness regarding the various elements of the project. It can also provide the opportunity for adult faith formation and renewal as the parish prepares to worship in its new space. It can also help parishioners understand why a project is being considered and allow them a role in the decision.
- §108 These Guidelines provide you with a set of reflective questions to begin the parish dialogue. Whatever form your catechesis takes, it should always be on-going and inclusive.
- §109 When considering a project, the parish might reflect on the following questions:
- How do we see ourselves as a symbol of the risen Christ?
  - How have we been called to be disciples and what concrete ways are we "carrying our cross?" (Mt 10:37-39)
  - How do we currently celebrate the Church's liturgy (e.g., baptism, confirmation, Eucharist, marriage, funerals)? Does our celebration invite us to live a life of radical discipleship?
  - How can our building influence and shape our worship? Our theology?
  - Are all members of our community able to access our facilities in a way that enables their meaningful participation in parish life?
- §110 Parish catechesis can take many forms. Published materials such as bulletin inserts or updates on the process might be appropriate. A slide presentation on church architecture or a presentation on how worship plays a part in the design of the space may be appropriate. Parish meetings, such as a listening session or town hall, allow the assembly to gather and dialogue. Other opportunities for catechesis could include workshops or retreats, which would allow those gathered to discuss and reflect.

§111 Preparation on the part of the pastor and planning committee early on should include a study of Church documents:

- The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy
- The General Instruction of the Roman Missal
- Built of Living Stones
- Rite of Dedication of a Church and an Altar

§112 It should also include study on various liturgical elements, such as the altar, ambo, and baptismal font, as well as the Liturgical Year and the liturgies of each season. The Office of Worship is happy to assist with the catechesis and formational process.

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## SUSTAINABLE ARCHITECTURE

§113 Buildings have a substantial impact on the health and wellbeing of people and our planet. They use resources, generate waste and are costly to maintain and operate. Sustainable architecture includes designing, constructing and operating buildings, and the sites around them, to maximize occupant health, use fewer resources, reduce waste and pollution, and decrease life cycle costs. Life cycle cost is defined as the expense to maintain and operate a building over time.

§114 In his encyclical letter *Laudato Si'*<sup>13</sup>, Pope Francis calls us to be protectors of God's handiwork, the resources of creation. As such, our church facilities must be planned and designed using the principles of sustainability. With each building project, the parish committee and design and construction professionals are encouraged to work together to consider these principles and set goals to implement them in ways that are both valuable and beneficial to the project and the community.

§115 Sustainable design principles include:

- Sustainable site selection including consideration of climate, protection and restoration of habitat, and proximity to public transportation sources
- Sustainable site design including open space, rainwater management, light pollution prevention and reduction of heat island effect
- Efficient use of water, both indoors and outdoors

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<sup>13</sup> Pope Francis. 2015. *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home* [Encyclical].

- Mechanical and electrical systems designed to operate efficiently, reduce energy use and life cycle costs
- Consideration of renewable energy sources
- Well-designed building enclosures that conserve energy, increase durability and provide thermal comfort
- Selection of building materials that are renewable, contain recycled content, are extracted, or made locally or regionally and are free of toxins and other hazards
- Reduction of waste generated by construction activities
- Provision of space for collection and storage of recyclables by building occupants
- Indoor environmental quality including air quality, access to daylight and views, pleasant acoustic conditions, and occupant control over lighting and thermal comfort
- Encouraging awareness and education of sustainable design with project features
- Planning or implementing on-site renewable energy use (such as photovoltaic panels)
- Other innovative ideas and strategies relevant to the project

§116

**The Choice of Building Materials**

§117

*“A church building is a lasting expression of a faith community's life. Because the church building is destined to endure, parishes and the professionals who assist them should ensure that the components of the building, especially the building materials, are sturdy and substantial enough to stand the test of time. While traditional building materials have served the Church well in the past, more recently developed materials and building techniques might better serve a contemporary structure. In all instances, the building that is designed for an extended life will need fine, durable materials. The use of materials available locally and of designs that are expressive of local culture can be an advantage to parishes.” (BLS 215)*

