CHURCH AND RELIGIOUS ARTWORK & ARCHITECTURE
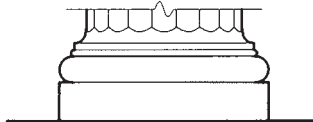

ARCHITECTURE TECHNOLOGY, P.C.
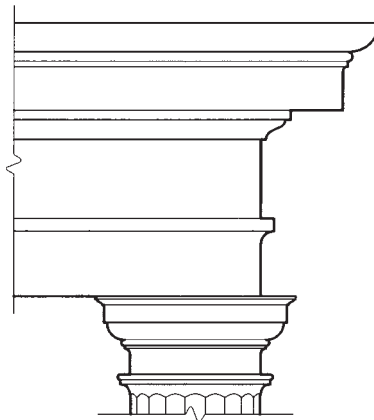
TABLE OF CONTENTS

STATEMENT OF DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, credited with the famous dictum, "God is in the details," understood that carefully worked, but corruptible, physical artifacts can express (or mirror) a perfection conceived only in the *ideal*. Although St. Anselm and St. Thomas Aquinas (among others) posited logical proofs for God's existence (and the existence of *perfection* as an *embodiable* idea) from the material word of our senses alone, for some people direct linkage between God and everyday experience requires a "leap of faith." Thus, in the "everyday" or "mundane," a higher reality can be gleaned, and we take our place within an ordered universe whose hierarchical structure both begins and ends with God, its creator.

Our urge to comprehend God's larger plan is a call not to domination over, but to responsible service to everything in that plan. Though perfection is never achieved in our lifetime, both the ends and the means of our architecture (or any other) vocation must be directed toward the greater good of God's work. His holiness, John Paul II quotes St. Alphonsus Maria De Liquori in the papal encyclical, *Veritatis Splendor*: "It is not enough to do good works; they need to be done well. For our works to be good and perfect, they must be done for the sole purpose of pleasing God."

Architecture Technology, P.C. understands architecture to be a service vocation with social as well as economic and aesthetic implications. Codes and budgets often dictate the technical and financial aspects of a building. Its appearance may reflect a particular imagery or style. But it is the specific imperative of the architect to imbue a design with qualities which transcend these constraints. Architecture Technology, P.C. believes that it is the architect's main role to make places with meaning: places which invite people and support a life of reverence through creative thought and action. It is our goal to produce artifacts which reflect the complete and fundamental compatibility of faith and reason, and the coincidence of beauty and truth.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH

Traverse City, Michigan

New Centennial Hall Presentation

Richard A. Skendzel

Presented to the Advanced Donors Sunday, February 26,1995
Presented to the Parish Sunday, May 21, 1995

This presentation is made to offer you a better understanding of the design concept of the new Immaculate Conception Parish Hall by pointing out just a few examples of the buildings that have influenced and shaped Christian architecture through the past 20 centuries of cumulative tradition.

To begin, let's take a look at the architect's original design rendering of the new Immaculate Conception Church, made in 1952 by Harford Field Associates, Traverse City (Figure 1). Perhaps most striking about this view of the church for us today is the fact that so little about the exterior form of the building has changed over its 40-plus years of service to this faith community. The greatest testament that a building can make to the accomplishment of its designer is to survive in the form he intended for it over decades of active use, just as this church structure has done.

Figure 1
Rendering of Immaculate Conception Church
Harford Field & Associates, *1952*

Immaculate Conception church takes its form (but not its details or type of construction) from the hall churches of late medieval and early renaissance Europe. Derived from the earlier basilica structures which Christianity inherited from civic Roman architecture, the hall churches were developed to fulfill the needs of growing mendicant orders, like the Dominicans and Jesuits. In the thirteenth through sixteenth centuries, these relatively new "preaching" orders required large, open-floor-plan, hall-like church facilities for public oration as well as celebration of the Eucharist. The hall form is expressed on the outside

of Immaculate Conception Church by the long, horizontal axis of its main, sloping roof. Punctuating this hall axis, or "nave," of the church are two striking vertical elements. These are the sanctuary tower and the bell tower.

The sanctuary tower, even in the flat-roofed, abstracted form in which we find it at Immaculate Conception, may serve to recall the magnificent, domed sanctuary towers of the renaissance period of which Il Duomo in Florence is perhaps the most famous example. The bell tower, in turn, serves the same architectural function as its predecessor, the campanile. There are many other such "elements" that contribute to the exterior form of Christian religious architecture, and this paper will comment on a few of them. First, let's focus on the campanile, or bell tower.

Two primary functions give the campanile its characteristic architectural form. One is a very practical purpose: that of calling the people to communal worship. In this regard, the campanile's height above the rooftops that surround it affords line-of-sight communication by means of lamplight, a ringing bell, or even by voice. The second purpose of the campanile carries a much greater spiritual significance. The tall, slender, vertical shaft of the tower stands in defiance of gravity. Such dramatic sculptural forms have, for many centuries suggested what is known in Latin as an *axis mundi* (world axis) in the sense that they seem to make a physical connection between earth below and the heavens above.

