

FAQs – RCC Renovation Project

January 13, 2018

1. Why has the RCC renovation project been initiated?

Upon the recommendation of the Parish Pastoral Council and with the approval of Father Sal, the ad hoc Resurrection Catholic Church Renovation Committee (“RCCRC”) has been established to develop a church renovation plan. This plan is to provide for enhancement and any needed structural repairs of our church’s altar and worship space. In addition, the “RCCRC” will consider possible improvements to other church building areas, including the commons, office space, classrooms, and Morrow Hall. At a minimum, RCC’s altar space needs to be expanded for safety and practical reasons, and the flooring needs to be repaired and replaced to comply with “GIRM” requirements. (See also Question 4 below).

2. How were the Renovation Committee members selected?

Upon the recommendation of the Pastoral Council and with the approval of Father Sal, members of the “RCCRC” were selected to represent a broad cross section of RCC’s various committees and ministries that would be most directly concerned with and affected by the renovation project. In addition to Father Sal and Deacon Barry, committee membership includes representatives from the Pastoral Council, Capital Improvement, Finance Council, Parish staff, Youth Faith Formation, Worship, and Art/Environment.

3. Why is the Richmond Diocese’s approval required for RCC’s proposed renovation project?

The Catholic Church organizes itself under the Code of Canon Law, which can be found on the Vatican website. When our church was established as a mission church and subsequently as a full-fledged parish, its charter specified that it would be fully subject to and operate in accordance with the Code of Canon Law. Canon Law specifies that all parishes will administer their property (temporal goods) as governed by the requirements of canon law. Under canon law, the Bishop has full authority concerning the purchase, administration, or sale of church property within his diocese. Hence, in our diocese any building and renovation projects over \$25,000 or any project that involves changes to the sanctuary/worship space must be approved by the Richmond Diocese.

4. What is the source/basis of rules and regulations that govern the administration of church property and configuration of the church’s worship space?

Under the Code of Canon Law, canons 1254-1310 regulate the purchase, ownership, administration, and sale of temporal goods—i.e., all church property. (See Vatican website)

General Instruction of the Roman Missal (“GIRM”), Third Edition, as introduced by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2011, presents English language instructions for celebration of the Eucharist in the Roman Catholic Dioceses of the United States. Chapter V of the “GIRM” sets forth precepts and guidelines (“Instructions”) for “The Arrangement and Ornamentation of Churches for Celebration of the Eucharist.” The RCC renovation project must be compliant with these requirements. (See website: www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/the-mass/general-instruction-of-the-roman-missal)

5. What is the role of the Richmond Diocese’s Building and Renovation Committee (“BARC”)?

Acting under the authority of the Bishop of the Richmond Diocese, the “BARC” is responsible for reviewing and approving any building and/or renovation project involving liturgical space, regardless of its scope and size. The “BARC” enforces “Limits of Authority” (guidelines for approvals required to implement a building or renovation project based on the estimated monetary value of the project), and it oversees and administers a seven-phase review and approval process for project implementation. As the Bishop’s delegate, the “BARC” must make decisions and operate in accordance with the Code of Canon Law and the “GIRM.”

6. Why does the installation of kneelers need to be part of the RCC renovation project?

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Richmond requires that its member churches have kneelers installed to facilitate the celebration of the Eucharist in accordance with the “GIRM” and the instructions of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Since RCC did not provide for kneelers during its initial construction, the “BARC” now stipulates that priority be accorded to installing kneelers as part of any building and renovation project. This applies to all churches in the Richmond Diocese.

According to the “GIRM”, Chapter II, Instruction 43, throughout the Dioceses of the United States the faithful “should kneel beginning after the singing or recitation of the Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy) until after the Amen of the Eucharistic Prayer, except when prevented on occasion of ill health, or for reasons of lack of space, of the large number of people present, or for another reasonable cause.”

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (“Praying with Body, Mind, and Voice” – 2010) underscored that prayer during Mass “is expressed by our bodies well,” and affirmed “that the bishops of this country have chosen the posture of kneeling for the entire Eucharistic Prayer.”

