

*“Heaven-pointing” in Newark:
The Architecture of the Cathedral-Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Context*

The Archbishop Gerety Lecture, April 24, 2013

By Brian Regan

Listen to rhetoric about the early aspirations for a cathedral in Newark.

“Here today is laid the foundation of the cathedral not to be surpassed in beauty by any in the land.”

“[The cathedral] will be larger than the magnificent cathedral now being erected on Fifth Avenue, New York, and even more grand and beautiful.”

“The cathedral will take its place among the greatest productions of architectural art on this continent.”

I wish to look at these great expectations for Newark’s cathedral and also consider:

- American cathedral building generally;
- why the Gothic style was preferred;
- the multiple phases of the venture;
- Sacred Heart’s models and sources;
- finally, I’ll offer thoughts about Sacred Heart as a work of architecture.

At the founding of the Diocese of Newark in 1853, Saint Patrick’s Church became the pro-cathedral, short for provisional cathedral church. In 1859, Bishop Bayley took the first step toward raising a purpose-built cathedral, purchasing a site on the south side of the city. Eight years later, what was regarded as a superior site was found only blocks away. It faced Lincoln Park. It’s important to note that the diocese foresaw the cathedral downtown.

Although the word cathedral implies neither size nor style, why did Bayley expect a Gothic-style building? In this period, there was an overwhelming preference for Gothic. Part of a cultural movement that romanticized the Middle Ages, two decades before the start of the Newark project, Englishman A. W. N. Pugin shaped this change in taste in the English-speaking world. Pugin’s designs and writings made historically accurate Gothic the ideal.

Others generally advanced a revival. English university clergy and students, including John Henry Newman, urged reforms that led to a transformation within Anglicanism. It became known as the Oxford Movement, and reclaiming the ceremonies and the building style of the Middle Ages were major motivations.

Catholics, especially the convert Pugin, asserted that their rights to the Gothic style trumped others, claiming the ground of its first flowering in Catholic Medieval society.

Intelligent as it could be, working again in Gothic posed challenges, including how such churches were used. Medieval buildings suited their day. A deep apse for the clergy and celebration of rites took place largely out of view of the laity in the nave. Such buildings were really a kind of devotional shrine.

But the Council of Trent's reforms in the sixteenth century reordered worship space, calling for a visible altar, effectively making a church a liturgical theater. Trent's dictates still applied in the nineteenth century. Chesterton said that the Victorians saw the Middle Ages by moonlight. And I will say more later about the adaptations and compromises that came along with trying to turn back the clock.

In the United States, the first purpose-built cathedral, that is, not an adapted parish church, was in Baltimore. Started in 1804 and designed by Benjamin Latrobe, the Cathedral of the Assumption in the Roman Revival style was the largest house of worship in the country when it was dedicated in 1821 and quite possibly the most sophisticated architectural work in America.

As we move forward, keep in mind three points about this seminal building: Latrobe actually had given his client a choice of a Gothic or Classical style building; it has masonry vaulting; and Latrobe was not Catholic.

As fine as the Baltimore Cathedral was, in the next forty years several trends converged: a staggering number of new Catholics arriving in America due to immigration brought the need for many new dioceses; cathedral building consequently surged; and the Gothic Revival was ascendant.

The next cathedral on a grand scale was Albany's Immaculate Conception, designed by Patrick Keely, based in Brooklyn. Keely, in fact, designed Newark's pro-cathedral. Church commissions in this era predictably aligned along denominational affiliation. When Keely began, he was a rare professional: a Catholic architect. Initially working as a carpenter and cabinet maker, he developed architectural skills. His early entry in the Catholic field permitted him to gain dominance. When the Albany cathedral opened in 1852, it was acclaimed as the largest and most imposing in the country.