It may be recalled that the sanctuary tower also often takes the (both physical and spiritual) form of an axis mundi. There are two important distinctions, however, between the campanile and sanctuary towers. In the first place, the sanctuary tower, especially if it is a dome, has its most powerful impact as an interior space, that is, as experienced from the inside. The campanile tower expresses itself most clearly as a sculptural object viewed from without. Secondly, it will be recalled that until quite recently in our liturgical history, the space within and under the sanctuary tower was accessible only to the clergy. The campanile, on the other hand, has always been an element of church architecture very close and accessible to the laity. Note, for example, in the church of San Giorgio in Velabro in Rome (Figure 2), dating from the twelfth century, that the campanile structure has its most powerful impact on the people just as they arrive at the building's entry. One can imagine walking directly beside or even under the tower's great base as this church is entered through its columned portico. In another example from the

Figure 2
S. Giorgio in Velabro
Rome, *12th c.*

same period, SS. Giovanni e Paolo also in Rome (Figure 3), the campanile projects slightly from the front facade of the church, establishing a strong continuity from pavement to sky. The subtle positioning of this tower also provides for direct, physical contact with the people. Even in a case where the campanile has been pulled back from the entry facade of the church, as is the case at the tenth century church, San Ambrosio in Milan (Figure 4), its presence is an integral and significant part of the approach and entry into the church itself. Here the campanile can be seen as a kind of link or pin about which are hinged an entry courtyard, the church's front facade, and the main body of the church lying behind it.

Figure 3
SS. Giovanni e Paolo: campanile
Rome*, 12th c.*

The courtyard facing the entry to San Ambrosio is an example of another important component found in traditional Christian architecture. Taking its precedent from ancient Roman architecture, this forecourt space surrounded by porticoes is called an "atrium." Making a transition between the "public" realm of the streets outside and the "private" realm of the church inside, the atrium has played a critical role in the "urban design" of churches and cities. Consistent with this transitional role, the atrium should be recognized for its support of two important functions. The first is that of arrival. In purely practical terms, the atrium and its surrounding covered portico provided shelter for weary travelers making pilgrim journeys to famous churches, shrines, and other sacred sites. In medieval times, faithful Christians, even of modest financial means, would make at least one major pilgrimage during their lives, often involving weeks or even months of travel on foot. The atrium was to these people a welcome and joyful termination of their long journey, a place to stay the night and be refreshed. The second function fulfilled by the atrium, in contrast to the first, is that of preparation and commencement. In this sense, the atrium serves not only as a place of quiet reflection for wor-

Figure 4
S. Ambrosio: atrium & campanile
Milan*, 10th c.*

shippers prior to their entry into the church building, but also as a place of cleansing and spiritual preparation for catechumens as they prepare to enter into, and become full members of, the church body itself -i.e., the faith community that is "church."

Exemplifying the ideal arrangement between atrium and church is the original mother church in Rome, St. Peters, as it existed in about 330 AD, during the first years of the Christian church's public presence there (Figure 5). At St. Peters, the size of the atrium rivals that of the church proper for good, practical reason. It was a place of welcoming for thousands of Christian initiates, and it played an important liturgical role as well as an important link in the processional "way." The outer entry into the

Figure 5
St. Peter's Basilica: reconstruction of original church
Rome, *1st c.*

atrium is a kind of grand gateway in itself, abounding in metaphorical allusions to "entry into the kingdom," "the narrow gate," "a fortress and refuge," etc. Notice that at the center of the atrium space stands a fountain, itself a symbol of ritual cleansing and life-giving waters as well as a source of physical refreshment and sustenance. In a later, monastic example, the abbey of Monte Cassino, located in central Italy and dating from the eleventh century (Figure 6), we can see the effective combination of basilica church, atrium, and campanile in their traditional architectural composition.

Figure 6
Monte Cassino: abbey complex
Italy, *11th c.*

The composition of building components at Monte Cassino contains more than church, atrium, and campanile, however. Along with the development of monasticism in the middle ages came the emergence of expanded religious complexes and a concomitant expansion in the number of architectural components required to meet their needs. Monastic complexes included facilities for living and dining, storage of supplies, study and intellectual pursuits, manual labor and manufacturing, healing and physical recovery, and recreation as well as places for prayer and celebration of the Eucharist. These additional programmatic functions called for a number of unique

Figure 7
St. Martin de Canigou: abbey
France, *11th c.*

architectural spaces. But perhaps most important was the need to maintain a strong hierarchical order in their overall organization as a single monastery complex. A good example of this architectural "unity in diversity" can be seen in the very beautiful monastery of St. Martin de Canigou, in France from around the eleventh century (Figure 7). It is important to understand that very rarely were these complexes pre-planned. There was no masterplan for their facilities development. Rather, their growth was an "organic" process in which not purely architectural or aesthetic principles, but fundamental faith, communal organizational, intellectual philosophical, "scientific," and pragmatic functional principles acted as "plan and guide." St. Martin's demonstrates these principles in the coherence of its grouped buildings and in their hierarchical organization, from the most important, sacred functions to the least important, utilitarian ones. In this clustered arrangement of building structures, maximum use is made of both interior and exterior spaces, public and private spaces, monumental and support/service spaces.

