

St. Francis Xavier Church, Camrose, Alberta

Preamble:

History of St. Francis Xavier

St. Francis Xavier was born in 1506 in Spain. In the name and mission of Jesus Christ, he labored most successfully in this great ministry as priest, missionary, and member of the Jesuit Order (Society of Jesus). He was one of the greatest of all missionaries. He brought Jesus Christ to the hearts of those who did not know Him and those whom His life and message had not yet reached. He was one of the founders of the Jesuit Order. He was born in the Basque Castle of Xavier, not far from Pamplona, Spain.

He led extensive missions for evangelization, mainly in the Portuguese Empire of that time. His missionary work extended to India, South East Asia including the eastward islands such as Malacca (Malaysia), the Moluccas (the famous Spice Islands, now part of Indonesia), East Timor, New Guinea, Thailand, Japan, and the island of Macau off the coast of China. As St. Francis Xavier was serving under the patronage of the Portuguese Crown, his missionary voyage followed the path set out by the Portuguese.

St. Francis Xavier spent two and one half years in Japan, baptizing over 700 people. For his evangelization of Japan, he brought the essentials of the faith such as the Creed and also paintings of the Madonna and the Madonna and the Child. Three centuries after he left Japan, Protestant missionaries discovered approximately 100,000 Christians still practicing in the Nagasaki area, despite their faith having been driven underground by persecution.

In 1552 he returned to Goa in India and began preparations for his evangelization of China. He died off the coast of China with his dream, vision, and desire to evangelize China, not realized.

Pope Francis said in a homily addressed to St Francis Xavier's Jesuit brothers on August 1, 2013:

"It is always pleasant for me to think of the sunset of the Jesuit, when a Jesuit finishes his life, when the sun goes down. ... A classical sunset of St. Francis Xavier, looking at China...

This end of Xavier has been painted so many times, even in literature in a deep description of peace..."

(I added - like the peace on the face of the dying Jesus on our processional cross which design comes from a Croatian tradition to depict the dying Jesus at peace with His Father's will).

Pope Francis continues:

"At the end, having nothing, but in the sight of the Lord; it does me good to think about this. ... Let us ask for grace that our sunset will be like this."

It is the true spirit of the Jesuit, in the end, to lose all and see only Jesus - all centered on Jesus. This focus or centering on Jesus is depicted on the emblem of the Jesuit Order with the composition 'IHS' being the first three letters (iota-eta-sigma) in the name of Jesus in the Greek alphabet.

St. Francis Xavier died on December 3, 1552 on Shangchuan Island off the coast of China. He was 46 years of age. He was canonized a saint by Pope Gregory XV on April 12, 1622 at the same time as St. Ignatius Loyola.

In only ten years of evangelization, energized by boundless zeal to spread the faith, he visited over ten countries spread over ten modern time zones and voyaged over tens of thousands of miles by ship. He learned many languages, adapting his preaching to widely dissimilar cultures and baptizing over 30,000 people. He pioneered methods of evangelization that put an emphasis on finding points of contact between the Gospel and the local culture. In Japan he gave more attention to the forms of life such as politeness, dress and delicacy of communication. The heart of his evangelization was the love he had for Jesus which translated into his genuine care for the people he served who were poor, uneducated and pagan.

He was named by Pope Pius XI as the 'Patron of Catholic Missions' and all works for spreading the faith.

The Environmental Worship and Art Spaces of St. Francis Xavier Church Which Express Some of the Experiences of St. Francis Xavier

Our new St. Francis Xavier Church depicts some of St. Francis Xavier's Christ and Gospel centered life.

The Baptismal Font

The Baptismal Font will most profoundly remind us of St. Francis Xavier. He baptized approximately 30,000 people.

The Baptismal Font, located at the entry to the nave of the church, is directly underneath the spire of the church. The height from the ground to the top of the spire is 35.4 metres (116'). The height of the spire, not including the cross above it, is 32.17 metres (105' 6"). The height of the cross above the spire (from the base of the cross to the top of the cross) is 3.23 metres (10' 6").

The front and backside of the cross on the spire outside the church faces east and west. Thus it is fully exposed to Camrose Drive traffic travelling east and west, 50th Street, and to the parking lot which gives main entry to the church. Theologically and liturgically, the front of the cross should face east where the sun rises, a depiction of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. So, symbolically and beautifully again, we present the whole paschal mystery depicting Jesus' blessed Passion, glorious Resurrection and Ascension into heaven. Theologically, the whole mystery of Jesus is presented, which is in harmony with the Gospel presentation of Jesus Christ.

The spire has nineteen stained glass windows - six on the east, west, and south sides and one on the north. The colors in the windows are blue, red, white, and yellow, representing various symbols and events of baptism, death, resurrection, rebirth and new creation.

