



NEWS ARCHIVE:

Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon

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K of C Indoor Games executive director Bob Barkman, glass artist Sarah Hall, Holy Family pastor Fr. David Tumback, Bishop Donald Bolen, Knights of Columbus State Deputy Ed Gibney and Building Chair Jim Nakoneshny (l-r) at the cathedral site after the installation of solar stained glass in May 2011.
- Photo by Tim Yaworski

Construction continues on cathedral; solar art glass installed; opening set

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

Work continues on construction of Holy Family Cathedral and Catholic Pastoral Centre in northeast Saskatoon, with the first Mass in the building expected to take place in December.

As Holy Family parish and the Catholic Pastoral Centre diocesan offices prepare to make the move to the new multi-purpose building, plans are underway for official opening celebrations in the spring, to take place over a week, from May 6 to 13.

During a diocesan Administration Day Sept. 7, 2011, Jim Nakoneshny, who chairs the building committee and was also recently hired as facility manager for the new cathedral, reported on the history and progress of the project.

**Cathedral Opening Gala Week:
May 6 to 13, 2012**

Watch for details in the weeks ahead!

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Prompted by the urgent need for a new parish home for Holy Family, with its rapidly growing congregation in expanding neighbourhoods of northeast Saskatoon, plans for the construction project increased in scope when Bishop Albert LeGatt decided the new building would also be the new cathedral for the diocese. This grew out of the fact that St. Paul's Cathedral is no longer large enough to function as a cathedral for diocesan events. (St. Paul's will continue to serve parishioners: and permission was obtained for the historic building to be designated a Co-Cathedral.)

It was also evident that the Catholic Pastoral Centre next to St. Paul's was facing a chronic shortage of space from which to coordinate diocesan programs and ministries. Therefore, a Uniting in Faith campaign was launched in 2008 by the diocese and Holy Family parish to raise funds for the \$28.5 million combined project. Ground was broken in December 2009 and construction started immediately.

Nakoneshny detailed some of the unique requirements of the 65,000-square-foot building, which combines many uses. The Diocesan Liturgy Commission has assisted with design to ensure the cathedral meets liturgical requirements, he noted.

As well, it was determined that the building should "have a lifespan of well over 100 years – this entailed choices in construction method and building materials, such as field stone and concrete." The most distinctive feature of the new building is the "soaring spiral roofline of the central cross, which reaches to a height of over 175 feet," Nakoneshny noted, before describing a number of details of the building to the diocesan gathering.

Pat Clarke of Holy Family parish spoke about plans for official opening celebrations May 6 to 13, which he described as an historic event, with plans for a variety of celebrations, concerts, and family events.

In recent months, a number of key developments and installations have taken place, including the solar stained glass designed by Canadian artist Sarah Hall. Presently hidden by scaffolding, the solar stained glass will eventually be visible from the outside, as well as from points inside the sanctuary.

Hall and a team from Germany were on hand for the precise installation process in May, and she spoke about the unique solar glass to the media and at a public presentation held at a local book store.

Taking her inspiration from the prairie skies, Hall's design of the "*Lux Gloria*" project includes three large panels in red, in gold and in blue/green, with a total of 54 pieces of glass in different sizes. Solar technology is incorporated into the design, which has been pioneered in North America by Hall, who works with a fabrication studio in Germany to create the glass, which will collect solar energy to help meet power needs of the new building.

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The solar stained glass in the spire is also visible from inside the sanctuary



“Here we are, taking that (strong south-facing) light, creating energy from it and creating something beautiful – really, after our installation, it feels like a really perfect fit for the cathedral. We’ve done something that sets a new precedent,” she said.

Saskatchewan Knights of Columbus state council is taking on fund-raising for the solar stained glass. (This presently includes sharing proceeds from a home lottery and organizing an upcoming performance by the comedy group “*Hey Nunnie Nunnie*” in Macklin Nov. 1, Ituna Nov. 2, and Saskatoon at Prairieland Park Thursday, Nov. 3.)

The combination of beauty and technology captures the imagination, said Bishop Donald Bolen of the solar glass installation, adding that striving for beauty in places of worship is a natural impulse.

“A church building and its art are designed to reflect the glory of God and God’s creation,” he said. “To also do that in a way that is environmentally responsible and serves as a kind of symbol of our desire to respect the environment – all these things come together wonderfully in this solar stained glass.”

In recent months, the bishop and the building committee also decided to proceed with the rest of the



The solar stained glass panels were carefully installed in May 2011.

Photo: Sarah Hall studios

interior non-solar stained glass planned for the cathedral. Originally, it was thought this glass art would be added later, after a fund-raising campaign. However, it became clear that it would be far less disruptive to proceed with the glass now, during the construction process (for instance, before pews are in place) rather than later on, said Bolen.

As a result, fund-raising efforts have started for the stained glass, with parishes and individuals being asked to consider supporting the installation. In some cases, individuals are purchasing a portion of the stained glass in memory of loved ones, or as a legacy that will be recorded and recognized in a display planned for the new space, said Don Gorsalitz of the Saskatoon Diocese Catholic Foundation, which is coordinating fundraising for the glass.