Taking a closer look at one part of a monastic complex helps to clarify these architectural interrelationships. The monk's cloister at St. Gall, dating from the seventh century and located in present day Switzerland (Figure 8), for example, is just one part of a much larger campus. In it we can see how a number of the residential facilities of the abbey, including the main church, the monks' dormitory, latrine, refectory, kitchen, and wine cellar, are accommodated in building structures surrounding

Figure 8
St. Gall: reconstruction of the monks' cloister
Switzerland, *7th c.*

a common courtyard. And although these structures are possessed of architectural forms appropriate to their own individual purposes, combined they produce a mutually beneficial overall composition. Put another way, they form a whole "greater than the sum of its parts." At a yet finer level of focus within the abbey at St. Gall we can see how the relative importance of a single building function, in this case the monk's refectory or dining hall (Figure 9), takes its own expression. Pervading the interior of the refectory is a sense
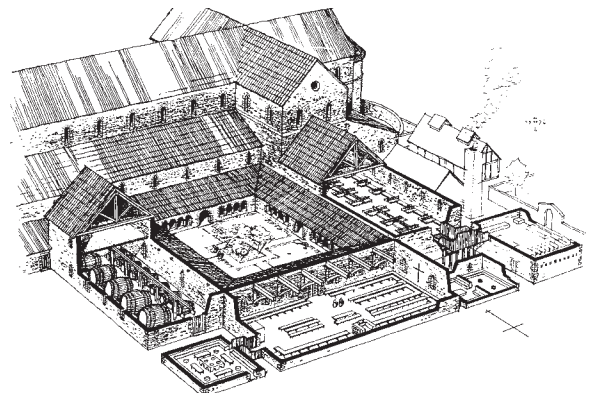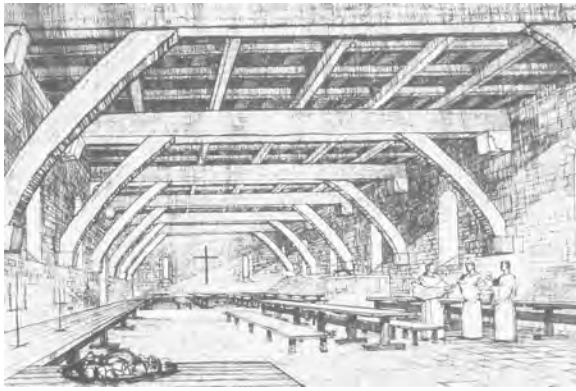
Figure 9
St. Gall: reconstruction of the refectory interior
Switzerland, *7th c.*

Figure 10
Cluny: abbey complex
France, *12th c.*

Figure 11
Immaculate Conception Church & Hall
Traverse City, *1995*

of economy in the lack of frivolous ornament, a sense of integrity in the solidity and strength of its materials, and a sense of community in the monumental character of its single, vaulted space.

Putting all of the pieces together to form a unified whole, with the possibility for continuous growth of the community, resulted in some rather large monastic complexes by the end of the medieval period. Many of these, like the facility at Cluny, France (Figure 10) grew to become nothing short of small cities. And yet even at Cluny we can appreciate a kind of subtle, ordered harmony in the arrangement of building structures and open spaces that is rarely achieved in our own modern cities.

Coming back to our own building project at Immaculate Conception Parish (Figure 11) may serve to remind us, by way of contrast with Cluny, that our efforts are modest indeed! We have a long way to go before replicating the great religious campuses of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries! And, modest though we may be, many of the same principles of facilities growth and functional integration have been consulted in our design proposal for the new parish hall. Furthermore, it has been our conscientious and deliberate objective throughout the design process to respect and, if possible, enhance those elements of traditional Christian architecture possessed by the present church building.