These stained glass windows on the spire will be lit at night from the inside. The spire and the lit cross will be a beacon of light and a testimony of our faith to the people of Camrose. The cross will be a reminder of the cross Jesus carried to bring us new life and also the cross St. Francis Xavier always carried in his hand.

The granite used in the Baptismal Font is named 'Lemurian'. It has a greyish background with flashes of crystal blue and gold. It is quarried near the town of Ihosy, located in the central south of Madagascar, off the tip of Africa. The quarry is located in the Diocese of Ihosy and is under the Archdiocese of Fianarantsoa in Madagascar. St. Francis Xavier left Portugal in 1541 and arrived in Mozambique in August of the same year. Mozambique is in southeastern Africa on the Mozambique Channel between eastern Africa and Madagascar. This route was one St. Francis Xavier travelled on missionary voyages. The quarry is capable of producing large 'raw blocks'. Our Lemurian granite was shipped from the quarry to Carrara, Italy to be prepped, carved and polished. The next voyage involved shipping it to Vancouver via the Panama Canal at which point it was transported to Camrose.

The floor around the Baptismal Font is made of Blacked Flamed stone. It is finished with a rough surface for non-slipping purposes. It is prized for its durability for building and structural applications.

Part of the ritual of Baptism is described below.

The candidate takes three steps down into the font. After the Baptism, the candidate takes three steps up on the other side and goes to a special room to dress in the white baptismal robe. The three steps going down represent the candidate's participation in the death of Jesus. The three steps going up on the other side represent the candidate's participation in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

Immersion and submersion can be practiced in our Baptismal Font.

Immersion means that the candidate stands or kneels in the water.

The celebrant pours water over the candidate's head and body (called affusion).

Our font is also designed to practice submersion in the following way. The candidate sits down in the water. The celebrant lowers the upper part of the candidate's body into the water three times. The celebrant says during the first lowering 'In the name of the Father', second lowering 'and of the Son', third lowering 'and of the Holy Spirit'.

The Paschal candle is placed on a stand shaft next to the Baptismal Font. The paschal candle, stand and base were designed and crafted by Marklin Candle Design from Contoocook, New Hampshire. The stand is made of red oak with red oak rings or nodes and has a natural finish. The top of the stand has a high polish brass bobèche and socket.

The ambry is a glass door cabinet which contains the Holy Oils for baptism etc. This is located adjacent to the font. Across from this is a similar cabinet designed to display historical articles from our other churches. St. Thomas Church, Duhamel, donated the chalice used by Father Hypolyte Bellevaire. It was made in 1863. Please see addendum for more detailed information in regard to this chalice.

At the Baptismal Font we celebrate the first Sacrament of Initiation, namely Baptism. The other two Sacraments of Initiation are celebrated at the altar. The font is thus connected to the altar in the sanctuary by a red color on the outer edges of the carpet flowing from the font and encompassing the sanctuary. The main focus in the sanctuary is the altar.

The name of the marble used for the altar is called 'Mystery White'. These marble blocks were sent to Verona, Italy for processing. They made the same voyage as the Lemurian granite to Vancouver via the Panama Canal.

At the altar we celebrate the two other Sacraments of Initiation, namely Confirmation and Eucharist.

Sanctuary

Altar

The altar is made of 'Mystery White' marble from Namibia (Otjiwarongo Region) on the south western side of Africa. St. Francis Xavier passed by Namibia on his voyage from Spain to India.

The color of the marble is pure white with a sheen finish.

The altar front (of the 'Mystery White' marble) features symbols of wheat and grapes made of bronze. The back side of the altar contains the relic of St. Francis Xavier whose motto was that of the Society of Jesus: 'To the greater glory of God'. Archbishop Richard Smith deposited the relic in the altar at the Liturgy of Dedication of the Church and Altar.

The altar candles stand on each side of the altar. They are designed and crafted by Marklin Candle Design in the USA. They are made of red oak coated with a natural finish and the top has brass bobèche and socket fixtures over threaded rods.

The Processional Cross

The body of the dying Jesus was carved from linden wood by Petr Piskacek and Company of Surrey, BC. Petr offers religious artwork from the Czech and Slovak republics. These two countries have religious roots motifs which are hundreds of years old. All of his carvings are made for Catholics.

Father Larry Pederson chose this particular large carving of the body of Jesus on the cross as it expressed a combined sense of drama, monumentality and elegance through the extraordinary accomplished carving of the wood. While other corpuses emphasize Christ's agony, here His composed expression gives just a little hint of pain and suffering. It implies His triumph over death.

The symmetrical body and stylized carving of the rib cage convey a sense of calm detachment. The face of Christ and His torso are articulated with fine interior and exterior lines of His body. The mannered flow of Christ's wrap echoes the river's swirling current. The play of both candlelight and daylight over the relief enhances the richness of the carved wood surfaces. It is a devotional carving of haunting immediacy, resonant with pathos.