But other stylistic preferences never disappeared. Not surprisingly, Catholics often elected styles traceable to Italy and, especially Rome. Philadelphia's cathedral from this period is a good example. And, one could argue that the Baroque floor plan of this building made more sense for nineteenth-century worship than a Gothic one.

In Manhattan, the second Saint Patrick's, begun in 1856, became very important. When blessed in 1879, minus the spires, it was the largest church in the country and a sophisticated Gothic composition.

Brooklyn began (but would not finish) a cathedral designed by Keely in 1865. At the time, the Catholic press praised Brooklyn for choosing a Catholic architect, and savaged New York for selecting James Renwick, not a Catholic.

The first step of Newark's cathedral venture was erecting the cathedral chapel on the downtown site. Its dedication to "Our Lady and Saint Patrick" was also intended for the future cathedral. But the project changed course. Diocesan leaders learned that lots in north Newark, on the highest of the city's gentle rises, were for sale. And there was every reason to believe that Newark would continue spreading from its core.

The new location was tantalizing. And broader influences played a role in the ultimate choice of this high ground. In a publication that was influential for a long time, Cardinal Borromeo urged that major churches be in a prominent location and, when possible, on an elevated site. And in an era of deep prejudice, Church leaders were aware that large churches could serve as symbols of pride for Catholics; and, for others, they were monuments to be reckoned with.

An extraordinary person here enters the Newark cathedral-building stage. His name is George Hobart Doane. He was the son of George Washington Doane, the Episcopal Bishop of New Jersey. The elder Doane was one of the Oxford Movement's American champions, promoted Gothic's use, and commissioned churches and other structures by the best architects of his day. The younger Doane famously converted to Catholicism, became a priest and Bishop Bayley's secretary. As it relates to architecture, he brought the highest standards to Catholic church-building patronage. Pertinent here, he teamed with Newark architect Jeremiah O'Rourke to form what was effectively a patron-architect collaboration. Their early association brought churches that show Pugin's influence and Doane family links; for instance, note how Christ (Episcopal) Church in Newark influenced the marvelous Seton Hall Chapel. [see [Gothic Pride](#) illustrations]

Regarding the future cathedral, Bishop Bayley said it should not be a too grand or large or a financial burden. Despite or because of this sentiment, he delegated leadership of the project to Father Doane, who urged that they look to England, where there were a number of accomplished Catholic architects. Doane and O'Rourke then went abroad to cull ideas for the new cathedral, studying medieval and newer buildings, especially by Pugin (who died in 1852) and those he most touched, and to find an architect for Newark.

Their choice fell on George Goldie, with O'Rourke serving as local architect. The [Tablet](#) reported the selection and also delivered a pointed message, saying, "The [Newark] Cathedral will, when completed, be one of the most remarkable modern ecclesiastical structures in the United States, where immense sums have been expended on ecclesiastical buildings by the zeal and energy of both clergy and laity, without the results which should have been expected."

This was expressed less politely in a later [Architectural Review](#) article that cited Keely's Hartford cathedral and denigrated all Catholic work. The writer, the authoritative Ralph

Adams Cram called it “R.C. [Roman Catholic] Gothic,” which he deemed “the worst thing in the architectural world....It is exactly wrong at every point.”

Cram had an acid tongue, yet in settling for or insisting on a Catholic architect perhaps the most sophisticated opportunities were lost. That said, critics of Keely’s work fail to allow for what was accomplished. If sometimes the architectural envelop disclosed that he was self-taught, Keely had a flair for creating dramatic interiors that amply gratified patrons and filled their churches with appointments—stained glass, wood work, pipe organs, etc. — many of which were as worthy as those in any American church.

In any event, people as sophisticated about architecture as Father Doane and O’Rourke were unusual and exceedingly rare among American Catholics. They were determined to avoid artistic insularity in Newark. And George Goldie met their expectations.

