

# DIOCESE OF SANDHURST

## RENOVATIONS OF A CHURCH

### GUIDELINES

#### Reference Material

*General Instruction to the Roman Missal* (2002)

Chapter 5 – The Arrangement and Furnishings for Churches for the Celebration of the Eucharist (288-318)

*Built of Living Stones* (2000)

*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* (1963)

Chapter 7 – Sacred Art and Sacred Furnishings (122-130)

*Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1994)

Part II: Chapter II: Article IV – Where is the Liturgy Celebrated (1179-1186, 1197-1199, 1379)

*Code of Canon Law* (1983)

Book IV – The Sanctifying Office of the Church  
(858,937-8,964,1188,1216,1235)

#### **The Altar**

- It is desirable to have a fixed altar in every church...but in other places set aside for liturgical celebrations, the altar may be movable.
- The major altar must be freestanding and central.
- The altar is to be of natural stone, though the Conference of Bishops may judge that another material may be used that is worthy, solid and artistically made.
- Moderation should be observed when decorating an altar
- There is to be a cross, with the corpus, either on the altar or near it, which is clearly visible to the people gathered together.
- The credence table should be sufficiently large for ablutions to be easily and discreetly performed in the sanctuary area

#### **The Ambo**

- The dignity of the Word of God requires the church have a suitable place for the proclamation of the word that is a natural focal point for the faithful.
- It is appropriate that the ambo be stationary and those using it be visible.

#### **The Presiders Chair and other seats**

- The Presiders chair should stand out as a symbol of his office. Thus it is best suited facing the people within the sanctuary area. Anything resembling a throne is to be avoided.
- A number of suitable chairs for concelebrants should be available

#### **The Tabernacle**

- The tabernacle should be in a part of the church which is truly noble, prominent, readily visible, beautifully decorated and suitable for prayer.

- The tabernacle should be immovable, not transparent, and lockable. There should be only one tabernacle in each church.
- It is in keeping that the tabernacle in which the Most Holy Eucharist is reserved not be on the altar on which the Mass is celebrated. The location is made according to the diocesan bishop, either in the sanctuary apart from the altar of celebration (not excluding an old altar no longer used for celebration). Or in a chapel suited to the faithful's private adoration and prayer, which is connected and conspicuous.
- A special lamp which burns continuously must be near the tabernacle, to indicate the presence of Christ.
- The placement of the tabernacle must be carefully considered. All possible solutions should be examined from building a new chapel, the redeveloping an existing space to maintaining the status quo.
- In case of dispute the diocesan bishop will have final judgement.

**The plan of the church** must mark off the sanctuary area from the body of the church. The baptismal font may be near the sanctuary, or some other place where the participation of the congregation during Baptisms is possible. The arrangement of the space should remind the faithful where they are and encourage them to prayer.

**The Confessional** provides an opportunity for an anonymous encounter with a fixed grille or face-to-face encounters as the penitent chooses. Privacy from the outside must be ensured.

**The places for the faithful** should be arranged with care so they may be able to be full, conscious and active participants. The seating should be arranged so the faithful may take the postures required during the celebration, and provide unimpeded access to receive Holy Communion. All ministries must be able to be seen and heard.

There should always be an **accessible area at the front of the Sanctuary** for the placement of the casket during funerals and the possibilities of gathering of members of the faithful for blessings.

**Sacred Images** are appropriate and may be displayed for veneration so they may guide people to the mysteries of the faith celebrated there. The images should not distract the worshipping community and should not be increased indiscriminately. There should be only one image of any given saint, and the images should be beautiful and uniting.

The church should be designed so that a **choir and musicians** may be part of the gathered community. The location should assist the choir to exercise their ministry.

The organ and other lawful instruments should be so placed, that they may be heard by all, and sustain the singing.

**The Baptismal font** should use clean water, be attractive and if possible accommodate immersion and well as infusion.

**A Place of honour** should be made for the Easter Candle, the Oils of Baptism and the Sick, and any processional cross used.