Father Larry Pederson sent the carving to Marklin Candle Design in New Hampshire, USA. The cross, staff and stand were made of cherry wood and crafted by human hands by Marklin Candle. The two rings or nodes (one above the upper shaft and the other below the upper shaft) were made from Bubinga wood from Africa. This wood is from the Rosewood family of trees.

At the back of the cross are five prisms made from Bubinga wood. They represent the five wounds of Christ on the cross.

The fifteen inch circular fusion glass halo was made by an artist from New Jersey, USA. Colors of the glass and sequences of colors were chosen by a committee composed of parishioners and Father Larry Pederson. The installation of the fusion glass was the work of Marklin Candle. All metal parts and attachments, were machine made by Marklin Candle.

Hopefully, all will appreciate the coordinated efforts of the artists involved and their willingness to reflect the direction and decisions for design and woods by the parish committee. The desire of the committee was to present a special insight not often represented in a processional cross. The uniqueness represents the whole paschal mystery of suffering and victory over sin and death. The Jesus represented on this processional cross is not yet dead, but expresses in Him a sense of peace, victory and triumph over sin and the death. His death is represented by the five prisms of rosewood on the back of the cross.

This unique design of the processional cross reminds us that we celebrate on this altar table 'the memorial of Christ, recalling especially His blessed Passion, glorious Resurrection and Ascension into heaven' (The General Instruction of the Roman Missal - par. 79 e). Because of its design and depiction, it is placed near the altar.

The artistic, moral, steadfast and financial support of the committee and parishioners which spanned over a period of eleven months was much appreciated by Father Larry Pederson.

The Ambo

The Ambo is made of 'Mystery White' marble. Candles and candle stands and fixtures are placed on each side of the ambo. They were made by human hands by Marklin Candle Design in a 'similar pattern' to the altar candles. This helps to emphasize that 'when the Sacred Scriptures are read in the Church, God Himself speaks to His people, and Christ, present in His word, proclaims the Gospel. Therefore, the readings from the Word of God are to be listened to reverently by everyone, for they are an element of great importance in the Liturgy' (The General Instruction of the Roman Missal - page 30). The Liturgy of the Word leads and prepares us to celebrate 'the centre and high point of the entire celebration ... namely, the Eucharistic Prayer itself, that is, the prayer of thanksgiving and sanctification' (The General Instruction of the Roman Missal - par. 78).

'The two parts which in a sense go to make up the Mass, viz. the Liturgy of the Word and the Eucharistic liturgy, are so closely connected with each other that they form but one single act of worship' (The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy - par. 56).

Celebrant's chair

The design on the back of the celebrant's chair is a cluster of grapes.

Jesus said: "I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing ... My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit". (John 15: 5-8)

This is the meaning of the dismissal rite of the Mass which is given from the celebrant's chair or by the deacon from his chair. The words of the dismissal rite in the Roman Missal are: 'Go forth, the Mass is ended; Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord; Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life' ... bear fruit in the world by responding responsibly and thankfully to the gift of faith (not merited or earned by us) by good works such as the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

Sanctuary Floor

The floor is made of marble and has a cross also made of marble, stretching from one side to the other. The cross reminds us of what takes place on the altar, namely, the memorial of the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross of Calvary where He died for us to give us new and ultimately eternal life.

Sanctuary Stained Glass Windows

Various features serve as a setting for the sanctuary. Two are very prominent. The first is height, which from the nave of the church to the peak of the ceiling in front of the sanctuary is 15.548 meters (51' feet). The second is the three stained glass windows on the wall behind the sanctuary which depict some of the life of St. Francis Xavier and the Jesuit Order (The Society of Jesus) which he co-founded.

The centre window is 22' high and 9' wide and depicts the figure of St. Francis Xavier holding his cross. Below and on each side of him are depicted the various people he evangelized - those from India, Japan, Indonesia including the inhabitants of the Maluku Islands etc. Also included are the First Nations Peoples of New France (Canada) who were evangelized by St. Francis Xavier's brothers beginning in the year 1611. The First Nations People are represented by the First Nations Chief.

Many of St. Francis Xavier's Jesuit brothers were martyred for their witness to the faith. We celebrate their feast - St. Jean de Brebeuf and St. Isaac Jogues, Priests and Companions, Martyrs - on September 26th in the Canadian Liturgical Calendar. The Canadian Jesuit Martyrs were canonized by Pope Pius XI in 1930. They are called the secondary patron saints of Canada. The Martyrs' Shrine is located in Midland, Ontario.

