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St. Paul the Apostle Church in Los Angeles. Project by Pica + Sullivan Architects. Photograph by Randall Michelson.

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**Pica + Sullivan
Architects, Ltd.**

145 S Fairfax Ave
Suite 403
L.A., CA 90036
(323) 653-7124

PicaSullivan.com

RENEWAL

St. Paul the Apostle Church

St. Paul the Apostle Catholic Community celebrated the re-opening of its landmark church. The long overdue renovation project came about as a result of the Los Angeles Archdiocese-wide ***Called to Renew Campaign*** – a \$500 million fundraising endeavor to support critical social programs and simulta-

neously preserve churches and schools for future generations.

Designed in 1956 and completed in 1958, St. Paul's Church is an exceptional example of Mid-Century Modern. The architecture sports a soaring fluted bell tower, delicate arcade arches, a stately facade and extensive mosaic art. The 15,000 square-ft building includes 800 pew seats within the nave and choir loft.

The light and airy interior is the backdrop for extensive religious art. The numerous noteworthy pieces include an altar mosaic and a satin brass and enamel tabernacle by famed artists Jean and Arthur Ames, a "Roman" style mosaic of the twelve apostles by C.F. Horan, decorative stained glass windows designed by Rudi Schilling, and an oak reredos ornamented with stylized stalks of wheat.

The Station-of-the-Cross bas-reliefs, lining the nave, are vertically composed with stained glass depictions of influential Catholic historical figures. Four of those, representing Martin de Porres, Elizabeth Ann Seton, Junipero Serra and Cardinal John Newman, have been canonized since the 1958 completion of the church.

The front exterior facade of the church includes

a striking bronze form of the Apostle Paul at the moment of his conversion. The dramatic and unique pose, created by renowned Los Angeles sculptor Stephen Zakian, has the apostle on his knees, shielding his eyes from the blinding light and cupping his ear to hear the voice of Jesus.

The team for the interior renovation was led by Maureen Sullivan of Los Angeles-based Pica + Sullivan Architects. Alex Villeda of Eagle Rock-based Vancrest Construction, church lighting specialist Bridget Williams of Apple Valley-based Williams Design, and audio-visual specialist Ken Buckowski of Burbank-based Studio Spectrum brought their talents and expertise to the project. St. Paul Business Manager Mayora Hiney served as project manager - shepherding the process from the initial planning to scheduling, coordination and completion.