Take, for example, the existing bell

tower, and note how its role as a critical link or hinge in the entry sequence to the church has been emphasized in the new design. The base of the tower is now a connection point for the new portico-like breezeway which links the hall reception area and the church. The new construction begins in this low walkway near the front entrance to the church so as not to compete visually with the existing facade. It continues southward, gradually stepping up in a spiraling progression, giving appropriately increasing hierarchical "weight" to the breezeway, the

Figure 12
Immaculate Conception Church & Hall
Traverse City, *1995*

reception area, the parish hall proper (known as the Centennial Hall), and the main mass of the church, respectively. The Centennial Hall itself, a large, open communal space made from simple, massive materials, and an exposed timber truss roof structure, is punctuated with a clerestory tower which mimics, but is made lower than, the two existing church towers in order to further tie the new and the old together into a single, unified composition.
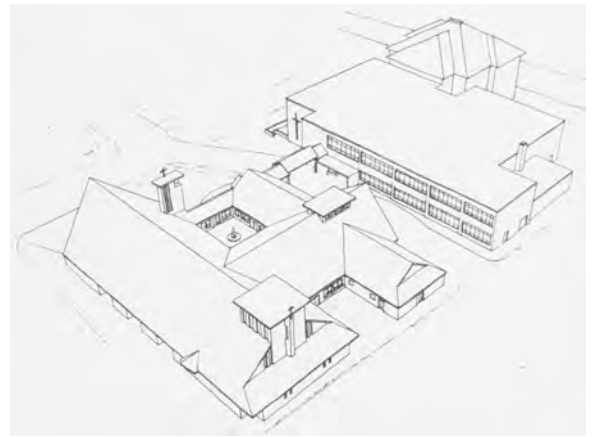
A number of formal exterior spaces have also been incorporated into the new design (Figure 12). The most prominent of these is an atrium courtyard which is formed by the intersection of church, breezeway, reception area, and Centennial Hall. In it we can imagine a devotional statue or sculpture in place of the more traditional fountain (for climatic reasons). Opposite the atrium is a rear courtyard supporting the existing southeast entrance to the church, entry to the Centennial Hall, and delivery access to the food preparation room adjacent to the Hall. Finally, the decision to place the new construction between the existing church and the Immaculate Conception Middle School building has made possible a more intimate connection between the activities of worship, community, and education as co-imperatives of the Catholic Church. In the spirit of this interrelationship, a new plaza will be created between, and enjoyed by both, the school and the church/hall building.

It is sincerely hoped that use of this new facility will promote the growth of the parish family's "sense of community" and the enhancement of the individual's experience of the church, as these two modes of its functionality must be supported jointly (Figure 13). Accommodation has been made in the new building for both personal and communal experience of the church. Places designed for quiet meditation and prayer exist along side places designed for group gathering and the celebration of community. Amidst the pro-

Figure 13
Immaculate Conception Church: atrium sketch
Traverse City, *1995*

grammatic intricacy of many such interrelating activities however, there are certain fundamental and enduring symbols of our faith that can best be communicated through strong and clear architectural forms, like the church nave, the sanctuary tower, the atrium, and the campanile. These ancient elements of Christian architecture continue to guide the design of contemporary buildings, providing a mode of connectivity with our rich cultural and religious past.

Project Participants:

Immaculate Conception Parish Pastor: Fr. Dennis Stilwell

Diocese of Gaylord: Bishop Patrick Cooney

Architect of Record: Cornwell Callahan Architects, PC, Traverse City, Michigan

Design Architect: Richard A. Skendzel

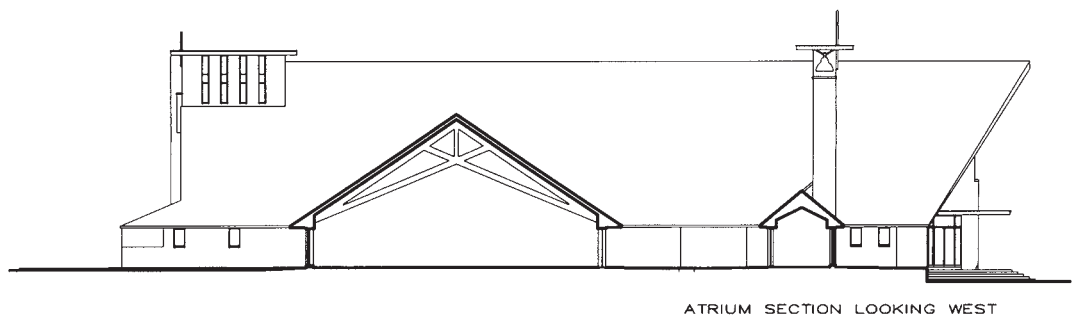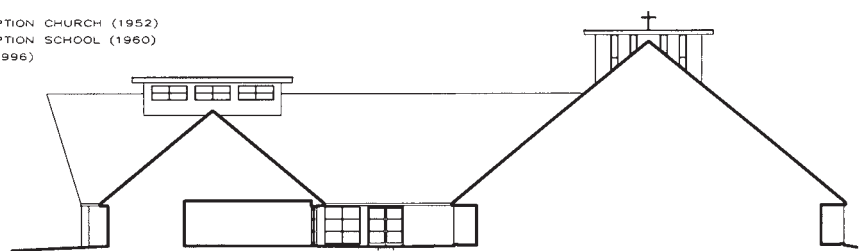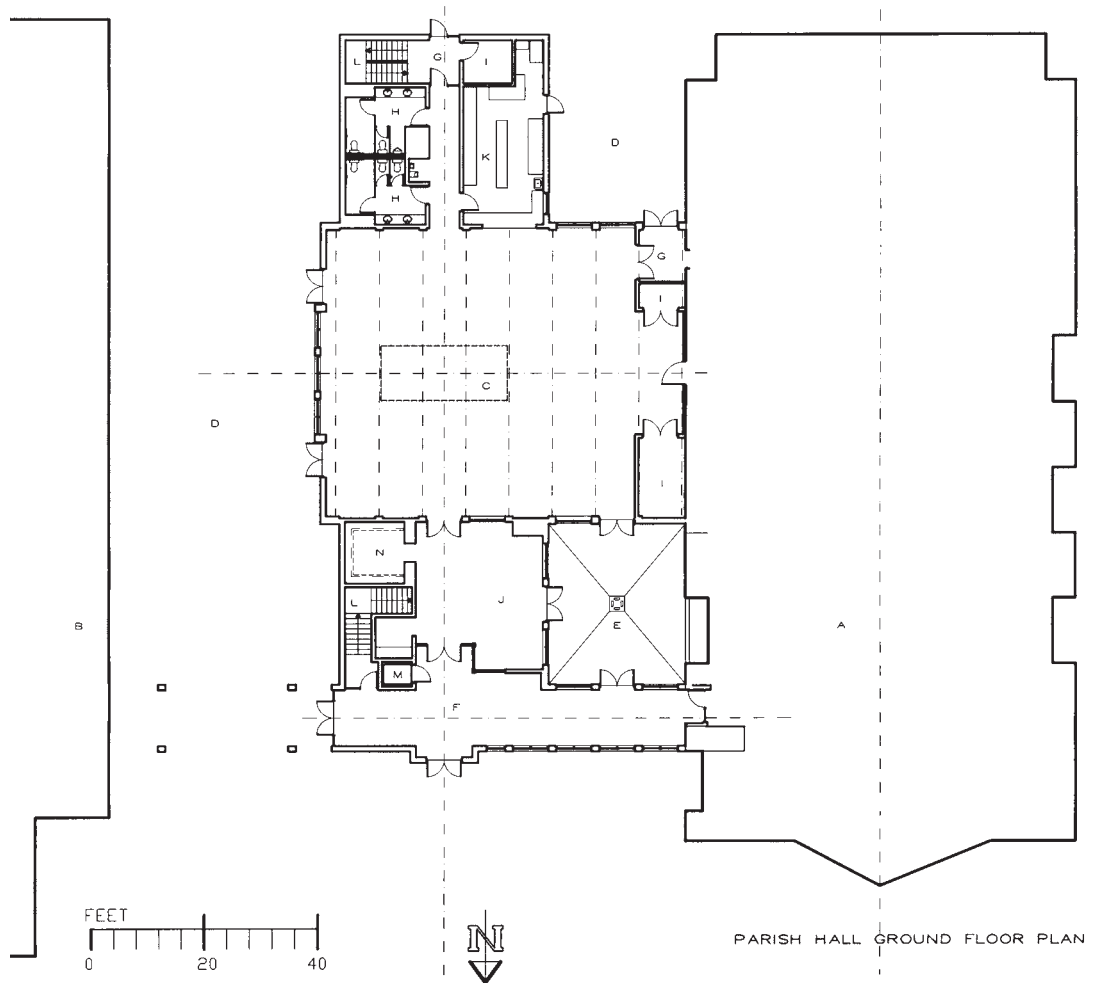Contractor: Hallmark Construction, Inc., Traverse City, Michigan

Sources for the Illustrations

Figure 1.: Title sheet of the original construction documents set for Immaculate Conception Church, Harford Field Associates, 1952, Immaculate Conception Church Archives

Figures 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, &10.: Kostof, Spiro, A History of Architecture, Settings and Rituals, Oxford University Press, New York, 1985.

Figures 8 & 9.: Price, Lorna, The Plan of St. Gall in Brief, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1982.

Figures 11, 12, & 13.: Pencil drawings made by the author for Cornwell Callahan Architects, Immaculate Conception Parish Hall design project.

PARISH HALL GROUND FLOOR PLAN

FEET

0   20   40

N

ATRIUM SECTION LOOKING SOUTH

ATRIUM SECTION LOOKING WEST

Aerial view from northeast
Immaculate Conception Church Parish Hall

North elevation with original church nave and bell tower to the right
Immaculate Conception Church Parish Hall

Interior breezeway connecting school, hall, and church
Immaculate Conception Church Parish Hall

"Centennial Hall" interior view
Immaculate Conception Church Parish Hall

Photographs of finished building by Dietrich Floeter Photography

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH
Traverse City, Michigan

Marble Ambo

Designed and fabricated: 1995-1996
Installed: March, 1996

Commissioned by Fr. Dennis Stilwell, Pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish, Traverse City, MI, the sturdy geometry of this ambo was created by re-using some of the Italian marble slabs salvaged from the old high alter (removed from the sanctuary in the mid 1970's). The ambo was designed by Richard Skendzel to take advantage of the specific pieces of marble material available. Fabrication and installation of the work was undertaken by Mr. Mark Knisely of Peninsula Granite and Marble Co., Traverse City, MI.

