

St. Anne's Church in East Moline concludes 100th anniversary celebration with renovated sanctuary



Michael McNeil and Lona Friedman stand in the newly renovated altar area in St. Anne's Catholic Church in East Moline. The final observance of the church's year-long centennial celebration will include a mass at 10 a.m. on Sunday, July 28.

EAST MOLINE — “Remember-Rejoice-Renew” is the vision created by the 100th-anniversary committee at St. Anne's Catholic Church in East Moline in celebrating the church's anniversary.

The “Year of Celebrations” began in April of 2018, and the observance traced church history in remembering parish history, rejoiced in the heritage of faith and family, and renewed plans for the future.

The church was last renovated in the mid-1980s, according to church member Lona Friedman, who also serves on the anniversary committee. She said “Renew” became a major focal point as there was a strong desire to incorporate renewing the church building to take worshippers into the next 100 years.

The congregation recently moved “back home” to their renovated church after attending masses at two alternate locations beginning in January.

Masses from mid-January until Palm Sunday were held at St. Mary’s in Moline and Our Lady of Guadalupe in Silvis.

Plans are underway for the final observance of the centennial celebration and include a mass at 10 a.m. on Sunday, July 28, with invited guests including Bishop Daniel Jenky and former priests, sisters and vocations from the parish.

After the mass, there will be a reception, luncheon and historical display in Cleary Hall.

Most of the renovation changes to the church were completed in the altar area at a total cost of just over \$200,000, which was primarily funded by parish members through a Centennial Renew Fund Drive.

Michael McNeil, of Studio 483 architects, and also a church member, designed the renovation. He said the tabernacle was raised 18 inches off the main altar and now sat on its own platform with steps on three sides.

”The tabernacle platform is now covered with its own canopy, which sits on four massive columns,” he said.

Spotlighting was added to showcase the features of the crucifix and the canopies, and each of the two side altars now had canopies with new lighting to accent the statues of Mary and Joseph.

The interior of the church has been repainted to a neutral shade in an effort to brighten the areas. Ceiling panels in the dome skylight were changed to light and dark blue.

The renovation included refinishing and reinstalling the pews over new carpeting.

McNeil said the entire interior of the church now was illuminated with all LED lighting for energy savings and longer life.

“The sound system was upgraded to a state-of-the-art system with more flexibility, and both the organ and speaker system have been rebuilt,” he said.

The Rev. James Pallardy, who was called to serve St. Anne’s Church in June, credits the Rev. Antonio Dittmer, church pastor when the project got underway, for his support of the renovation project.

“Father Dittmer was influential in the plans for the restoration,” Pallardy said. “As the new pastor, I see the restoration of the church as a clear testament to the love St. Anne parishioners have for their parish as we celebrate our 100-year anniversary.

The “Year of Celebration” observance got underway in April 2018 with a special mass and dinner. Other events included a “Cinco de Mayo” celebration, Family Fun Fest, spaghetti supper and trivia night, and the July 28 mass will culminate the celebration marking the July 26 Feast Day of St. Anne.

In addition to the vision, “Remember-Rejoice-Renew,” the anniversary committee also created a mission statement:

- **Remember** parish history — “By remembering those who have come before us, we honor the legacy of the diversity of our founders who, molded by God’s blessings and the holy priests He empowered, joined together to establish our church and school.”
- **Rejoice** in people and achievements — “By rejoicing in our heritage of faith and family, we appreciate past sacrifices which enabled our parish to grow and flourish and serve as an inspiration to our members, past and present.”
- **Renew** plans for the future — “By renewing our commitment to our parish, we will create an environment of enthusiasm, encouraging growth and flourishing spiritual life for future generations.”