



OVERVIEW

The Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption in Marietta, OH, was recently named a minor basilica by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments in Rome. A minor basilica is an honorific title bestowed by the Pope on certain Catholic churches that are considered to be a religious center of notable importance. Reverend Monsignor John M. Campbell recognized the need for reputable liturgical guidance to prepare for this great honor and brought on Liturgical Designer Rolf Rohn of Rohn & Associates Design to determine the needs of the church and how best to execute them. Major interior and exterior repairs were necessary to preserve the Basilica's heritage. Rolf and his team developed a complete renovation program that emphasized its historical significance and artistic splendor, while making sure the Basilica met all current Church-mandated guidelines. Once the restoration was completed under Rolf's direction, light, sound and space once again became a magical place where people of God meet their God.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The scope of work included exterior repairs, space formation, new sacred art, liturgical furniture, appointments, mosaics, murals, statuary and interior decoration designed to work in harmony in a liturgically correct environment.



PROJECT EXECUTION

- On the exterior of the building, structural issues on the bell tower were fixed and crumbling stonework was repaired.
- The interior water-damaged walls were plastered to prevent further deterioration and then repainted along with the rest of the church.
- The dome was rebuilt so that it is architecturally in harmony with the rest of the environment.
- Liturgical Interior Designer Kathy Maglicco developed a majestic decorating scheme to complement and enhance the interior.
- Artists Renate Rohn and Victoria Christina returned faded murals—dating from the early 1900s—to their original grandeur. Paintings on the vaulted ceiling were finished to match the originals.
- At the entrance of the Chapel dedicated to the English Martyrs, we created a large mural depicting St. Thomas More, St. Thomas the Becket and St. John Fisher. The mural represents their moment of martyrdom.
- Damaged art glass was restored.
- Wiring was updated to be energy efficient and to properly brighten the church, highlight the oil paintings on the wall, emphasize important architectural elements and make it easier to truly celebrate the great sacrifice Jesus made for us all.
- A permanent altar made of carved Italian marble (including relics of saints and encircled by statues of the Twelve Apostles) was installed to replace a portable one in the repaired altar and sanctuary area.
- Original liturgical elements were refinished (including hanging sanctuary lamps, professional cross, presider's chair, con-celebrant chair, servers' chairs and consecration candlesticks), while a tabernacle stand, ambo, baptismal font, a crucifixion scene and images of the Holy Family were added. These items, while designed by Rohn, came from all parts of the world: Italy, Poland, Germany, Philippines and the great United States of America.
- At the base of the Tabernacle throne, Rohn artists designed, installed and painted a Pelicanus sculpture and mosaic. This evocative Pelicanus symbolizes our Lord, Jesus Christ—our Redeemer—who gave His life for our redemption. The mother pelican wounded herself to feed her babies her blood so her young would not starve. In turn, she, too, lost her life.

PROJECT EXECUTION: continued

- Our artists also marbled the wood lectern to match the rest of the furniture. Two mosaics were added on the front panels: the upper one features the Jerusalem cross, representing Christ's command to spread the Gospel around the world.



COMPLETED PROJECT

With the Rohn team's expertise, the once glorious Basilica was restored to its original splendor and beyond—a place that is worthy of the responsibility of the location for special liturgical celebrations and to provide pastoral outreach to the people of God. The Inaugural Mass for the renovated Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption was held using a special Tintinnabulum we designed for consecration of the now noble Basilica and videotaped for later broadcast on the Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN).





RECOGNITION FROM CATHEDRAL LEADERSHIP

"A fantastic bit of work has been done here, and many significant improvements have been made to an already beautiful church...I leave you with a view of the narthex of the church, which is one of the most beautiful I have seen."—New Liturgical Movement, Sunday, August 9th, 2009