Marble ambo, rear view
Immaculate Conception Church, Traverse City, MI

Marble ambo, front view
Immaculate Conception Church, Traverse City, MI

Photographs by Dietrich Floeter Photography

CEDAR RUN EYE CENTER MEDITATION CHAPEL
Traverse City, Michigan

Designed and built: 1997

As part of his 25,000 SF Ophthalmology building, Dr. Timothy Hanley commissioned Architecture Technology, P.C. to design a small meditation chapel. The building floor space allocated for the chapel lent itself to the formation of an octagon, approximately 7'-6" square, in plan. From this beginning, the architect drew his inspiration from the centrally-planned church architecture of early and Medieval Christianity. The interior space is articulated with four devotional niches with segmented half-shell ceilings, while the main ceiling is an octagonal dome with three concentric coffers at its peak. The room's crystalline geometric form is furthered by an elaborate system of painted surface decoration, in a color pallet derived from the rich mosaic and illumination tradition of Byzantium.

Photographs by Dietrich Floeter Photography
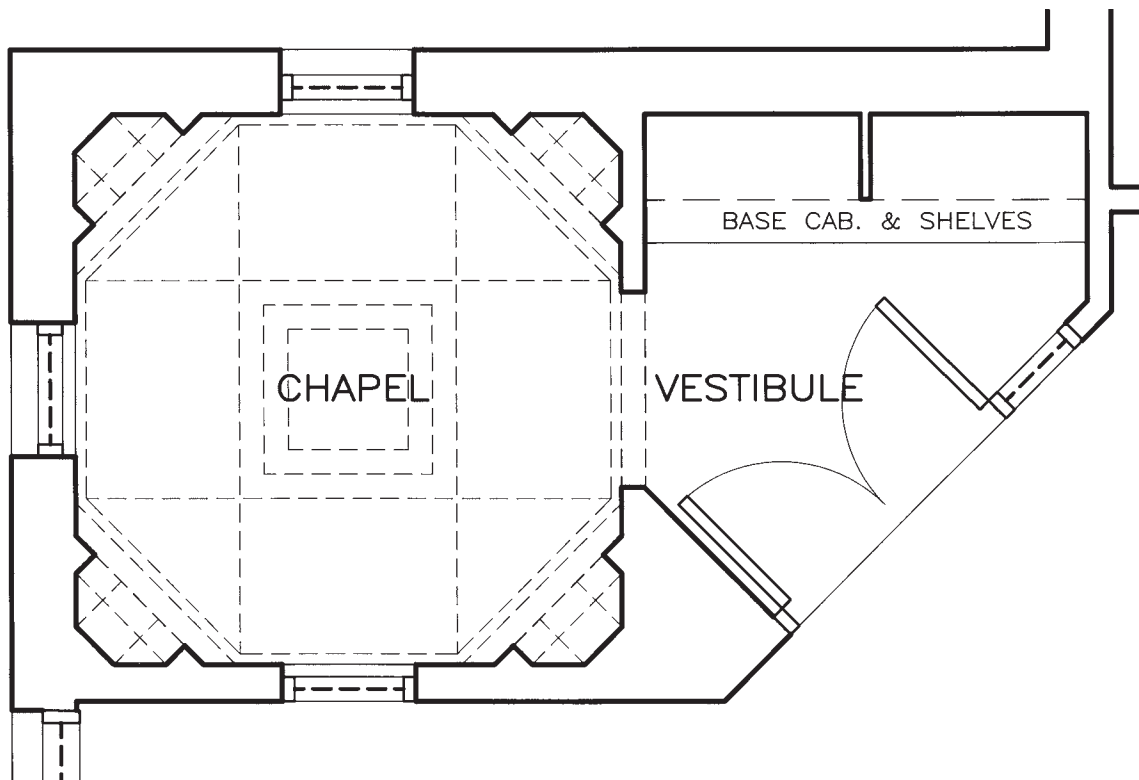
Meditation chapel plan
Cedar Run Eye Center, Traverse City, MI

Meditation chapel devotional niches
Cedar Run Eye Center, Traverse City, MI

Meditation chapel ceiling
Cedar Run Eye Center, Traverse City, MI

FRIENDS OF THE LIGHT MEETING HOUSE ENTRY PORCHES
Traverse City, Michigan

Designed and built: 1997

The Friends of the Light Meeting House has served as a Quaker Church since its original construction on this site in the late nineteenth century. The old wooden church is typical of the period in which it was built, with its dominant corner tower, intersecting gable roofs, and box-like massing. The church stands remarkably well-preserved today, with the most dramatic change being the lowering of the street elevation in the 1940's which necessitated the removal of the original wooden covered entry porches and their replacement with uncovered and uncharacteristically massive stone and concrete steps. In Architecture Technology's intent in its recent renovation of the porches at the main and side entrances was to return to the original character of the church, while adjusting the design for changes which had previously been made to the entry door configuration and to the site's grade elevations.