The project moved ahead in 1872. The architects refined the scheme, saying it was fourteenth-century French Gothic. This revealed an inclination toward Continental styles as the Revival progressed. (The drawings appear to be lost, though Goldie’s manner can be seen in his firm’s scheme for a London church; one must imagine a second spire on it.) [see Gothic Pride illustrations]

But a terrible financial downturn the following year forever altered the course of the cathedral project. No place fared worse than Saint John’s Church in Orange, whose fiscally incompetent pastor racked up mortgages approaching \$300,000. The diocese had to bail out St. John’s, coming up with funds that could have paid for four or five complete churches. The ensuing years, known for a long time as the Great Depression, brought terrible deprivations. The double blow of the crisis in Orange and the systemic hard times sealed the fate of the Cathedral of Our Lady and St. Patrick.

It would take until the late 1890s for Newark to return to its cathedral project. But other significant cathedrals were completed in this era. Among them are Keely’s in Chicago, Boston, Hartford, and Providence.

Regarding cathedrals for the Episcopal church, it is not a coincidence that one of the most imaginative builders was Father Doane’s brother, the bishop of Albany. The cathedral he planned was the first in the Episcopal Church that approached its English models. William Doane was also associated with one of the outstanding cathedral projects: New York’s Saint John the Divine, preaching at its cornerstone ceremony in 1892.

By 1897, Newark’s Bishop Wigger was ready to take up the cathedral venture. He thought the diocese could raise \$1 million and have a finished and debt-free cathedral in ten years. We know how that turned out. (At this point I should admit what I came to believe during my cathedral research: one would have to possess at least the capacity for self-delusion to start building a cathedral.)

For his part, Father Doane, by now Monsignor Doane, recommended building the 1870’s plans, saying, “One advantage about them is that they are entirely different from

everything we have here—and so many of the cathedrals are simply replicas of each other....” His reference to replicas is probably especially to Keely’s Hartford and Providence designs. But Wigger decided to hold a competition among four firms for what would become Sacred Heart Cathedral. Jeremiah O’Rourke presented an entirely new scheme, and was chosen.

O’Rourke’s design was noted as “Continental Gothic of the thirteenth century.” The High Gothic cathedrals of Chartres, Notre Dame, Laon, Rheims, and Amiens, were masterpieces in every way – marvels of innovative engineering, sublime expressions of human creativity, and absolute embodiments of their age. As moderns, however, we are given to pieties in understanding the great cathedrals, often seeing them through Chesterton’s moonlight. In the light of day we also understand that they were made possible by sharply changing economic, political, social, and religious conditions. And, inevitably, Sacred Heart’s scheme held O’Rourke’s personal manner.

O’Rourke’s drawing shows spires of immense height, the tallest equivalent of about a thirty-five-story building, (when Newark’s tallest reached twelve stories). [see [Gothic Pride](#) illustrations] Pugin thought “a heaven-pointing spire surrounded by clusters of pinnacles formed a beautiful and instructive emblem of a Christian’s brightest hopes.” Those planned for Newark are traceable back to Pugin’s St. Giles Church and to which O’Rourke looked when planning St. John’s in Orange. And other features show the influence of St. Colman’s Cathedral in Ireland, and O’Rourke’s scheme for the Paulist Church in New York, influenced by the Irish cathedral.

The diagonal towers probably had two models. The abbey church in Rouen was one of the last major Gothic building projects in France and originally had such partially built towers. They were torn down in the 1840s, and replaced by conventional towers, a move condemned in some circles. The idea for the diagonal towers might also have come from Keely’s Brooklyn scheme. And these distinctive towers became Sacred Heart’s signature, resulting in a very broad façade. It is the geometry of the 45-degree angle that makes each tower about forty percent wider than in a conventional plan—and more energized and dramatic.

Construction on Sacred Heart’s New Hampshire and Vermont granite walls moved ahead through 1905, when complex and troubling problems developed between O’Rourke and the construction firm. I will not here delve into this confusing, bitter, and ultimately poignant phase. It ended badly and sadly for Jeremiah O’Rourke.

