 **\* international forensic architecture and design \***

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**MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT COLUMBARIUM**

**AND OPEN-AIR PERGOLA**

The Columbarium project has been a 4-year process. The location of the Columbarium was initiated as an Eagle Scout project by Boy Scout Gregory Grant Hodges for a prayer garden in 2010 that lead to the desire for and the design of the Stations of the Cross in 2019. Then In 2020, the idea of a Columbarium was born. A Committee was formed, and the design was initiated by the architect that has overseen the development of the MBS campus since 1978. The construction of Phase One of the Columbarium was dedicated on June 22, 2024, four years in the making. The four years in the making were filled with challenges from the City of Arlington rewrite of the City Ordinance to several construction issues. Your Columbarium Committee has overcome these adversities to provide MBS parishioners with the Columbarium project they have requested and deserve.

**The Purpose (from the MBS Policy for the Columbarium):**

*“The purpose of the Columbarium is to provide a place on the Church property for the permanent preservation of the ashes of cremation* *for Church members and their families. The Most Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church Columbarium is an answer to the age-old concern of the Christian community to participate in the proper disposition of the earthly remains of those who have shared the fellowship. This is to be a place especially for those who love Most Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church and have a sense of closeness to it, which they would like to preserve even after death. It shall be hallowed ground, sacred to the memory of those who have departed from our midst.”*

**The Overall Design:**

The MBS Columbarium design is focused on the commitment to maintain design continuity throughout the design of all structures on the MBS campus. The design reflects several elements in the existing facilities to create a beautiful sculpture for the MBS Columbarium. It has both aesthetic and quality design along with the use of practical and quality materials.

**The Columbarium:**

The Columbarium plan shape reflects the linear octagonal shape of the plan shape of the Sanctuary and the other buildings on campus. The vertical heights of each Columbarium Niche wall are designed to create a reverent and open feeling of the spaces, as well as provide a secure feeling of safety while one is in the Columbarium area. The materials selected for the Columbarium reflect other materials provided on the campus. The face brick matches the face brick of the buildings; the niche faceplate granite is compatible in color to the color tones of the grey elements of the buildings; the black granite is the same black granite used in the Right to Life sculpture. The cast stone caps reflect the stone boarders of the Memorial Garden. The tree is the center focal point of the Memorial Garden, the Stations of the Cross, and the Columbarium and Open-air Pergola. The tree represents the Knights of Columbus as a focal point of their dedication to the Memorial Garden and Stations of the Cross. The infrastructure of the niche walls contains concrete piers, concrete beams and concrete columns to withstand the environmental elements Arlington experiences.

**The Open-Air Pergola:**

The open-air pergola structure reflects the roof design of other buildings on campus. The 6 “X” bracing features in the clerestory section of the open-air pergola reflect the “X” bracing features found in the Sanctuary and other major buildings on the campus. The clerestory section contains diagonal bracing that reflects the diagonal bracing seen in the wood trusses in the Sanctuary. The design of the steel fins creating the cover of the open-air pergola is inspired by other buildings on the MBS campus standing seam metal roofs. The 16-inch spacing of the steel fins reflects the other buildings standing seams 16-inch spacing of their metal roofs. With the Open-air Pergola, there was a study made of the sun angles, and the 16-inch spacing also provides optimum shading and openness for the Columbarium, Memorial Garden, and Stations of the Cross area and landscaping. The gray color of the pergola matches the gray color of the other buildings on campus metal roofs. The open-air pergola has been designed as and is considered a sculpture, a piece of art, that will draw attention to the location of the Right to Life sculpture, the Our Lady of Guadalupe statue, the Memorial Garden, the Stations of the Cross, the Memorial Wall and the Columbarium. The pergola will be the focal point and a beacon to guide people to this hallowed ground and reverent location sacred to the memory of those who have departed from their family’s midst.

**The Memorial Wall:**

Memorial Walls will be included in the Columbarium and Open-air Pergola to provide a place on Church property to permanently honor, recognize and respect those loved ones of Church members and their families. The Memorial Walls will consist of black granite etched plaques.

**The Future:**

Future plans incorporate additional support elements in the design and construction of the hallowed grounds of the Right to Life sculpture, Our Lady of Guadalupe statue, the Memorial Garden, the Stations of the Cross, the Memorial Wall, the Columbarium and the Open-Air Pergola. A future addition of wrought iron and face brick fencing for the enclosure and security of the area will enhance the reverent and respectful space. Empty conduits have been installed underground for a future sound system for music and worship; for a security system; and for lighting for evening visitations, evening worship, and security.

The Columbarium has been designed for future growth as well. The design has created three sections to respect and honor the three Archangels. The St. Michael the Archangel section will ultimately have 352 niches. The St. Gabriel the Archangel section will ultimately have 304 niches and a Memorial Wall with 48 granite plaques. The St. Raphael the Archangel section will ultimately have 96 niches, an altar, and a Memorial Wall with 48 granite plaques. Additionally, marble statues of each of the Archangels along with memorial benches and additional landscaping are planned.