Photographer of period photograph unknown
Photograph of existing church by Richard Skendzel
Photographs of new construction by Dietrich Floeter Photography

Period view
Friends Church, Traverse City, MI

View prior to porch replacement
Friends Church, Traverse City, MI

View of church with new front porch
Friends Church, Traverse City, MI

Detail view of new front porch
Friends Church, Traverse City, MI

PROCESSIONAL CROSS

Designed and built: 1998-9

Having obtained an old silver-plated Ethiopian processional cross, Fr. Jose Martelli, CSC, Pastor, Sacred Heart Parish, Notre Dame, IN, commissioned Richard Skendzel to design

Fr. Martelli Writes:

The Ethiopian, Coptic cross is one of the oldest types of crosses in the world and it is an exquisite example of the Ethiopian casting techniques. Processional crosses played an important role in the very rich Ethiopian liturgy: The cross was used in the ritual of consecration of the baptismal water, in the blessing of the earth, and yes, to mark the rhythm of the liturgical dance after the consecration of the bread and wine at Mass. Our cross portrays at its very center the icon of the Mother of God to tell us that she stands as guaranty of the incarnation of the Word of God who died on the cross. Angels are at the sides of the cross. They are witnesses of the resurrection of the lord who ascended into heaven to be reunited with the most Blessed Trinity (top of the cross).

and fabricate a staff and stand especially for the cross. The objective in the design of the wood parts was to compliment the massing and detail of the Coptic cross without competing with or detracting from it.

The staff and stand are made of solid ash, doweled and glued together. The stand is composed of two Greek cross-shaped frames laid horizontal and held apart by four, square columns and a larger central wood block at the base. The lower end of the staff fits into a slot in the stand framed by the intersecting arms of the upper horizontal cross.
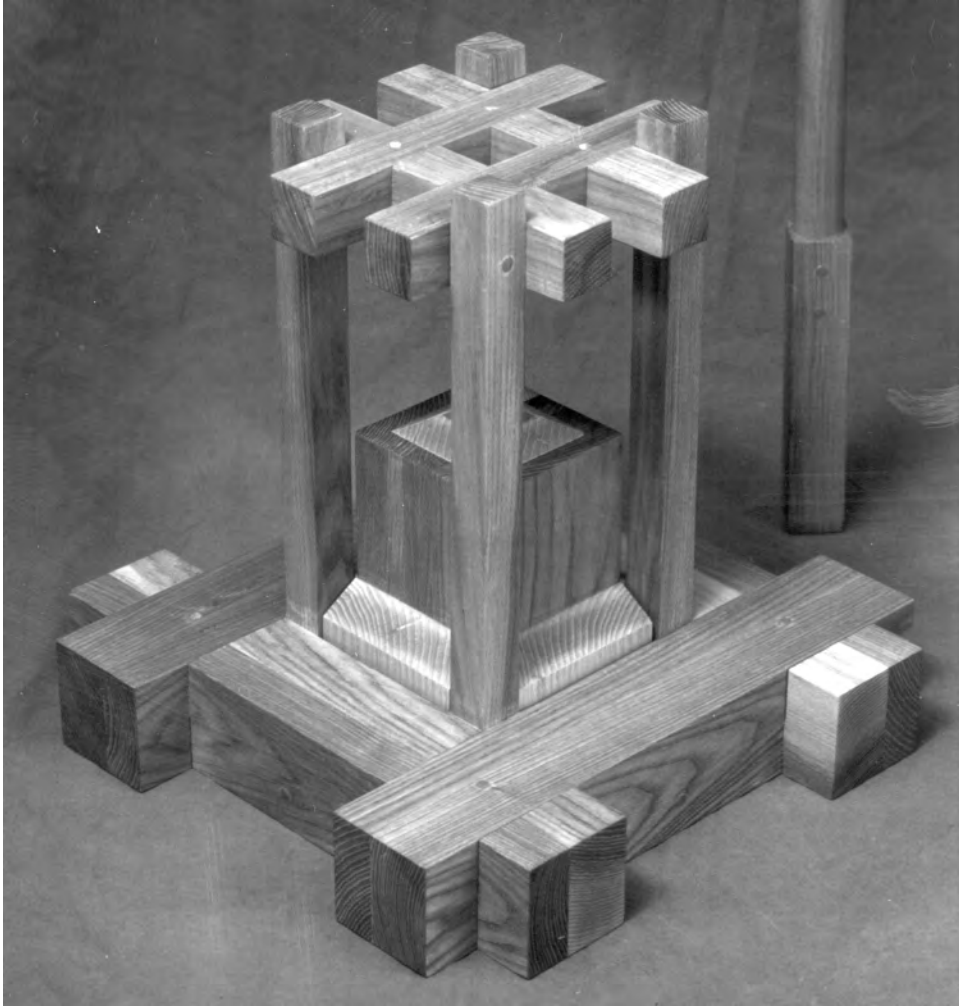
An additional cross form adorns the center of the staff. The four carved wooden plugs that terminate the arms of this three-dimensional cross conceal a reliquary chamber within.