Indeed by then, Bishop Wigger and Monsignor Doane had died. Bishop O’Connor and more particularly, his vicar general, Monsignor Sheppard, now led the cathedral project. And New York architect Isaac Ditmars came to the fore. Never mentioned in Newark for public consumption, was that Ditmars was Protestant.

Responding to apprehension about the foundations of the towers, Ditmars eliminated the spires and one stage of the towers, now designed to reach 232 feet, and borrowing features from Amiens cathedral. Ditmars looked to Rheims Cathedral for the rose window tracery

and for the capitals in the interior arcade. He was direct about the source for the capitals, saying he copied from photographs. This was not how O'Rourke and many revivalists approached Gothic, hoping as they did to take its ideals and make them their own. This was a real change in design philosophy. Ditmars also looked to Amiens in redesigning the copper spire at the crossing, called a flèche. With the reduction of the towers, the flèche assumed more of the "heaven-pointing" responsibility. In fact, flèche is the French word for arrow and the superb one here has pointed heavenward since 1919.

The sculpture in the facade's three portals was done in the 1920s. It looks as if the planners sought the simplest historical pattern, finding it in Sens cathedral, and then further rationalizing it. The work, however, seems a long way from the spirit and letter of Gothic sculpture or even quality revival work. One senses a waning vision.

With the death of Monsignor Sheppard in 1925, a new vicar general, Monsignor John Duffy, brought fresh purpose to the project. Ditmars also brought in a younger partner, Paul Reilly, who had a very good command of Gothic. The fact that Reilly was Irish-American and Catholic probably also appealed both to Ditmars and Newark officials.

The planners now addressed constructing the cathedral's vaulting or ceiling. The Gothic builders, with their progressively innovative vaulting and other techniques, realized ever higher structures with larger portions of walls filled with glass – all contributing to what Nikolaus Pevsner called the "heavenward urge." And this idea of reaching higher is critical – it is another form of "heaven pointing." For the faithful in the Medieval world, and, I dare say, a good while later, heaven was thought to be "up" — above the skies!

Yet much neo-Gothic work, however visually persuasive, held compromises. Keely's cathedrals had ceilings of wood or lathe and plaster. Even the vaults in Saint Patrick's Cathedral in New York are imitative. O'Rourke projected that Sacred Heart's would be a cementitious product more impressive than plaster but not stone. All these substitutes were greater or lesser compromises.

But a novel system, called Guastivino vaulting, had been introduced in this country in the previous decades by Rafael Guastivino, an architect from Spain who adapted an old Mediterranean technique. Guastivino used tiles and cement, layering them into thin, strong vaults. The tiles' color could be customized. And the color of Sacred Heart's vaulting is inspired. It harmonizes beautifully with the limestone walls and makes no attempt to suggest that it is stone vaulting.

Conscious to those who choose it or not, this respects the influential theories of John Ruskin, who picked up Pugin's cause in the 19th century. Ruskin believed that making materials appear like anything other than they are, was a deplorable deception. (An example would be a plaster ceiling made to look like stone by painting or giving it some faux application.) In all, Guastivino vaulting was a magnificent solution in Newark.

Following Bishop O'Connor's death in 1927, Thomas Walsh succeeded him and his installation was held in Sacred Heart, by then complete on the exterior but unfinished

inside. Everyone could see what more than \$3 million and three decades had produced. The raw, profoundly architectonic structure is captured in this sensational photo. [see [Gothic Pride](#) illustrations]

Walsh was a driven, focused leader but the Depression and then the World War Two prevented progress on the cathedral, though the diocese grew, becoming an archdiocese in 1937 and Walsh its first archbishop.

Let's now look at American cathedral projects that began after Sacred Heart was begun. Notables ones are in Pittsburgh, Richmond, St. Paul, Toledo, St. Louis, Helena, and Seattle. Their stylistic variety—Gothic, of course, but Baroque, Beaux Arts, Byzantine, Spanish Revival—manifested Gothic's diminishing hold on church architecture.