To the left of the First Nations Chief is Saint Kateri Tekakwitha who was evangelized by St. Francis Xavier's Jesuit brothers. She is a part of the Canadian Catholic religious experience. She was known as the 'Lily of the Mohawks' and was born into the Mohawk nation of the Iroquois Confederacy in 1656 in Ossernenon (today Auriesville, New York) to a Catholic Algonquin mother and a Mohawk Chief. Ten years before Tekakwitha's birth, Father Isaac Jogues and his companion, Father Jean de Lalonde (now saints in the church), were martyred in this same village. She moved from her village when she was ten years old to Caughnawaga (today Fonda, New York). She was baptized at the mission church in Caughnawaga on Easter Sunday by Father Jacques de Lamberville, a Jesuit brother of St. Francis Xavier. The Baptismal name the priest chose for her was 'Kateri', a form of 'Catherine' who was proclaimed a saint by the church. 'Kateri' is her baptismal name and 'Tekakwitha' is her Mohawk name. She became known as 'Kateri Tekakwitha'. She spent time praying and fashioning crosses from twigs from tree branches. Facing ridicule, threats and hostility, she fled to St. Francis Xavier Mission, a Christian Mohawk village in Kahnawake, Quebec. There, she received her first Communion on Christmas Day 1677. She also made a vow of perpetual virginity on the Feast of the Annunciation in 1679. In Kahnawake, Kateri Tekakwitha was known for her faith and holiness. She taught prayers to children, cared for the elderly and the sick, and would often attend Mass at sunrise and sunset. She died April 17, 1680, shortly before her 24th birthday, and was buried at St. Francis Xavier Mission. Her final words were 'Jesus Konoronkwa' ('Jesus, I love you'). Witnesses report that within minutes of her death, the smallpox scars vanished from her face, which then radiated with beauty. She was canonized a saint on Oct 21, 2012 by Pope Benedict XVI and was named a patron saint of environment and ecology. Her feast day in Canada is April 17. She was the first Aboriginal person of the Americas to be canonized.

The other window in the sanctuary on the west side of the middle window depicts the voyages of St. Francis Xavier over the oceans by ship.

In early 1552, St. Francis Xavier returned to Goa in India and spent one year planning his evangelization of China. He died in the boat named 'Santa Cruz' in 1552 looking at the coast of China near Shangchuan Island. Pope Francis called his death the classical sunset of a Jesuit and wished that our death would be like his, because in the end what really mattered to him was Jesus Christ who filled his life - the true goal of Jesuit spirituality. This is presented in the stained glass window with the sunset on the coastline of China. His dream of evangelizing China is coming true today. Of all countries in the world, the largest number of Catholics celebrating Christmas Eve and Day Masses in 2016, was China. The Angus Reid poll conducted from March 4-11, 2015 predicted that by 2050 China would have 220 million Christians. It is fitting indeed that this is symbolized in this window. The window on the east side of him depict the symbols of the Jesuit Order (Society of Jesus), namely, the flame of fire and the cross - symbols of the zeal to evangelize in the name and mission of Jesus Christ.

In only ten years of evangelization, energized by boundless zeal to spread the faith, he visited over ten countries spread over ten modern time zones, learned many languages, adapted his preaching to widely varied cultures and baptized over 30,000 people.

The Jesuit Order began in 1534 and spread the faith very quickly to the Empire of Portugal, South East Asia, the far Eastern Islands, Europe, and Paraguay.

Pottery

The pottery used for our celebrations (washing of hands, feet, etc.) was hand crafted by Noboru Kubo. He is Japanese born and educated. He studied with his father and is a 1964 graduate of the Kyoto Industrial Arts School. A fourth generation potter, he first came to North America in 1969. Noboru has taken part in many one person, group, invitational and juried shows, as well as teaching and conducting workshops. He is represented in private, corporate and government collections in Japan, the U.S.A., Great Britain and Canada. He presently works from his own studio in Edmonton.

Tabernacle

The tabernacle in place in our new church is the one from our previous church. It was originally used in the hospital chapel at St. Mary's Hospital, Camrose AB. It dates back to 1924 and represents great historical and religious value and we are honored to give it a home here.

Art and Environment and working rooms

These rooms are located behind the sanctuary.

St. Francis Xavier Chapel

Our church will also have attached to the nave of the church, a chapel named St. Francis Xavier Chapel. It is designed similar to a Japanese lantern symbolizing St. Francis Xavier's evangelization of Japan and his dream, vision, and desire to evangelize China. Five of the seven windows in the chapel could be developed into stained glass windows. Above each are four small squares which provide an opportunity in the future to install stained glass windows as well. The themes and types of glass to be used for this project continue to be developed. Two themes to consider are the Madonna and the Madonna and the

Child. These, among other teaching techniques, were used by St. Francis Xavier to help evangelize the people of Japan.

Another prominent feature in the chapel is the prie-dieu or kneeler with a table for prayer. It has many amazing features and was used at the former St. Joseph Church, Bawlf.

Dedication Candles

There are twelve dedication candles which are placed on the walls of the nave of the church. They were handcrafted by Darrell Morris of Images in Iron Custom Ironwork. Each dedication candle is shaped in a circle with a cross on it with the five wounds of Christ. The lower area displays a circular holder with a candle in a clear glass container. The twelve crosses represent the twelve apostles. The candles are lit on the Solemn Dedication Liturgy of the Altar and Church after the anointing and the incensations.

