

Christ Cathedral

Renaissance of a landmark

Johnson Fain and Rios Clementi Hale Studios, respectively, will redesign the cathedral interior and resculpt the campus. The two firms, working with the Architectural and Renovation Committee of the Diocese of Orange, have developed a design that respects and embodies the unique heritage of the campus, both spiritual and physical, while creating an inspiring center of Catholic worship, a center for the arts and culture, and a charitable center for outreach to the community and the poor and marginalized.

The deepest and most significant aspects of the rich liturgical heritage and tradition of the Catholic Church are embodied in the project, which the two firms have called the challenge of a lifetime. The task: to convert an all-glass church into a worship space that is intrinsically Catholic and that inspires contemplative and solemn prayer and sacred ministry while honoring the property's legacy.

Six guiding principles provide the inspiration for the design of the cathedral and the rest of the campus:

- The cathedral is the center and focal point of the 34-acre campus
- The campus is intended to be a global center for Catholic life
- The cathedral and campus will welcome and serve all in the local community
- People have priority over cars
- Design excellence will be a priority for the site
- Flexibility for the future will be preserved

The historic shell of the original Crystal Cathedral will be maintained and restored. Its three principle entries will be reconfigured. The main entry leading to the new Narthex at the South will be fully glazed with the addition of two bronze pivot doors which will comprise the Bishop's Door. The new interior plan is a simple rectangle surrounded by the four triangles of the upper mezzanine.

The ambo is elevated above the predella on the right-hand side while the baptistery is on axis to the west with the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament to the east.

Directly behind the altar is the cathedra while pews are arrayed in a radial pattern around the predella.



The Shading System

Constructed out of a translucent material (metal or composite plastic), the system will be a complex series of quatrefoils made up of triangular metal sails. By arranging open and closed "petals" on the inside surface, natural light is modulated and glare is reduced. The system also will be sufficiently rigid to act as an acoustic element and reflect sound.



Sanctuary

Sanctuary Walls

The new stone sanctuary walls are designed to allow the floor to wrap upwards creating a sense of enclosure in a sense reorganizing the worship level space. Within the structural cavity of each wall will be a low level air plenum. This will allow proper conditioning of air at the "pedestrian" level around the ambulatory. Within the structural cavity of the walls surrounding the worship level there will be diffusers at approximately 11ft above the finish floor with high-velocity output.

Future Phase

Ringling the cathedral is a shaded, tree-lined plaza where shrines, chapels, visitor services and support elements for the cathedral will be located. This frame of trees and small structures will serve as a liminal, or transitional, space: visitors will walk out of the secular world outside, through a cloud-like canopy of shade trees and into the sacred space of the cathedral.

Future Phase

Undercroft: Situated 16 feet below the main worship level of the cathedral, the new undercroft will include several key elements and support functions. A small existing mezzanine at the northern tip of the building will be closed off and demolished to create a single level for the undercroft.

BALCONY LEVEL

WORSHIP (ground) LEVEL

UNDERCROFT LEVEL (new)
16 feet below worship level

West balcony

North balcony

East balcony

South balcony

BALCONY LEVEL

This entire level will be connected by elevated walkways supported by the new sanctuary walls. It will support music in multiple configurations and the casework of the famous Hazel Wright Memorial Organ will be redesigned in light-colored wood or other material.

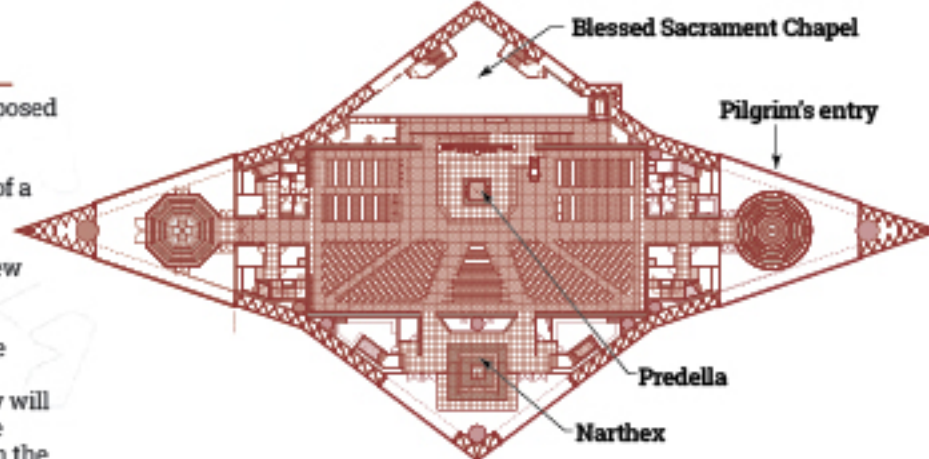
WORSHIP LEVEL

At the balcony levels it is proposed that both organ cases be reconstructed and clad with opacified white glass panels of a variety of profile shapes. Refurbished organ pipes will be re-set into the proposed new enclosures. The north balcony has been designed to integrate both the choir and musical instrumentation. The balcony will have the ability to provide the optimal configuration for both the choir and the music group at any given time or need.

UNDERCROFT

Accessible from the Pilgrim's Court and paved with travertine, the undercroft will include the Chapel of St. Callistus, the bishop's crypts and columbarium, a bride's room, family room, choir practice room, sacristies and support functions.

Future Phase



Pilgrim's entry

Predella

Narthex

Bride's Room

Chapel of St. Callistus

Bishop's Crypts and Columbarium

Choir Practice

The Baptistry on the west side is octagonal and incorporates a cruciform-shaped font. Atop one of the walls is a base holding the Pascal Candle.

The Eucharistic Chapel is located just through the Pilgrim's Entry on the east side of the sanctuary. The Chapel is circular shaped encompassing the tabernacle and a magnificent portrait of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The predella is located at the front, with the altar at its center and a metallic baldachin and carved crucifix suspended above.

The Baldachin is a horizontal "canopy" that floats about 30 feet above the altar. Hanging from the open center of the structure will be a large carved crucifix.

The South Balcony