Several important Episcopal cathedral projects also advanced. The Episcopal Church long wanted a cathedral in Washington, an American Westminster Abbey, and its English Gothic style made sense for a denomination with Anglican roots. The cornerstone was laid in 1907 and the structure, with authentic vaulting, was completed late in the century.

Progress was made on Saint John the Divine in New York and the nave in use by 1941. If ever finished, it would be the fourth-largest cathedral in the world. As it is, what has been completed may be the nearest thing to its Gothic models in America.

Although these cathedral projects remained in historical styles, progressive architects, artists, and patrons began to embrace Modernism. This is ironic. In the Middle Ages, as the new Gothic style spread, it was called Opus Modernum, modern work or design. In the twentieth century, modern was Modernism, though Newark and most cathedral builders carried on with revival styles.

Following the Second World War, Archbishop Walsh decided that Sacred Heart's interior would be finished in time for the Newark see's centennial, in 1953. Successful fundraising left a cathedral that, in nominal dollars, cost \$10 million, the most expensive Catholic church built in the United States. (I probably need not point out that in even nominal dollars it cost ten times what Bishop Wigger planned.)

Up to this juncture, Sacred Heart is best understood by tracing its stage-by-stage development. But because the interior assumed its final form so quickly, we should consider what the finishing volley brought.

It is essential to understand the division of responsibilities. Auxiliary Bishop James McNulty represented the archdiocese's interests; he and his advisers established the program for liturgical furnishings and decorative arts. Paul Reilly returned to the project and had overall architectural control and design responsibility for the structural envelope, including carved masonry. Gonippo Raggi had charge of liturgical furnishings and appointments, wood-carving, stained glass, mosaic work, much but not all statuary. At first glance, Raggi, a painter in the Italian Renaissance and Baroque tradition, was not the most

probable choice to design a Gothic interior largely calling for three-dimensional work. But there is a back story.

In 1901, Martin Maloney, a utilities tycoon, built a church in Spring Lake, at the Jersey Shore, as a memorial to his daughter Catharine. St. Catharine's, the Maloney Memorial, is a stunning recreation of Roman Baroque church. Maloney brought Gonippo Raggi, born and trained in Rome, to paint murals in it.

Raggi went on to work on many church interiors in the United States. His calling card eventually held more than artistic capacity: Raggi was well connected at the Vatican. His first cousin was a papal nuncio and very senior cardinal. And Raggi shrewdly cultivated a high Roman aura, cheerfully encouraging the Old World honorific "Professor Raggi."

Critical to Sacred Heart's story, he and his work won the notice of someone alert to the Roman manner: Thomas Walsh, then Bishop of Trenton. Walsh in many respects found his court artist in Raggi. When it came to finishing Sacred Heart Cathedral, and with Walsh's patronage, Raggi's particular artistic idiom and other considerations were set aside.

The word "ultramontane" literally means "beyond the mountains" — "beyond the Alps" —and, figuratively, the Vatican's influence on Catholic affairs outside of Italy. Certainly, an ultramontane spirit was at work in the Maloney Memorial at the start of Raggi's American career, and in good measure due to Raggi's involvement, one sees many general and particular Italian and ultramontane inflections in Sacred Heart. And his clerical patrons gave him their full consent.

If Raggi had been an unlikely designer to finish what before that was described as a French Gothic-style cathedral, Paul Reilly was a less surprising choice. Yet his task was not straightforward. Most critically, time had drained the vitality out of the Gothic Revival. Cultural and artistic movements wax and wane. And the one that brought Gothic's return had definitely waned by the mid-twentieth century.

When designing in Gothic, Reilly was self-aware about working in an antiquarian mode neither broadly popular nor esteemed in the architectural mainstream. He openly fretted about finding assistants to draw and specify Gothic details.