The turned components were made by Laurence Skendzel.

Photographs by Dietrich Floeter Photography

Front view: silver-plated, Ethiopian processional cross

Base view: Processional cross staff and stand

View of three-dimensional cross containing a con-
cealed reliquary within the staff

Architecture Technology, P.C.

The Firm

Architecture Technology, PC began offering architectural services in January, 1996. We are a full service architecture firm with a special emphasis on high quality site, building, and furniture design. It is our mission to provide to our customers:

> Excellent architectural design
> Innovative technical solutions
> Integration of art and science

Its founder and president, registered architect Richard Skendzel, brings to Architecture Technology more than 10 years of experience from architecture firms in Chicago, Milwaukee, Boston, and Traverse City. A graduate of Interlochen Arts Academy, Skendzel holds a bachelor of architecture degree from Notre Dame and a master of science degree from MIT. Design work by Skendzel and Architecture Technology includes residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial projects, ranging from the single furniture or art piece to medium-sized buildings and site development.

Services provided by Architecture Technology include:

> Urban design and site masterplanning
> Architectural and furnishings design
> Construction contract documentation
> Construction administration

Architecture Technology delivers its services through the application of computer technology not only for production of construction documentation but also for design investigation and optimization. The firm has developed and continues to expand and improve its database of building design and construction technical information. In addition, the firm's library contains a variety of technical publications as well as a large collection of works on architecture history and theory.

Architecture Technology looks forward to assisting its customers in their future residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional planning and building projects.

<div align="center">

Architecture Technology, PC
14685 S. West Bay Shore Drive
Suite 102
Traverse City, MI 49684
(231) 933-4489

</div>

ARCHITECTURE TECHNOLOGY, P.C.

1304 Business Park Drive Traverse City, MI 49686-8640

tel. (231) 933-4489   fax. (313) 293-6412

Richard A. Skendzel, AIA, CSI
REGISTERED ARCHITECT
*

Credentials:

Certification: National Council of Architecture Registration Boards (since 1992)

Architect Registration: State of Michigan   #1301039857

     State of Wisconsin #7377-5

     State of Illinois   #001-020676

American Institute of Architects (AIA): Member (since 2004)

     AIA Northern Michigan, Chapter President (2006, 2007, & 2008)

     AIA Michigan, Board of Directors (2008 & 2009)

Construction Specifications Institute (CSI): Member (since 1992)

CSI Certified Construction Specifier (since 2002)

CSI Certified Construction Contract Administrator (since 2001)

CSI Certified Construction Documents Technologist (since 1995)

International Code Council (formerly BOCA): Member (since 1996)

Master of Science Degree: Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1994)

Bachelor of Architecture Degree: University of Notre Dame (1989)

High School Diploma: Interlochen Arts Academy (1984)

Services:

Schematic architectural and site design

Construction contract documents (detailed drawings and specifications)

Construction contract administration

Experience:

<u>Architecture Technology, PC</u>, Traverse City, MI: President (1996 - present)
     Commercial, residential, institutional, and industrial building design and documentation
     Corporate president and owner

<u>Cornwell - Callahan, Architects, PC</u>, Traverse City, MI: Architect (1994 - 1995)
     Institutional, industrial, and residential building design and documentation
     Office computer system development and construction specification development

<u>Bergmeyer Associates, Inc.</u>, Boston, MA: Architect (summer 1993)
     Two and three dimensional computer graphics design documentation

<u>Zimmerman Design Group</u>, Milwaukee, WI: Architect (1991 - 1992)
     Institutional and industrial building design development
     Construction technical detail design and construction specification development

<u>Hammond Beeby and Babka, Inc.</u>, Chicago, IL: Intern Architect (1989-91)
     Commercial, institutional, and residential building design development
     Masterplanning and preliminary architectural design
     Overseas representation

Objectives:

Excellent architectural design

Innovative technical solutions

Integration of art and science

*   *   *

AT

ARCHITECTURE TECHNOLOGY, P.C.

1304 Business Park Drive
Traverse City, MI 49686-8640
Tel.: (231) 933-4489
Fax: (313) 293-6412
*