7. Why is reorientation of the choir being incorporated into RCC’s renovation project?

As the choir is currently situated, choir members do not have the opportunity for full participation in the Mass as is required for all congregants. Choir members do not have a direct view of the altar and the priest as Mass is being celebrated. The proposed 90 degree reorientation of the choir will afford the choir the opportunity to fulfill its liturgical role, lead parishioners in song, and allow each member full, sacramental participation in the Mass.

According to the “GIRM,” Chapter V, Instruction 312: “The choir should be positioned with respect to the design of each church so as to make evident its character as a part of the gathered community of the faithful fulfilling a specific function. The location should also assist the choir to exercise its function more easily and conveniently allow each choir member full, sacramental participation in the Mass.”

8. Why is moving the tabernacle to the altar area being considered for RCC’s renovation project?

According to the “GIRM,” Chapter V, Article 314: “...the Most Blessed Sacrament should be reserved in a tabernacle in a part of the church that is truly noble, prominent, conspicuous, worthily decorated, and suitable for prayer.”

RCC's tabernacle is currently located in our Chapel. Unfortunately, due to the configuration of RCC, this placement is neither "prominent" nor "conspicuous" for those attending RCC to celebrate Mass and engage in prayer.

Subject to the approval of our Bishop and taking into account that, at times, our worship space needs to be used for non-liturgical functions, the "RCCRC" is considering an interim solution to position a tabernacle behind or near the altar at the same time that we continue to maintain the Chapel tabernacle. As appropriate to circumstances and approved by RCC's pastor, the Most Holy Eucharist will be reserved in the tabernacle behind or near the altar or in the Chapel when our worship space is being used for a secular activity or on Good Friday. The tabernacle in which the Most Holy Eucharist is reserved will be designated by a permanently shining bees wax candle.

9. Why does the flooring have to be replaced on the altar and in the nave?

RCC's altar flooring needs to be repaired and replaced, and the sanctuary/altar area needs to be expanded.

Repair of the sanctuary/altar floor is necessary because there is significant weakness in the under-flooring which should be reinforced for safety reasons and to eliminate floor creaking that interferes with celebration of the Mass.

The altar needs to be enlarged because with the growth of the number of Eucharistic Ministers that participate in Mass celebration there is significant crowding on the altar that impairs movement of the celebrant and makes it unsafe for those standing at either side of the altar while the Eucharist is being celebrated.

The altar's current carpeted surface needs to be replaced with either a stone, tile, or a hardwood surface to permit recovery of the Most Holy Eucharist in case of accidental dropping or spillage.

The carpeting in the nave is quite worn after more than 20 years of service. It needs to be replaced with new carpeting or a different flooring, such as tile or wood.

10. Why does the altar furniture have to be replaced?

RCC needs to upgrade its altar furniture to bring our church in compliance with the "GIRM" requirements. The altar table top should be made of stone or, alternatively, of solid wood and permanently fixed to the altar floor—ours is not. The ambo also needs to be upgraded to be a stationary fixture as complement to the altar table. (See "GIRM," Chapter V)

11. Why is changing the location of the "Risen Christ" rendering within the worship space under consideration?

The "Risen Christ" rendering is recognized by virtually all RCC parishioners as an important symbol. It represents our congregation's dedication to our Lord Jesus Christ, RCC's welcoming disposition to all who wish to join us in worshiping God and Jesus Christ according to Roman

Catholic beliefs and precepts, and the cornerstone for the foundation of our parish. The "RCCRC" believes that the "Risen Christ" should be prominently featured in our worship space. However, the "RCCRC" is also cognizant that Instruction 308 of the GIRM specifies that there is always to be a cross with the figure of Christ crucified upon it "either on the altar or near it, where it is clearly visible to the assembled congregation." For this reason, consideration is being given to relocating the "Risen Christ" to another prominent part of the worship space and to have a depiction of Christ crucified the central focus overlooking the altar.