But he and Raggi could not dawdle. The compressed timetable in some respects deprived Sacred Heart of the enriching variety that can occur when features are added incrementally over long years. By the same token, it resulted in a marked interior coherence.

With these circumstances identified, we can evaluate what was created in Sacred Heart's completion phase. Before that, I must note that Archbishop Walsh did not live to see it finished. He was succeeded by Thomas Boland, who dedicated Sacred Heart in 1954.

In early planning, the archdiocese stipulated what it called a "liturgical style" or freestanding altar, demonstrating progressive ideas about liturgy. The altar table was carved from Botticino marble. Indeed, Raggi selected Italian marbles for all appointments

carved from Botticino marble. Indeed, Raggi selected Italian marbles for all appointments and statues in his purview: light brown Botticino for altars, pulpit, cathedra, and the like; and white Carrara for statues and select other use. Famous works by Michelangelo and others were in Botticino, as was the main altar of Saint Peter's in Rome. These associations were copiously noted in publicity about the Newark interior.

Over the altar is a baldachin. It is a beautiful composition with a fascinating sequence of models. The primary one is the baldachin designed by Charles Maginnis that was installed in Saint Patrick's in the previous decade. Among Maginnis's own models is one of the great works of Italian Gothic sculpture [the tomb of Robert of Anjou], in Santa Chiara in Naples. Starting with Maginnis's bronze baldachin, Raggi rendered a similar one in marble for Newark. He in a way thus transposed it back to its original medium, though the prototype in Santa Chiara was actually badly damaged in World War Two. And in a trick taken from the Baroque, from a certain vantage, Raggi's finial statue of the Sacred Heart appears to do the work of the central post of the triforium.

The pulpit's tracery, decoration, and curving stairs seem to derive from how wood is carved, and certainly pulpits are more typically made of wood. This one in marble is astonishing: even its lectern is Botticino! It's almost as if Raggi said to the Italian artisans: I dare you to execute this in marble. And they did.

The actual woodwork is a honey-colored American oak, expertly carved. In fact, the warm and harmonious color palette of Sacred Heart's interior, along with the overall scaling of the appointments, rank among Raggi's greatest personal contributions.

The stained glass is based on that in Chartres Cathedral and was produced by Zettler of Munich. The artists went to Chartres to study the major schemes and placement of subjects, and especially the painting and coloristic systems. The Newark teams decided on the windows' subject matter and Zettler artists translated Raggi's sketches into High Gothic syntax.

Gothic-style glass for a Gothic-style structure made sense. Cram thought that stained glass must "be absolutely subordinate to its architectural environment.... It must continue the structural wall surface perfectly; therefore it must be flat, without perspective or modeling... in no respect naturalistic." [Church Building, p. 139] In Newark, Cram's mandates were largely followed, though such painting in the twentieth century deprives it of the pictorial frankness of medieval glass work. Above all, Sacred Heart's glass triggers an overwhelming sensory response—neurons firing from eye to brain—stimulated by seeing so much richly colored glass animated by natural light. The Scholasticism that informed the old Gothic cathedrals holds that God is light. And the light in Sacred Heart is transcendent.

The stone screen facing the nave by Paul Reilly has a plan that appears to derive from the portal of St. Maclou, a late Gothic church in Rouen. As with O'Rourke's sourcing of the towers' plan, Reilly in a sense was picking up where the old Gothic builders left off. The

screen also holds citations to High Gothic sculpted portals, with the statuary's setting borrowed from Chartres.

Unlike a portal, it faces inside. This inversion creates both meaning and tension. Gothic cathedrals have two main axial thrusts: the horizontal drive toward the altar and the vertical one to the vaults and clerestory. Here, the monumental screen visually competes with these thrusts. It is a radical idea and in a way Reilly very much took things into his own hands. This screen also seems to suggest that the pursuit of the sacred, within Sacred Heart—but metaphorically, too—could pull one toward the altar or toward the city. The screen is both imposing and provocative.