§118

*“Faithful stewardship of the earth's resources demands that the Church be a partner in the development of a sustainable architecture. Materials, construction methods, and procedures that are toxic to the environment or that are wasteful of the earth's resources should be avoided. Providing heating, ventilating, air*

*conditioning, and lighting systems that are energy- efficient is financially sound practice and, at the same time, environmentally responsible. It is an exercise in parish stewardship.” (BLS 216)*

§119 **Building Maintenance**

§120 *“The design process will include planning for the long-term and short-term maintenance of the new or renovated building. The beauty and utility of a place of worship can be sustained only by an ongoing, careful attention to its upkeep through regular maintenance. Therefore, funds for both general maintenance and capital improvements should be anticipated in every future parish budget.” (BOLS 219)*

§121 *“Durability and maintenance expenses are critical factors in the selection of building materials and of the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems. Decisions made on the basis of short-term economy can be very costly when viewed from the perspective of long-term expenses. A well-thought-out plan for maintenance that includes a financial component is necessary in the case of existing structures. In addition, special attention may be needed when the maintenance of historical buildings is at issue.” (BOLS 220)*

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**LITURGICAL MEDIA IN WORSHIP**

§122 Media art refers to artworks that depend on a technological component to function and can take many forms. It can be a digitally displayed image that may make an individual see something they may have missed in a prior viewing. It can be a combination of images and sounds that leave a permanent impression in one’s memories, triggers an emotion, or creates an insight. It is art that invites the viewer to participate more fully in worship.

§123 In worship, media art that is truly liturgical art also has the potential to provide *“a portal to the mystery of God,”* because it can bring beauty into our worship.<sup>14</sup> More than just a projected image of the music lyrics during mass, it can draw the assembly into a deeply spiritual experience that supports the gospel, preaching, music and all components of the liturgy to enhance the worship experience.

§124 Media art can encourage participation, convey information, reinforce, and enrich oral communications and provide beauty to the worship space. If done thoughtfully and with great care media art can lead the assembly from one segment of worship to another. It can connect the community to the past and

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<sup>14</sup> Crowley, Eileen, *Moving Word: Media Art in Worship* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2006), 8.

present. It can add a new dimension to music or prayer, and it can stimulate worshipers to action or interaction.

§125

A parish should develop a strategy for the use, implementation, and continual update of the media art. It should also plan for removal and update of hardware as technology improves or becomes obsolete.

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## APPENDIX I

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### COMMISSIONING, PURCHASING, OR ACCEPTING DONATIONS OF RELIGIOUS/LITURGICAL ART FOR THE WORSHIP SPACE

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- §126 *“Art chosen for the place of worship is not simply something pretty or well made, an addition to make the ordinary more pleasant. Nor is the place of worship a museum to house artistic masterpieces or artistic models. Rather, artworks truly belong in the church when they are worthy of the place of worship and when they enhance the liturgical, devotional, and contemplative prayer they are inspired to serve.” (BLS 143)*
- §127 The Committee and the Office of Worship are available to answer your questions regarding choosing religious/liturgical art for the worship space.
- §128 **Guidelines to Assist in selection of Religious / Liturgical Art for Worship Space<sup>15</sup>**
- Read and study *Built of Living Stones, Chapter 3: The Work of Our Hands: Art and Artists Assisting the Church at Prayer*.
  - New artwork should be aesthetically consistent with the church’s architecture.
  - New artwork should complement and not overwhelm or detract from the actions of worship and liturgy.
  - Be aware of the distinction between religious art and fine art and between personal taste and religious/liturgical art values. (BLS 146)
  - When purchasing an existing piece of art, parishes should be cautious of ordering art from a catalog. *“The integrity and energy of a piece of art produced individually by the labor of an artist is always to be preferred above objects that are mass produced.” (BLS 147)*
  - Parishes should be committed to the equitable treatment of artists. Do not expect artists to do work without compensation during the design stage. Be prepared to pay for work and design as well as for the finished piece of art.

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<sup>15</sup> Diocese of Columbus, *Art and Environment Sub-Commission*, 2003.

- When considering and selecting art, parishes should consider the communities unique cultural and ethnic experiences.

