

St. Anthony Cathedral Basilica Beaumont, TX



OVERVIEW

St. Anthony Cathedral, now also a Basilica in Beaumont, Texas, had only seen the most basic of repairs for the thirty years prior when leadership engaged liturgical design maestros Rohn & Associates to program and implement a master plan to restore its beauty and bring the building functionally up-to-date. For three years, Liturgical Designer Rolf Rohn and his team worked closely with Father Jeremiah McGrath to carry out \$6 million of repairs and renovations to fulfill a vision for the sacred space that began under the direction of Bishop Curtis Guillory: transforming the shell of a Cathedral into a replica of Rome's revered 12th century Basilica of San Clemente, one of Christianity's oldest churches. A year after the renovation was completed, Pope Benedict proclaimed St. Anthony Cathedral a Minor Basilica as it was now deemed an excellent architectural and liturgical environment reflecting Catholic tradition with significant attention to promoting particular devotional ministries. Rolf and his team had to return to this sacred site again when the building suffered millions of dollars worth of water damage from Hurricane Rita in 2005 and Hurricane Ike in 2008. His dedicated teams worked quickly to ensure all damage was fixed and did not cause further deterioration of the structure and its beautiful art. They also completed previously planned artwork that had not yet been funded during the first renovation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

During the first renovation, the scope of work included space formation, a rebuilt Baldachin, seating, flooring, lighting, surface repair, new baptismal font, interior decoration, restoration of existing Stations and restoration of liturgical art, restoration of the vestibule and reconciliation chapels and new chapels for devotional shrines.

After the structure was ravaged by the storms, Rolf recommended a detailed program to repair the damage to the substructure, walls, art, decorative stenciling, gold leaf, lettering on the dome and nave, cleaning of statues, and re-stretching and reinstallation of two pieces of fabric sanctuary art.



PROJECT EXECUTION

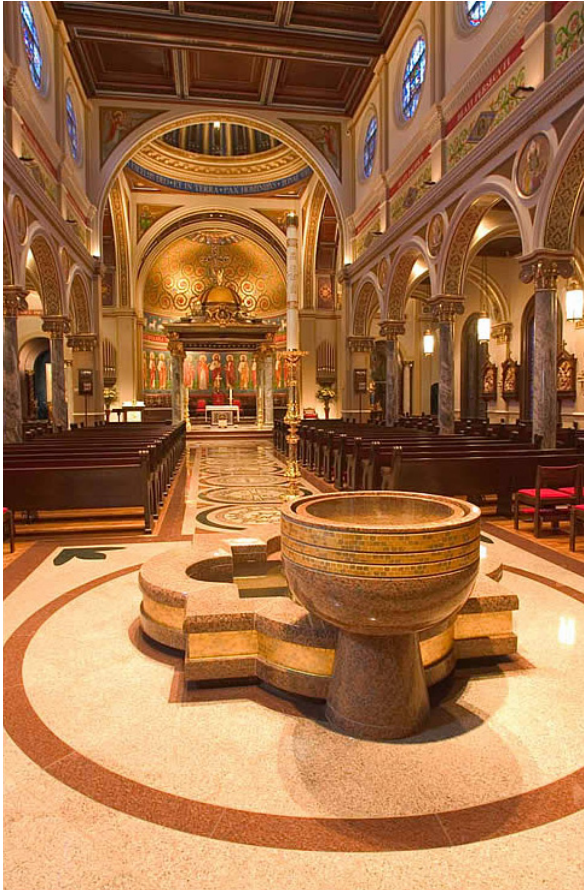
- Rolf recommended slightly thrusting out the sanctuary to provide better sightlines for parishioners and rebuilding the old Baldachin located toward the back of the sanctuary and placing it over the new altar.
- Our Custom Studio designed new granite flooring with symbols of the Church virtues, along with raised sanctuary steps and shrine niches.
- Presbyterium seating was introduced in the apse area, as is the traditional location in cathedrals.
- The existing seating was realigned and refinished, and new frontals were designed in character with the original woodwork.
- Reconciliation chapels were restored and acoustical sound boards installed.
- Surfaces were carefully restored to prevent further deterioration before implementing a complete interior decorating plan developed by Liturgical Interior Designer Kathy Maglicco to brighten the interior and tie it together with all liturgical art and furniture.
- The sanctuary's exquisite reproduction of the apse mural of vines and branches from the ancient Church of San Clemente was hand-painted and gold-leafed to be more in line with the original apse in Rome. The lower section has a Lamb of God and Saints represented as the Lamb cut in two, indicating that they died as innocent believers. Below that are beautiful images of Christ, Blessed Mother and the Apostles.
- Rolf created beautiful chapels to provide appropriate private celebrations for the reserved Eucharist, Divine Mercy and Our Lady of Guadalupe.
- Existing Stations of the Cross, in storage for many years, were restored.
- A state-of-the-art lighting system now focuses appropriately on liturgical art and actions.
- Rolf developed an exterior plaza with a pillar decorated with a resurrected Christ on it, ADA ramps, striking bronze doors with the words "This is the gateway to Heaven" above it in Latin, and an Easter fire pit.

COMPLETED PROJECT

Today, Beaumont's St. Anthony Cathedral Basilica is a stop for many pilgrims from all over the world who appreciate the timeless beauty and highest caliber of work. His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI, recognized the liturgical glory and historical significance of St. Anthony Cathedral by proclaiming it a Minor Basilica on July 11, 2006. It is truly a gateway to Heaven.







COMPLETED PROJECT