In the future, the dedication candles are lit only rarely but especially on the anniversary of the dedication of the church and at the Paschal Vigil.

Below is an explanation of the origin of the design of the dedication candle and how the design was enhanced for its depiction on the dedication candle.

When the St. Francis Xavier church bell was installed and blessed on October 27, 1912 by Archbishop Emile Legal, the Archdiocese of Edmonton was a French diocese and known then as the Diocese of St. Albert. The bell was made in Le Mans, France. Therefore, the language and some of the designs used on the bell are French artistic expressions. The image of the 'cross pattée' (in French la croix pattée) appears near the bottom of the St. Francis Xavier church bell. On the bottom of the bell are seven circles with a cross pattée in the same band but distanced from each other within the band. The cross pattée is a form that appears very early in medieval art.

This image of the cross pattée was chosen by Father Larry V. Pederson to be a major part of the design of each of the twelve dedication candles. Some changes were made to depict the whole paschal mystery of Jesus.

Pattée means foot. In its full context 'la croix pattée' means literally 'footed cross'. The cross has four splayed feet, each akin to the foot or base, for example, of a chalice or candelabrum.

This cross has narrow arms at the centre, and is often flared in a curved shape, to be broader at the perimeter. Each arm is of equal length. Within each arm is featured a fleur-de-lys or the white flower of the lily. The petals flare outward on the arms or feet of the cross. On the dedication candles the cross pattée is mounted on a background of textured brass with hammered edges. The cross is made of hand hammered steel with hand hammered edges. The cross is enhanced with a design depicting the fleur-de-lys. It is made of sheet metal using the process of 'chasing' and 'repoussé' to display the final outer design. At the intersection of the vertical and horizontal arms or feet of the cross, is a circle.

The suffering and death of Jesus are symbolized by the cross and the five wounds of Jesus. The placement of the five wounds of Jesus on the dedication candle are not the same as displayed on the church bell. Four of the five wounds are represented by the head of the nails which held Jesus to the cross. The heads of the nails are made of steel and shaped by forging. The fifth wound is represented by the spear thrust into Jesus' side which was a way of certifying Jesus' death (John 19:34). Thus the soldiers did not have to break His legs to ensure a quick death. As further evidence, 'blood and water'

flowed from the side of Jesus. This also points to the reality of Jesus' death. The water signifies the new life which now flows into humanity from Jesus' death. Water is a sign of the new life which flows from death. This sign appears throughout John's Gospel. The fifth wound on the dedication candles has red painted on one side and blue on the other (representing the blood and water that flowed from this wound). The arms or feet of the cross are flared outward and each has a unique portrayal of the fleur-de-lys. The fleur-de-lys is also flared outward. For some, the fleur-de-lys represent the white flower of the lily plant. Each in their own way, symbolize victory over death which is accomplished by the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

Therefore, the whole Paschal Mystery of Jesus (His suffering, death, and resurrection) is portrayed on the cross pattée in different ways. This is very unique on a cross. In the centre of the vertical and horizontal arms or feet, Father Larry Pederson designed a circle that bulges outward forming a blue toned global shape. This represents the earth and the universe. The death of Jesus on the cross brings reconciliation to the earth and heavens - the whole cosmos. The color blue is the result of forging (heating and hammering) the steel to a temperature where it turns blue. Once the color blue appears, the heat is turned off and blue hue remains.

St. Paul in Colossians 1:19-20 says that the cross is all encompassing, reaching to the earth and the universe.

'For in Him (Christ) all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through Him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross' (Colossians 1:19-20).

Nave of the church

Each wall in the nave of the church has a special significance. The wall of the entry (south wall) features the Baptismal Font, the Reconciliation Room, the vesting sacristy and fourteen glass doors. Each glass door is 4' x 10'. The north wall features the Sanctuary with the focus on the altar, ambo, the presider's chair, and the three sanctuary stained glass windows. The west wall features the St. Francis Xavier Chapel with windows on each side at floor level. In the future these windows will become stained glass windows. The Stations of the Cross are from the previous Church and are placed on the east wall. Each station is lit. The twelve dedication candles are placed on the walls of the nave of the church. The upper nave of the church will be the future home of sixteen stained glass windows. Please see addendum for more detailed information.

Gallery

The Gallery is located inside the east and west entrance doors between the nave of the church and the hall. The east parking lot which has 250 stalls leads to the entrance to the gallery. The room features 26 glass doors (4' by 10') and is a gathering space. It is designed to provide a sacred environment to prepare to celebrate the public worship of the church in the nave such as the sacraments. The church bell is above the east entrance and calls us to worship. The gallery has many statues and pieces of sacred art to set the environment for public worship and private devotion. Some of the features are donated by other churches the parish serves.