The exceptional bronze doors outside that screen are by Italian sculptor Aurelio Mistruzzi and based loosely on themes found in the main portal of Chartres, and in a format borrowed from Ghiberti, thus blending French Gothic and Italian Renaissance influences.

There is a host of statuary in Sacred Heart. Those in the transept screens were in Reilly's scope. The history of the Church is commemorated in the left transept. Saint Peter is surrounded by prelates from the era of the Newark see, expressing the Church's continuum. The right screen is an arresting ensemble of Old and New Testaments figures. Raggi's statues were carved in Italy and, from what the record shows, in the region around the quarries from which the marble came. In addition, nine statues were produced in an export-import process. The limestone for the narthex statutes was quarried in Indiana, shipped to Italy for carving, and brought back. Whether these statues are superior to the work of the Americans who did the other carving is, I think, a subjective matter.

The Lady Chapel has the only altar in Sacred Heart composed of white Carrara marble, symbolizing Mary's purity. Five other chapels carry dedications to saints associated with the archdiocese's diverse ethnic groups: Saints Patrick, Boniface, Lucy Filippini, Stanislaus, and Anne. Although each chapel is different in arrangement and design, they are composed in the same materials, somewhat homogenizing the diverse ethnic associations.

Architectural historian James Ackerman has considered what he calls "the intersection of architecture and narrative," in historic religious structures. I came to appreciate that the ethnic narratives, or story-telling, in the apse chapels are complemented by other narratives—or semiotics—in Sacred Heart.

And I offer these:

Dublin-born Jeremiah O'Rourke gave the structure its essential and distinctive plan. And there are enough Irish-American bishops in the left transept screen to start a St. Patrick's Day parade in Sacred Heart: Corrigan, O'Connor, Walsh, Boland, McNulty, among them.

Raggi brought plentiful Italian references to his work.

Skilled German artisans painted every stroke and wash of the beautiful stained glass.

The St. Anne Chapel includes commemoration of those of Spanish descent. Yet all you have to do in Sacred Heart to call to mind these people, so essential to Newark's recent story, is look up! The vaulting is based on an old building technique brought from Spain by a Spaniard. It is an "exalted" reference.

Finally, there could be no finer tribute to those of Central European ancestry than memory of John Paul II's 1995 visit, surely Sacred Heart's proudest day, and which brought its distinction as a minor basilica;

Let me offer concluding thoughts.

In many respects, Sacred Heart's completion in 1954 brought to a close the Gothic Revival for American Catholic cathedral building. For liturgical and aesthetics reasons, it seems almost unimaginable that one could start a Gothic cathedral after the Second Vatican Council.

Given the high aspirations at the cathedral project's inception, how did Newark do? I posit that Sacred Heart ranks among our top five Gothic cathedrals. Without ordering them, they are St. Patrick's and St. John the Divine in New York, the National Cathedral, and Sacred Heart. The fifth? I leave that for anyone else to decide. But Newark is securely among the most successful.

In the interior, the massive columns and dramatic arcade are hugely impressive. The splendid Guastivino vaulting gives it the structural authenticity that many counterparts lack. And the overall impression is one of a thoughtfully conceived scheme executed in the finest materials available.

The exterior is indisputably architectonic. Walk around Sacred Heart: its geometries and volumes absolutely vibrate.

Finally, the rise upon which Sacred Heart stands makes for a literally spectacular structure—a monument that represents the Church and the city. Seen from road, rail, or air—from city or park—its "heaven-pointing" could not be more directive and inspiring.

I close with a Latin exhortation that Monsignor Doane liked and which carries my own hope: Floreat Novarce! May Newark flourish, all of it—the archdiocese and the city and the great cathedral they hold and which represents both—and flourish in every way.