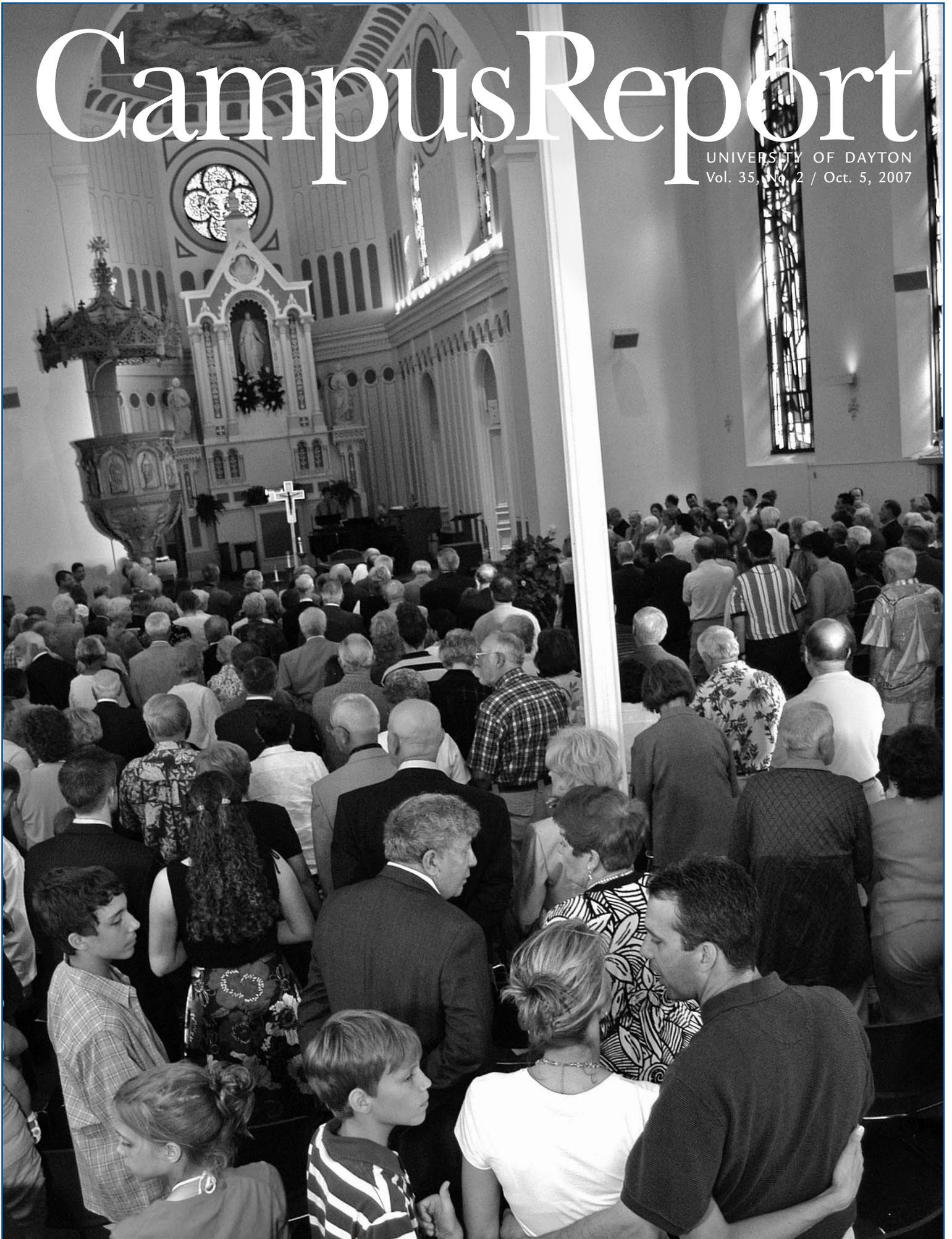


# CampusReport

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# Chapel renovation planning begins

## Liturgy is the heart of renovation

A campus committee, proceeding carefully and prayerfully, has begun planning for the renovation of Immaculate Conception Chapel, so that the University of Dayton community can more fully celebrate the liturgy for generations to come.

Father Chris Wittmann, S.M., director of campus ministry, and Claire Renzetti, professor of sociology, chair the committee that began at a July retreat to consider the chapel's role in the faith life of the University. As a new campus master plan takes shape, the committee is assessing present and future worship spaces.

The liturgy is the heart of the renovation.

