

Sacred Space

YOU NEVER KNOW WHERE A QUESTION MAY TAKE YOU....

The OLSS Thursday morning Bible Study class was finishing up Catholicism: The Pivotal Players, Vol. I, at the end of January. (This study program is part of Word on Fire, Bishop Robert Barron's Catholic global media ministry.) "The Pivotal Players displays the potential that friendship with Christ unleashes in the lives of His disciples."

"The Players" presented by Bishop Barron in Vol. I are St. Francis of Assisi (the reformer), St. Thomas Aquinas (the theologian), St. Catherine of Siena (the mystic), Blessed John Henry Newman (the convert), G. K. Chesterton (the evangelist) and Michelangelo (the artist). As Barron states, "Not all who know Christ will manifest the heroic virtue that makes one a saint, but all Christians are gifted with the potential for mighty deeds and can contribute, in accord with their state of life, to the transformation of all things in Christ. . . . whether apparent or hidden, it is Christ who is present, active and working."

So, what has this to do with Sacred Space? Back to Bible Study class: Michelangelo was the "Player" for the day and the chapter's final question (for personal application) was **"What works of art are in your parish church? What do they signify?"** Great chance to visualize OLSS, as each sees it!

The first response was our Stations of the Cross. How timely! That day, January 31st, was the feast day of St. John Bosco (1815-1888), the Italian priest whose Salesian Order founded in 1979 the free, five-year boarding school(s) in impoverished areas of the Peruvian Andes. There, in the Don Bosco cooperative, our handsome Stations were created - hand carved and painted by young people who'd learned (along with a core curriculum) their trade from the Italian artisans who came to the Peruvian schools to teach the youths a trade that would sustain them and their families and keep them in the area. These young people are now artisans in their own right.

Another mentioned the beautiful painting of The Divine Mercy Jesus, which hangs just to the right of our Marian chapel. One said it was a singular piece in that Jesus was smiling! This painting was a commissioned gift of love to OLSS from the late Loretta and Nelson Henry.

The small colorful floral quilt hanging in the Ladies Room off the gathering area had captured another's attention. This piece, entitled "A Bouquet for St. Joseph" (his lilies) is the handiwork of one of the Sisters of St. Joseph whose mother house is in the heart of historic St. Augustine. The Sisters (SSJ) remain a huge gift to the Catholic Church throughout the state of Florida since their arrival from Le Puy, France, in 1866, at the request of Bishop Augustine Verot, also formerly of Le Puy, the first Bishop of the Diocese of St. Augustine.

And a Marian picture was the final noted artwork: Our Lady of Perpetual Help, a copy of the celebrated 15th century Byzantine icon. Our Blessed Mother as depicted from this apparition hangs in our gathering area on the west wall, to the left of OLSS front doors.

What works of art in our church come to your mind? What makes your choice(s) significant to you?

May our renovated Sacred Space fill our hearts and minds with more such special visions - that capture our attention and inspire our devotion.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

The OLSS renovation cost is \$8.5 M.
As of 2/05/19 we have received pledges totaling \$3,713,946 from 231 families.
Of that pledged amount, we've received \$1,419,853 in cash.

The Diocese requires half, in our case \$4.25 M, in cash, on hand, before permission will be given to begin construction.

Pledge/payment options include cash, check, Faith Direct, appreciated stock, bequests, IRA distribution (70 1/2 yrs.) and real estate. A 3-yr. payment plan is available. It is understood that this is a gift beyond that of the weekly offertory. As such, it is a sacrificial gift, deserving careful and prayerful consideration.

All gifts, no matter the size, are most appreciated and it is hoped that all in the parish will find a way to participate.

THANK YOU and may God bless our church as we move forward on this campaign.