The gallery has a peaked wall with a design of the Jesuit emblem depicting the initials 'IHS'. 'IHS' is a Greek monogram composed by three Greek letters (iota, eta, and sigma) representing the first three Greek letters in the name 'Jesus' used since the third century as an abbreviation. St. Ignatius of Loyola adopted the monogram in his seal as leader of the Society of Jesus (1541). The cross is part of the official emblem (the IHS symbol with the inclusion of the cross). The arms of the cross are flared which depict the victory of the cross. This triumph was accomplished by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. The design is engraved with the words which summarize the spirituality of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola, namely, "FOR THE GREATER GLORY OF GOD". Whatever you do, do it for the greater glory of God. The gallery also leads to offices, meeting rooms, and the hall and commercial kitchen. These are designed to meet the needs of the people. The hall has a seating capacity for 360 people and for theatre style 550 people.

There are many glass doors in the gallery. Twenty-six of them are entry doors to the church and nave of the church. Each of these have depictions of Scriptural themes drawn on them by professional artists. Each door is 4' x 10' in size. The technique used for placement of these designs is called Vinyl Adhesive Imagery in Digital Form.

The four outside east entry doors depict these themes - sunrise, two arched tree branches and sunset. Sunrise and sunset are traditions of the Jewish people and the church to mark liturgical time. Sunset marks the end of the day and the beginning of the next day. For example, Good Friday really has two liturgies. The first liturgy of Good Friday begins at sunset on Thursday with the Mass of the Lord's Supper. The second liturgy of Good Friday is the Passion of the Lord.

The four inside east entry doors depict these themes - hands of welcome, the potter and the clay, celebrating in song and the Emmaus story (Recognizing Jesus in the breaking of the Bread).

The entry doors around the Baptismal Font have six glass doors. The Scriptural themes depicted are: the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist in the River Jordan, the Easter Proclamation at the Easter Vigil - 'This candle is made by bees' (depicted by the honey comb with the paschal candle in the middle, and on one side a honey bee on a yellow flower and on the other side honey bees flying), deer yearning for running streams or living water, the exodus of the people of God from Egypt through the Red Sea to the Promised Land (prefiguration of Baptism) and the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well.

The next four glass doors are adjacent to the door depicting the resurrection of Jesus. They begin with Pentecost (The Church is born of the Spirit) and lead to the other three glass doors next to the reconciliation room with the scriptural reconciliation themes of the tree not bearing good fruit, the prodigal son, or the father welcoming his son home, and the good shepherd carrying the lost sheep on his shoulders.

The four glass doors on the other side of the Baptismal Font depict some ways to live the Christian life, namely, the ten commandments and the eight beatitudes, Jesus washing the feet of the apostles, an artistic depiction of these words of Jesus 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me', and one of the corporal works of mercy, namely, shelter the homeless.

The two outside west entry doors depict scriptural images of the people of God as stewards of creation and trees by running streams. The two inside west entry doors depict a guardian angel and new horizons.

St. Francis Xavier Church Bell

The St. Francis Xavier Church Bell was cast by Amedée Bollée Foundry at Le Mans, France in 1912. It is made of bronze and weights over 2000 pounds. Any words written on it are in French as the diocese at the time was a French diocese called the Diocese of St. Albert. The Diocese of St. Albert existed until the 30th of November 1912. The bell was blessed and installed on the 27th of October 1912. Many of the designs are French artistic expressions rooted in the Old Republic of France. The bell is approximately 36" high by 30" wide. It has eight bands with words or designs inside each.

Designation of the rings from top to bottom:

On the first band are fleur-de-lys.

The bands on the bell which have words on them are in French. For this booklet, I present the English translation.

The second band has these words on it:

"MY NAME IS RENEE REMAS". On the opposite side it has the year: "A.D. 1912".

The third band has these words on it:

"I WAS BAPTIZED BY S. G. MONSIGNOR EMILE LEGAL, BISHOP OF ST ALBERT, POPE PIUS X.
MY GODFATHER WAS REVEREND HYPOLYTE BELLEVAIRE"

The fourth band has these words on it: "AND MY GODMOTHER WAS LAURE ADAM. — Mr RENE
LEMARCHAND OF EDMONTON, ALBERTA, CANADA, DONOR"

René Le Marchand was a businessman who set up the Le Marchand Mansion at 11523 100 Ave in Edmonton. His brother, Alphonse arrived in Edmonton in 1894. He was an Oblate priest and told his brother René about the opportunities in Edmonton. René arrived in Edmonton. It explains the strong friendship that René had with the Oblates.

Below the fourth band are decorations of oak leaves and acorns. Below that are drawings on each side: a victorious cross, the papal insignia of Pope Pius X (the Pope at that time), the national emblem of the Old Republic of France which was used in that era and the coronation of Mary with the twelve stars around her head (the traditional drawing and used by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate religious order).