"The chapel, which seats 315 people on the main level, has become inadequate for the needs of the UD community," Wittmann said. In addition to more seating, the community needs "sufficient space and quality design to allow the complete celebration of the full range of liturgical actions called for by the church, and aesthetics that enhance prayer through beauty, dignity and simplicity," he said.

Built in 1869, the chapel is widely embraced as the heart of the UD community. For many, the chapel's dome and simple exterior symbolize the faith commitment and humble, welcoming spirit of the University. Over the decades in the chapel, Marianist brothers have professed and renewed their religious vows, students and graduates have become engaged and been married, and funerals have been held.

"Given its history, legacy and location, it's desirable to discover ways to renovate and expand the chapel so that it can remain, for the foreseeable future, the primary daily and Sunday worship space, as well as a place for personal devotional prayer outside of liturgies," Wittmann said.

The renovation goes hand in hand with the renewal of liturgy and Christian faith. "The process will help educate the community about the liturgy and the space needed for a full celebration of the



liturgy," Renzetti said. A gathering space, a baptistery, a reservation chapel for the Eucharist, a reconciliation room and multipurpose rooms are among the other needs being explored.

The renovation will honor the chapel's architectural heritage and liturgical history. The committee's guiding concepts note "the honesty of materials, nobility of design and solid workmanship of the chapel speak to the pioneering spirit of faith of the first Marianist Brothers in the United States of America. As much as possible, these qualities should be preserved. The elegant simplicity of the

architecture, both interior and exterior, should be a guide in the design of any renovation and expansion."

Toward those goals, the committee will hire and work with liturgical and architectural consultants to develop the renovation plan and design. Requests for proposals will be sent this semester. The renovation plan will follow the guidelines of Church law as found in official liturgical documents, including the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' guidelines "Built of Living Stones: Art, Architecture, Worship." See <http://www.usccb.org/liturgy/livingstones.shtml#preface>.

A construction schedule has not been set. After Jan. 1, 2009, however, the sacristan will not make commitments to reserve the chapel for weddings and other events.

More information on the renovation will be posted on the campus ministry Web site at <http://ministry.udayton.edu/>.

## Chapel's limitations hamper a full celebration of the liturgy

During the rituals of Holy Week and the Triduum — the great three-day liturgy encompassing Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil — the limitations of Immaculate Conception Chapel become particularly apparent. There is insufficient space for the washing of the feet and the veneration of the cross. The chapel also lacks a permanent and prominent baptistery. The Church's Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults notes that "the baptistery or the area where the baptismal font is located should be reserved for the sacrament of baptism and should be worthy to serve as the place where Christians are reborn in water and the Holy Spirit." Currently in Immaculate Conception Chapel, adult catechumens are baptized in a plastic fishpond, purchased from Lowe's and disguised by potted plants and flowers.

In addition, as the committee's guiding concepts point out, "Full celebration of the Eucharist calls for a design which provides adequate space for the distinct and complementary roles of the various ministers; the essential role of the congregation gathered before the word and around the altar; the vital role of music ministry as an integral part of the congregation; and the various processions and movements of the liturgy. Consideration must also be given to the particular space needs of weddings, funerals, the profession of Marianist religious vows and Marianist jubilee celebrations."

## Renovation's 'guiding concepts' focus on faith, liturgy, past and future

The chapel renovation committee has recommended four guiding concepts for the renovation of the Immaculate Conception Chapel:

■ The process of renovating the chapel should be a faith-formatinal experience.

The process will help educate the community about the liturgy and the liturgical space needs for full, active and conscious celebration of the liturgy.

■ The liturgy itself is the heart of the renovation.

The needs of a rich celebration of the entire liturgical year will be the top priority of the renovation and will guide decisions.

■ The renovation will respect the architectural heritage and liturgical history of the chapel as it seeks to enhance the space for future generations.

The chapel is a testimony in brick, stone and wood to the priorities of Marianist founder Blessed William Joseph Chaminade: the primacy of faith;

the development of the "essential interior" life; and dedication to Mary. ... Worshippers develop profound personal attachments to the places in which they celebrate the liturgy, ritualize vocational commitments, mark life-changing events, and are formed more fully into the Body of Christ. As much as possible, the process and outcome of the renovation will honor these truths.

■ Once renovated, the Immaculate Conception Chapel will evangelize for generations to come.

The chapel might be thought of as a sort of laboratory for faith development. The liturgy celebrated there not only educates us, but it

transforms us into the Body of Christ. In and through the liturgy our faith comes alive and sends us out in mission as servants of God, one another, and the poor. As the University would seek state-of-the-art technology in a science laboratory, so the best quality possible ought to be demanded for the chapel as a learning laboratory of the highest kind.

