

“As a bishop, I have the privilege of traveling to many other dioceses, particularly in our region, and witnessing the beauty and majesty of their cathedrals. It has been clear to me for some time that, for the benefit of the faithful, a cathedral renovation would more accurately reflect our devotion, love of God and evangelistic spirit. I pray that the coming changes to Saint Thomas More Cathedral will be a blessing to our entire community, where all feel welcome to join as brothers and sisters in faith, to worship God and receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit.”

—Bishop Michael F. Burbidge

Cathedral Renovation Funding

Bishop Burbidge had three principles for funding this project which have been achieved: that no debt would be incurred for the renovation, that no assessments would be taken from any parish, and that there would be no major capital campaign for this project.

To raise the funds, Bishop Burbidge met personally with donors who generously gave to the project beyond their normal contributions to their parishes, the diocese and Catholic Charities. Thus, no funds are being drawn from parish or diocesan accounts, including offertory and the Bishop’s Lenten Appeal.

About the architect

The Cathedral renovation architect is Jim O’Brien of O’Brien and Keane Architecture, an Arlington-based firm that has extensive experience with major renovations and construction in Catholic settings throughout the country.

“The cathedral project has been a great opportunity to consider the incredible architectural heritage upon which we as Catholics have to build,” O’Brien said. “Our team spent some time studying historical precedents and considering how certain solutions might be re-imagined and translated into a unique architecture for Arlington in the 21st century.



A northeast view of the cathedral shows the transept, rose window and a statue of Saint Thomas More.



Devotional shrines with statues of various saints representing different cultures and communities will be located throughout the cathedral.



The tabernacle will be placed in the center of the sanctuary.

SAINT THOMAS MORE CATHEDRAL

A Home to Saints, Past and Present

Saint Josephine Bakhita: A Witness to Faith

While the majority of funding has been attained, additional gifts are being received for statues and memorial items. African Catholics are participating in this effort and have selected Saint Josephine Bakhita as the statue to represent their community in the Cathedral. This statue and the related stained-glass windows will represent all African Catholics and teach others about the life and impact this saint had on the history of their Catholic faith . . .

(continued on page 3)

To support the Saint Josephine Bakhita statue in our Cathedral, please make check payable to GCC/St. Josephine Bakhita Project and mail to:

Ghana Catholic Community of Arlington Diocese
P.O. Box 1393
Falls Church VA 22041

Kindly note in memo line: Saint Josephine Bakhita Cathedral statue



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF
ARLINGTON



The parking lot side of the Cathedral of Saint Thomas More in Arlington (left) shows the before view of the north facade. The exterior stonework (right) will be redone in a Tudor style in honor of the diocesan patron Saint Thomas More, depicted in a new statue.



The previous sanctuary (left) has the tabernacle at the right and the bishop's chair, in the center. The new sanctuary shows the emphasis on the tabernacle being located in the center of our Lord in the sanctuary. The bishop's chair will be on the left and the ambo on the right. A new rose window will be installed behind the crucifix and will depict "The New Jerusalem" as found in the Book of Revelation.



When a new diocese is founded, an important consideration is the location and naming of its cathedral. When a diocese is formed out of an existing diocese, often a parish church is named as the new cathedral. This was the case in 1974, when the Diocese of Arlington was carved out of the northern rim of the Diocese of Richmond. The parish of Saint Thomas More Catholic Church in Arlington was designated as the cathedral by Pope Saint Paul VI.

The symbolism and role of a cathedral

The word cathedral comes from the Latin "cathedra," which is the bishop's chair and signifies his governance and pastoral ministry over the local church. The cathedral is where the cathedra is located and symbolizes the bishop's pastoral care and his responsibility to teach, sanctify and shepherd the entire diocese.

The cathedral should set the standard in the diocese for clarity of teaching, the noble and beautiful celebration of the church's liturgies, and the joyful exercise of pastoral charity. In addition to being a parish church, it should also be considered home by the faithful throughout the diocese. In our Cathedral, many gather for celebrations, such as adult confirmation and multicultural liturgies, as well as the Chrism Mass and ordinations.

A cathedral is a beacon of hope. With timeless architecture and art, it is a reminder that while times change, God's promises never change nor do the truths of the Catholic Church. On the outside, a church should stand out as a testament to the sanctity of the

Catholic faith to all who enter. Then, upon entering, it should be a place of beauty to bring glory to God and imbue a desire to worship Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Sandy Dominick, a member of the Diocesan Pastoral Council, said, "When we come to our cathedral from across our diocese of 70 parishes, we gather to make new friends, to share in the liturgies, to grow in holiness, to walk closely with God and to fulfill our baptismal promises through the gifts and love Jesus gives us in the sacraments shared with one another. We are then sent forth to share his love in our own environments."

Renovations

After much prayer, deliberation and consultation, and in preparation for the 50th anniversary of the diocese, Bishop Michael F. Burbidge decided to renovate the Cathedral of Saint Thomas More.

The exterior stonework of the cathedral will be redone in a Tudor style to honor the era in which our diocesan patron Saint Thomas More lived.

Inside the cathedral, the most significant change will be the design of the sanctuary. Previously, the bishop's chair was in the center and the tabernacle to the side. The new design will place the tabernacle — in which our Eucharistic Lord resides — in the center — and gives a physical, architectural expression to the centrality of the Eucharist in our lives.

"It is in Christ, and his gift of the Eucharist, which we find true happiness," said Father Patrick L. Posey, cathedral rector. "Placing the tabernacle where his sacrificial love for us is offered reinforces this centrality of our relationship with him. The tabernacle can be seen, then, as an invitation to worship and converse with Jesus; moreover, it is an invitation to witness — to become, as our patron saint reminds us, 'God's servant(s) first.'"

The cathedra will be relocated to the left as one faces the sanctuary, and the sanctuary will be redone in marble. The beauty of the stone and its design sets the sanctuary apart and emphasizes the importance of what happens there. The location of the choir loft will remain unchanged, behind the sanctuary.

Devotional shrines with statues

The new cathedral design will have devotional shrines with statues of various saints who have had an impact on our faith over the centuries. Because the cathedral represents all the faithful of the diocese, these shrines will include saints who represent the different cultures and communities located throughout the diocese. Behind each statue will be stained-glass windows that tell the story of that saint's life or of that culture. The cathedral will exemplify both the oneness and the diversity of the diocese — that our one body has indeed many parts.

Saint Josephine Bakhita: A Witness to Faith

(Continued from the cover)

"Representatives from the African Catholic community are thrilled to have this opportunity to leave a lasting thumbprint on our Mother Church," said Bridget Wilson, diocesan director of multicultural ministries. "This saint they have chosen is an amazing witness to the faith and will serve as a constant reminder to all who visit that, though many, we are one body in Christ."

The funding needed for the statue and stained-glass is \$100,000. All friends of the African Catholic community are invited to support this effort. If you would like to make a gift, please see the giving instructions on the back of this brochure.



These photos offer an image of Saint Josephine Bakhita that the statue inside the Cathedral will be based on.