The fifth band has these words on it: "AMEDEE BOLLEE FOUNDRY AT MANS, FRANCE"

The sixth band is decorated with oak leaves which are symbolic of wisdom. The oak tree is considered a cosmic store house of wisdom embodied within its towering strength. The oak leaves are considered an expression of this wisdom.

The seventh band on one side has the letters: "LA".

The eighth band has seven circles in different positions with a cross pattée within each.

The first Roman Catholic settlers in the Sparling area (later renamed Camrose) varied from one to twelve families. They travelled by horse and wagon to celebrate Mass at Duhamel. Father Hypolyte Bellevoire was the pastor at the Laboucane Settlement. Later it was renamed St. Thomas Duhamel after Joseph-Thomas Duhamel, the Archbishop of Ottawa. Father Hypolyte Bellevoire had a church built in 1883 which was called St. Thomas. The name 'Thomas' came from the Archbishop of Ottawa's name and was chosen by Vital Grandin, bishop of St. Albert diocese.

The first Mass was celebrated in the home of a parishioner in Camrose (formerly named Sparling) in 1906 by Father Hypolyte Bellevoire. Sparling was renamed 'Camrose' in 1907 when it achieved town status with the Province of Alberta. Sparling was under the jurisdiction of the North West Territories until 1905.

The first Roman Catholic Church was built in Camrose in 1909 and became a mission of Wetaskiwin. It was served by the Pastor of Wetaskiwin, namely, Father F. Van Wett. The church was blessed by Archbishop Emile Legal on December 12, 1909. Many parishioners from Duhamel and Wetaskiwin were present for the celebration of the installation and blessing of the bell by Archbishop Emile Legal on October 27 1912. This bell had a home in the next two Catholic churches in Camrose, the second one built in 1927 and the third in 1963. This bell is installed in the new St. Francis Xavier Church at the entry.

The bell was taken down on October 27, 2016, on the same day it was installed and blessed by Archbishop Emile Legal in 1912 (104 years later). It was taken down because the wood support system was deteriorating. It was installed in the east church entry in the new St. Francis Xavier Church. The bell weighs approximately 2000 pounds. It was made in Le Mans, France by the Amedée Bollée Foundry.

A display of pictures of the church bell can be seen in the church entry area.

Exterior Environment

The area outside of the main east entry provides a beautiful space to gather for the blessing of palms. The procession with the palms proceeds from this point to the east end gathering area via the six foot wide sidewalk crossing the parking lot. At this point people will gather around the spire cross from the former St. Joseph, Bawlf Church. These areas can also be used for the lighting and blessing of the new fire at the Easter Vigil and the outside procession of the Blessed Sacrament for the Corpus Christi celebration on the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ.

The cross from the spire of the former St Joseph Church, Bawlf, is mounted at the east end of the property in a twelve metre area of concentric circles and surrounded by a semi-circle of Colorado blue spruce and grass area.

The east end of the parking lot is a beautiful area which will be developed as a place for outdoor private devotion, meditation and prayer.

The parking lot has a capacity of 250 parking stalls.

In the front and back areas of the Church and Parish Centre over 600 trees, shrubs, and perennials will be planted. Native Alberta perennial wildflowers will be planted between the curbing of the parking lot

and the trees which border the property. These are high pollen and nectar sources for pollinating insects such as bees and butterflies will attract song birds. Some butterfly houses will be placed on the property.

Father Larry V. Pederson and parishioners will provide birdhouses and birdbaths for purple martins, mountain bluebirds and for other species of birds.

**RESEARCHED AND WRITTEN BY FATHER LARRY V. PEDERSON,
PASTOR OF ST. FRANCIS XAVIER PARISH, CAMROSE, ALBERTA**

Addendum

Réne Rémas

His name and information of his baptism is found on our church bell. The following research was conducted by Father Larry Pederson with help from Father Camille Piché, archivist for the Oblates of Mary Immaculate (Lacombe Canada Province).

Father Réne Rémas as it is written in the 3rd volume of Bibliographical Dictionary of Gaston Carrière:

Father Albert Lacombe was first a diocesan priest when he came West. While in Red River (Winnipeg) he decide to join the Missionary Oblates. Was sent to Lac Ste Anne and asked to make his one year novitiate with Father Réne Rémas OMI.

*Born: June 1, 1823 in Fontenay-en-Champagne
Parents: Francois Rémas and Marguerite Bouteny
Ordained: March 27, 1852 in Marseille, France
Died: July 10, 1901 in St Albert, AB*

Rene studied at the minor seminary of Précigné and at the major seminary of Mans, entered the novitiate at Notre-Dame-de-I'Osier, on April 22, 1850 and pronounced his vows on April 21, 1851. After his scholasticate at the major seminary of Marseilles, he was ordained priest, in the same city, on March 27, 1852.