A fuller treatment of the guiding concepts will be posted on the campus ministry Web site at <http://ministry.udayton.edu/>.

*Once renovated, the Immaculate Conception Chapel will evangelize for generations to come.*

## Historically, the Chapel has always been a work in progress

**1868** Brother Maxim Zehler, S.M., submits plans for the proposed church to the Marianist General Administration in Paris, which finds the plans too pretentious and orders a substantial reduction of the intended edifice. Construction begins and the structure is under roof by winter.

**1869** The chapel is consecrated and dedicated by Cincinnati Archbishop John Purcell. The building, completed at a cost of \$40,000, is 120 feet long and 50 feet wide with 42-foot high walls. Features include a belfry, containing four bronze bells, capped by a cupola with an 8-foot cross. Smaller crosses, gilded in gold adorn the miniature towers at the four corners of the belfry. A main altar and two side altars are installed. The tabernacle features "a colossal door that sometimes threatened to defy the efforts of the priest to swing it open." Other features were a hand carved pulpit with figures of the four Evangelists and the Blessed Virgin Mary. "Today the pulpit is hardly more than a relic for seldom do preachers any longer wedge themselves past the narrow opening from the sacristy to the platform," Brother Elmer Lackner, S.M., wrote in a history of the chapel prepared for its 75th anniversary.

Ten enormous stained glass windows (five on each side of the main body of the chapel) display a "rather disappointing lack of a full exercise of artistic ability," the result, perhaps, of keeping expenses down and permitting sufficient light. The four side windows of the sanctuary contain representations of Sts. Peter, Paul, Augustine and Ambrose. The windows in the front and rear walls were richly tinted rosettes, "perhaps the prettiest specimens of architecture in the chapel." Not much is known about the decoration of the walls and ceiling in 1869; the *Catholic Telegraph* refers to the chapel as "elegantly frescoed."

**1876** The reredos — the carved wooden superstructure with the large niche that contains a statue of the Immaculate Conception — was probably added "and served to fill in the awful vacancy that had previously existed," Lackner wrote.

**1883-1929** Photos from this era show paintings on the ceiling of the sanctuary — the Coronation of the Blessed Virgin and on the main body of the church of Christ blessing the little children.

**1899** Electric lighting was introduced.

**1901** A smaller bronze door replaces the cumbersome tabernacle door.

**1919** Brother Edward Gorman, S.M., a maintenance man, draws plans and supervises construction of the confessionals, breaking through the walls beneath four large side windows and using bricks believed to have been remnants of Zehler Hall's old chimney.

**1924** A Wangerin organ, costing \$15,000, is installed, replacing the 1869 tracker action organ that would shrink or swell according to the weather conditions.

**1929** The chapel undergoes an extensive \$20,000 redecoration and alteration, with new floors, pews, chandeliers, and heating and ventilating systems.

**1950** Repainting and retouching

**1970-71** A \$95,000 renovation, considered controversial by some alumni and students, provides for the liturgical renewal recommended by Vatican II and corrects some structural defects. Ten abstract stained glass windows replace the leaking side windows. The murals, statues, side altars, main marble altar, Stations of the Cross and the pews were removed.

**1983** To make space for standing-room only crowds and increase seating from 260 to 360, the main altar moves to a side wall and sits on a 21-inch-high platform to improve visibility. The congregation sits in a semi-circle facing the altar. An additional 50 chairs can be placed in the elevated area behind the former main altar.

**1985** The chapel dome is repaired, repainted and relighted.

**2000** The chairs and altar are reoriented to use the original architectural direction of the chapel, while highlighting both the ambo and altar as focal points. The new arrangement still poses challenges for communion distribution. Air conditioning, better heating and ventilation and a new sound system are installed.

Sources: "Historical Account of the University Chapel," by Brother Elmer Lackner, S.M., 1944; Flyer News



## Chapel renovation committee

Co-chairs: Claire Renzetti and Father Chris Wittmann, S.M.

Committee members and the areas they represent are:

Father Jerry Chinchar, S.M., campus ministry/  
Marianists

John Haley, board of trustees

Dave Harper, advancement

Kathy Henry, student

Katie Jennrich, student

Eric Stoiber, student

Beth Keyes, facilities management

Brother Tom Pieper, S.M., campus ministry/  
Marianists

Sandra Yocum Mize, religious studies

Loretta Schaefer Puncer, alumni