

# Reflecting Heaven

## Notes on the OLMC Sanctuary Renovation

### Christmas Edition Overview

*A blessed and merry Christmas to all, whether visitor, newcomer, or daily Mass participant at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel! This great Solemnity of the Nativity of our Lord, perhaps beyond all other feasts of the year, is one of beauty and mystery. In the bitter cold of a winter's night, we reflect on a heavenly star beaming upon a tiny stable in an obscure village in the Middle East, drawing worshipers from foreign lands. We wonder at the story of humble shepherds keeping watch over their flocks, startled into awe and action by the "multitude of the heavenly host." And most of all, the magic of the Christmas season helps us ponder the mystery of all mysteries and wonder of all wonders: the God of heaven and earth takes on the flesh of the frailest humanity, the infant of a poor couple reduced to sheltering in a place so humble it is fit only for animals.*

Hopefully this Christmas season holds some moments of enchantment for each of us. Moments in which God does not seem distant, moments in which, in spite of ourselves, our hearts, more than our minds, allow God to draw us into a close embrace.

If you feel that mystical encounter even once this Christmas season, wouldn't it be a profound blessing to experience it every time you walk into Our Lady of Mt. Carmel?



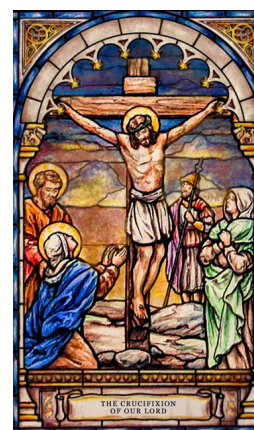
Wouldn't it be grand to leave the outside world behind you for a bit, enter these doors, and sense God's presence in awe and wonder? Would that not help you delve into the Mass with a deeper fervor, a deeper union with God and your fellow worshipers?

That, in a nutshell, is why you see evidence this Christmas of an upcoming change at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. Between now and Holy Week, we will strive to make the interior of our church more conducive to prayer, worship, and nurturing a relationship with Jesus Christ and his Church.

**So, what should we expect in the coming months?**

### WHEN?

The plan is for the renovation to be completed before Holy Week (April 9). All Sunday Masses will continue to be celebrated in the church during the renovation. Weekday Masses will move to the St. Thomas Aquinas Room in the lower level, except for school Masses (MWF 8 am), which will be in the gym.



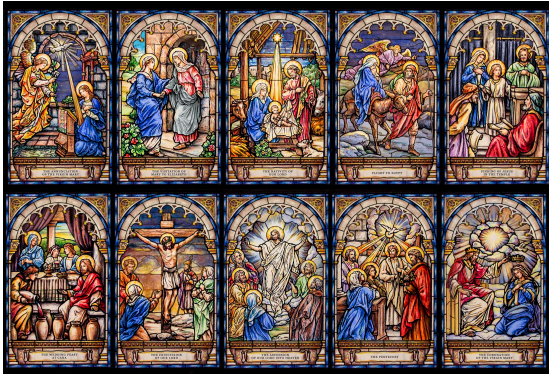
### WHO?

A committee of clergy, staff, and parishioners has long been meeting, consulting, and refining plans. Along the way we have worked with some of the most respected liturgical designers in the country. In the end, the architectural firm is Scholer Corporation from Lafayette, in liturgical consultation with Martin Rambusch, based in New Jersey. The general contractor carrying out the work is Olive Wood Construction, led by OLMC parishioner Kayser Swidan.

## PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

### STAINED GLASS

- 10 new stained glass windows will replace both the old stained glass and the 6 clear windows that now flank the sanctuary. At press time, all are being resized to match.
- The 10 windows depict scenes in the life of the Blessed Virgin Mary, our patroness. A separate article will follow with window details.
- The present stained glass will be repurposed, probably elsewhere on campus.



### STATIONS OF THE CROSS

- Our present minimalist stations will be replaced with more representational ones that inspire prayer and reflection. The final design has not yet been determined.

### SANCTUARY

- The sanctuary will be reshaped to provide more space. The back wall of the sanctuary will be repositioned and covered with a more noble material than the tile that covers it now.
- Since the shape of the sanctuary will change, the flooring will, as well. The same marble flooring for the sanctuary will extend down the center aisle all the way to the Baptismal font.
- The Tabernacle, Ambo, and presider's chair will all shift location to provide a more worthy place of reservation for the Blessed Sacrament and better liturgical function overall.
- The ceiling decking over the sanctuary will be painted a lighter color than the rest of the nave, to help set the sanctuary apart and raise the heart toward heaven.
- Future articles will treat the sanctuary in detail.

### NAVE & LIGHTING

- Many parishioners and visitors comment that our nave is oppressively dark. This project will add light, with the dark brick of the outer walls stained a lighter color.



- Light oak (matching the pews) wainscot will wrap the large structural beams in the nave.
- The present lighting will be replaced by LED lighting that will:
  - Conserve energy and be far more economical
  - Much more effectively and artistically light the nave and sanctuary.
  - Provide different lighting scenes for various liturgical functions.

In short, 2017 promises to be an exciting year that will not be without its inconveniences and adjustments to change. But the ultimate goal of this renovation is to be inspired to a closer relationship with Jesus Christ and his Church. *Amen!*