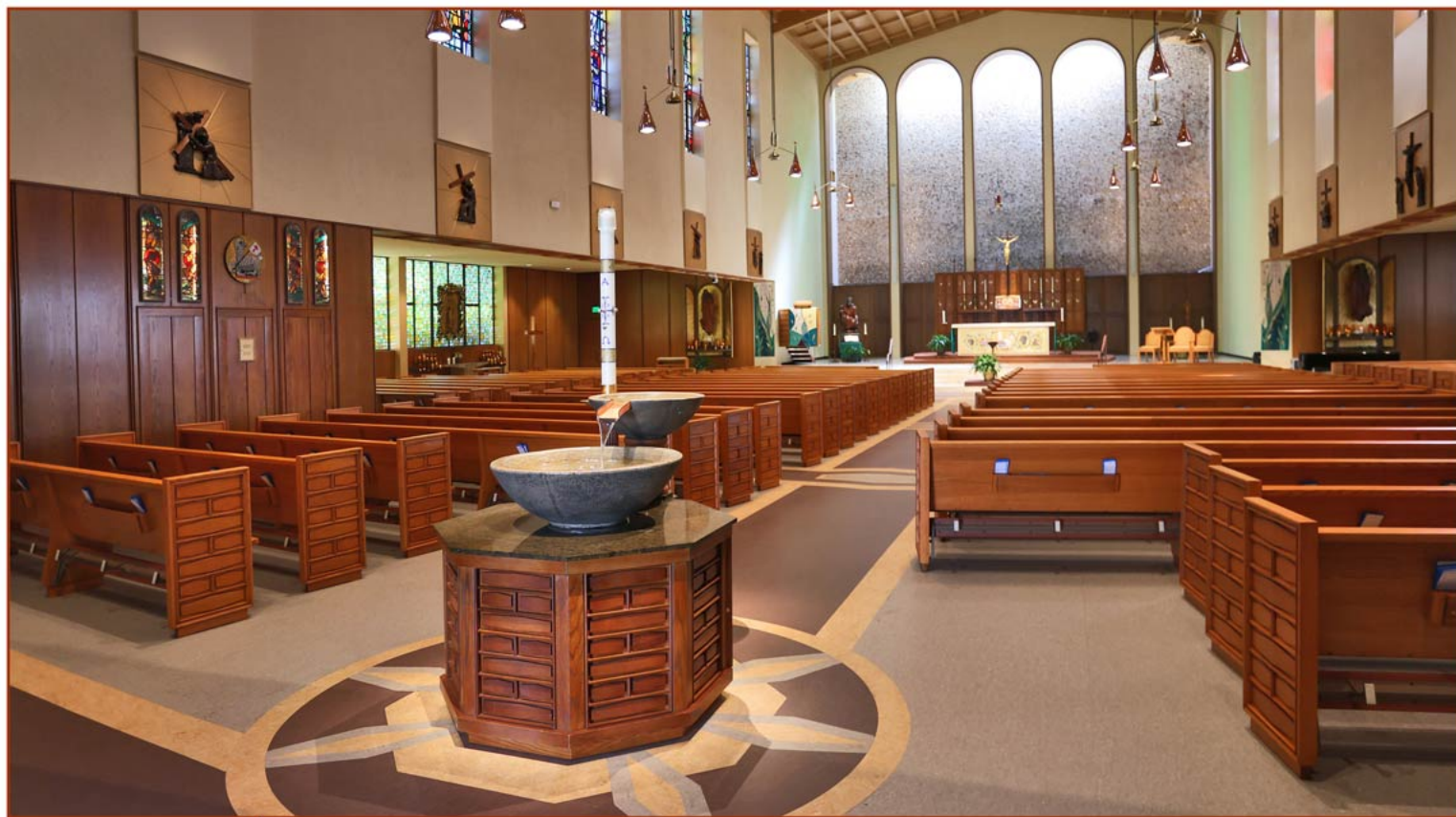
In order to accomplish the work, the masses and other church activities were relocated to the adjacent John Carroll Parish Center. Construction started with dismantling and transporting of 1,200 linear feet of pews to a local casework shop for repair and refinishing.

The empty nave afforded access to the ceiling for refinishing, audio-video installation, lighting repair and replacement, and the installation of new lighting.

Upon reinstallation, the orientation of the refurbished pews and kneelers were slightly angled inward. The new center aisle flooring mirrors the geometric design of the pew end panels.

The renewal included new painting and floor-

Understated Architectural Features Accentuated



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ing, as well as the cleaning and polishing of the interior stone. Many original interior architectural features, previously understated, were accentuated.

The most impactful part of the renovation was incorporation of an elaborate lighting package. This included variable highlighting of liturgical areas as well as specifically illuminating the altar mosaic and backwall of the nave.

New spotlights are focused on the Stations-of-the-Cross bas-reliefs and most of the flat artwork. A new central dimmer control package offers numerous pre-programmed lighting "scenes" of various intensities and colors.

The interior design included restoration of the decorative brass and bronze chandeliers, including rewiring and re-lamping for energy conservation, safety and longevity. The beautiful fixtures contribute to the spatial layering and scale within the nave.

As noted by Pastor Reverend Gilbert Martinez, "As we reopen, we remember that our Church is more than a building, but the people gathered as community."

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Pica + Sullivan Architects, Ltd. specializes in master planning and architectural design for non-profit independent and religious-based schools, religious institutions, social service organizations, and charitable foundations. Since its inception in 1990 the firm has been involved in over 1,000 projects of varying size and scope. These projects range from campus master planning to design for new buildings, additions, and remodels.

To meet the special design needs of non-profit institutions, Pica + Sullivan have established management systems and resources for large new construction projects as well as small remodeling jobs. In order to deliver the services of architecture and planning to our clients, Pica + Sullivan have an approach that includes **hands-on principals, a flexible and responsive staff, a value-engineering sensibility, a belief in contextual architecture** and a deep understanding of the non-profit client.



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