

The New Church on Cowan Crescent

There is nothing gothic about St. Anne's Roman Catholic Church, no pointed arched windows, no graying weathered stone. Instead the new church, designed by Etienne Gaboury of St. Boniface and built at 1701 Cowan Crescent rises in copper-sheeted blocks to a tower with an inset stained glass window.

Stained glass windows are traditional in church architecture, but at St. Anne's are abstract in gold, purple and white, suggesting religious themes, but not detailing them. From the outside, the lower walls of the building are textured with white stucco, with the copper sheeting rising above the white base and soaring upward to the tower.

Gaboury is a leading young church architect, and designed this church to fit new liturgical requirements, and to bring aesthetic fulfillment to the 300 families who make up the congregation.

The hall and rectory are built attached to the church, to give an artistic unity to the whole complex. Rev. John Floyd, pastor of St. Anne's, believes the church to be as modern as those which will be built 25 years from now.

The size, scale and strength of the space corresponded directly to the hierarchy of functions it encloses and these spaces are knit between one function and the other. The nave itself introduces each sacramental space.

The congregation's participation in all liturgical functions is ensured by placement of the baptismal font and the circular confessional in front of the sanctuary space. The font is at the entrance of the sanctuary as a symbolic entrance to the Christian community. It, and the alter, pulpit, reserve alter and sedilia are constructed of ebony opalescent granite. The font is depressed in the floor recalling the descent into the water, and is filled with running water, symbol of purification and life.

The elevated alter, beneath the 64 foot tower, is the focal point of the church. Semi-circular vents partially surround the alter.

The pews are arranged in five rows, tiered as in a theatre, and will accommodate 500 persons at a time.

Natural lighting above the alter flows in through stained glass windows, which portray in abstract symbols, doves, water, crosses and rugged lines.

Rough-hewn cedar rise above the pews to a peak 64 feet above the black opalescent granite alter. The stained glass windows are set into the tower.