§129

**Guidelines to Assist in Acceptance of Donations of Religious Art<sup>16</sup>**

§130

When considering the acceptance of donations of religious art be clear that the art must meet certain criteria for religious/liturgical art such as the criteria identified in *Built of Livings Stones 146-148*.

- Develop a parish policy regarding art donations.
- Be wary of donations with “strings attached.”
- Make clear that once art donations are accepted, they become the property of the church to be used as the church determines and that the church is responsible for the future disposition of the item.
- If a donation of artwork appears to be of historic value, locate and contact someone who can offer guidance for the restoration, display, protection, and registration of historic art pieces.

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<sup>16</sup> Diocese of Columbus, Art and Environment Sub-Commission, 2003.



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## APPENDIX II

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### PARISH PROCESS FOR COMMISSIONING RELIGIOUS/LITURGICAL ART<sup>17</sup>

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- Step 1: Form a parish liturgical art review committee that includes the pastor, the donor (if there is one) and artistically and liturgically knowledgeable parishioners.
- Step 2: Develop a list of potential candidates - ways to do this include:
- Giving preference to local and regional artists.
  - Discussions with the Committee and the Office of Worship.
  - Look at religious/liturgical artwork in publications such as Environment & Art Newsletter, Faith and Form and on individual artists' web sites.
  - Visit local parishes that have recently commissioned and installed religious/liturgical art.
- Step 3: Send letters to potential candidates requesting resumes, brochures, portfolios, references, etc.
- Step 4: Review information submitted and visit churches where their artwork is located.
- Step 5: Narrow down the choices and set-up interviews and presentations of work.
- Step 6: Interview and view presentations (usually in the form of slides of work) from selected candidates. Consider qualifications, spirituality/theology, artwork, references, design process, and "fit" with your parish.
- Step 7: Select the artist and sign a contract or letter of agreement. The contract should include how much will be paid, and when and what will be done if the committee rejects artwork in the design process. Be sure the Artist understands the parish culture, needs, budget and timeline and make sure to secure the right to graphic reproduction of the artwork for parish use.
- Step 8. During the initial process, the Committee should be able to review, approve, modify, or reject the artist's model, sketch, rendering, and/or mock-up of the commissioned artwork.
- Step 9: Once the artwork is completed, it should be blessed or dedicated in the worship space. (See Book of Blessings.)

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<sup>17</sup> Diocese of Columbus, Art and Environment Sub-Commission, 2003.

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## APPENDIX III

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### SUGGESTED RESOURCES

- §131 Professional Affiliations:
- Association of Consultants for Liturgical Space (ACLS)
  - Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions (FDLC)
  - North American Academy of Liturgy (NAAL)
  - United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)
  - American Institute of Architecture – Interfaith Forum on Religion, Art and Architecture (IFRAA)
- §132 Religious Arts/Architecture Foundation
- The Center for Religious Architecture
  - Christians in the Visual Arts
  - Art + Christianity Enquiry

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### SUGGESTED RESOURCE BOOKS

Crowley, Eileen D. Liturgical Art for a Media Culture. Liturgical Press, Collegeville, MN, 2007.

Crowley, Eileen D. Moving Word: Media Art in Worship. Augsburg Fortress Publishers, Minneapolis, MN, 2006.

Gerhard, Albert. Space for Active Participation: Theological and Liturgical Perspectives on Catholic Church Architecture. Munich: Prestel, 2002.

Healy, James E. Building A New Church: A Process Manual for Pastors and Lay Leaders. Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota, 2009.

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McNamara, Denis R. Catholic Church Architecture and the Spirit of the Liturgy, Hillenbrand Books, Chicago,IL, 2009.

The Partnership for Achieving Construction Excellence, The Field Guide for Sustainable Construction, Penn State University, 2004.

Stroik, Duncan. The Church Building as a Sacred Place: Beauty, Transcendence, and the Eternal, Liturgical Training Publications, Chicago, Illinois, 2012.

Torgerson, Mark, An Architecture of Immanence: Architecture for Worship and Ministry Today, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, Michigan, 2007.

Vosko, Richard. God's House Is our House: Re-imagining the Environment for Worship, Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota, 2006.