Having received his obedience for the Canadian West, Father resided at St. Boniface (1852-1853), and left for Lac-la-Biche, Alberta for a few months and went to Lac-St.-Anne, Alberta (1854-1868) from where he spread Christ's message in a vast territory: Cumberland House, Saskatchewan, Fort Carlton, Fort Pitt, Fort Jasper, Alberta. He made three visits to the Prairie (1856-1864) and four at the Pettit Lac des Esclaves (Grouard) and worked also in Edmonton.

From 1868 to 1872, he resided at Lac-la-Biche, and was the first to reside at Grouard (1872-1874), and from 1874-1884, he was at Lac-la-Biche, at Bow River, St. Albert, Calgary, where he ministered to employees of the CPR construction.

From 1884 to 1901, we find him at Riviere-qui-Barre, Alberta, Onion Lake, Saskatchewan, St. Albert while ministering in Stoney Plain, Winterburn, and Riviere-qui-Barre; and from Edmonton he went to Winterburn, to Montreal for treatments; and back to St. Joachim, he went to Bears Hills (Hobbema), Calgary and St. Albert. Father is the author of a few publications in Cree. He was buried in the Oblate cemetery in St. Albert, Alberta.

More information about Father Réne Rémas is available on:

pg 47 in 'Indian Bishop of the West' by Frank J. Dolphin

pg 81-83, 90-93, 107-115, 119, 120, 122, 126, 128, 190, 295, 333 in 'Father Lacombe' by James G. MacGregor

Translation of the words on the chalice used by Father Hypolyte Bellevaire (from Latin into English)

From the top of the chalice to the bottom —

Top ring: "Drink from this all of you for this is the chalice of my blood"

On the base of the chalice: "Only hope, Most pure mother, Mystic rose"

Bottom ring: "Behold I am with you always even unto the end of the world"

Bottom edge: "21 December 1863"

"at the first Mass he received it - J. M. Prin"

On the underside of the paten: "Eat of this all of you for this is my Body"

Obviously, the chalice was given to Father Hypolyte Bellevaire to use. This is the chalice used at St. Thomas Church in Duhamel, Alberta. He came to Duhamel (originally called The Laboucane Stettlement) in the winter of 1882 -1883.

Proposed themes by Father Larry V. Pederson and committee for the eight stained glass windows in the nave of the church - Windows EG-02

Windows on the west side starting on the north end

1. Annunciation (Angel Gabriel)
2. The nativity of Jesus
3. The boy Jesus teaching in the temple
4. The baptism of Jesus

Windows on the east side starting on the south end

5. The last supper
6. The crucifixion and death of Jesus
7. The resurrection
8. Pentecost - coming of the Holy Spirit to strengthen the disciples to witness to the Good News of Jesus

The approximately 4' x 4' windows above each of these windows will carry the theme of each window in a more modern presentation. The windows below will be a combination of traditional and modern.

The two windows of each side of St. Francis Xavier Chapel (west wall) - Windows EG-02

The theme of the window on the north side of the chapel is to represent Mary, Mother of Evangelization as depicted and visually described by Pope Francis in the 'Joy of the Gospel', Chapter Five, Part 11. Mary, Mother of Evangelization.

284 - 'Mary is also present to us as we speak our faith and invite others to join us'.

285 - 'Jesus gave his mother to us while he was on the cross.

"Here is your mother," he said (John 19:27). Let us receive her with open arms.

Mary was the first missionary disciple. She is, indeed, our Mother'.

286 - 'Mary turned a humble stable into a temporary home for Jesus. She is a sign of hope for us; she opens our hearts; she shares our struggles, and in the end, she leads us to Christ'.

287 - 'Now we ask the Mother of Jesus to guide our hands and feet to help us proclaim our faith and to invite and welcome in the name of Christ'.

288 - 'Mary's love and tenderness becomes the very style with which we now proclaim the good news that she bore in her own body. Her humility becomes our goal. Her faith is our faith'.

'She praised God for 'bringing down the mighty from their thrones' and 'sending the rich away empty-handed' (Luke 1:52-53). She pondered the mysteries of the faith in her heart. And in the end, she stood faithfully at the foot of the cross. With her, we now hear the words of the Risen Christ, "Behold, I make all this new" (Revelation 21:5).'

The theme of the window on the south side of the chapel will depict St. Joseph the Worker, patron Saint of the Archdiocese of Edmonton.

The Liturgical design of the Church

Father Larry V. Pederson made sure that the design of the church and exterior devotional area would accommodate all of the liturgical celebrations of Holy Week and other special liturgical celebrations. His thought was that if the design could accommodate such, then all should work out properly for liturgical celebrations. Father Larry had the committees walk through the Holy Week celebrations and other special celebrations to make sure all situations were accommodated.

The design of this church reflects in a beautiful way the Gospel centered life of St. Francis Xavier. Much time and detail was spent to develop this dimension. Also the special feature of the gallery to make it a sacred place to prepare for liturgical celebrations was important to our committees.

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