

EPISODE 04 – The Church Building

1. What architectural features help symbolize your church as the Gateway of Heaven? the Body of Christ? the New Jerusalem?
 - We have two buildings on St. Mary's Parish Campus that people in the community would describe as a Church, namely, the 150 year old Church and the new 2010 Church. Within St. Mary's the older building is referred to as the Chapel and the newer building is the Church. Architecturally the buildings are quite different but there are major elements in common. The most striking exterior symbol is the **cross** towering above all else, on the steeple of the Chapel, and above the altar of the Church. Both churches have the **tabernacle** at the eastern end so that in facing or moving toward the tabernacle you are **moving east** toward the holy city of Jerusalem where the original temple was situated. There are many verses of scripture in which the east is significant in this way.
 - **Matthew 2:1-2** {1 In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage."}
 - **Ezekiel 8:16** {And he brought me into the inner court of the house of the Lord; there, at the entrance of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about twenty-five men, with their backs to the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east, prostrating themselves to the sun toward the east.}
 - Both buildings have a **Narthex** where people can enter out of the world, greet each other, and prepare to enter the **sanctuary**.
 - Both of **seats** and **kneelers** where the body of Christ can gather in the presence of God to pray, worship, sing, and receive the sacraments.
 - Other architectural features are the **altars**, the **vigil lights**, the **statues**, the **stations of the cross**, the **tabernacle**, the **stained glass** windows, the **ambo**, and so much more.
2. How can the building remind us to care for the temple of our hearts?
 - In the first letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians I read:
 - **1 Corinthians 6:19-20** {Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.}
 - As anyone viewing the buildings on our parish campus would easily pick out those that are churches from what they see outside and inside, so it should be with me. People seeing me should get a glimpse of the glory from God both from what they experience from my words and deeds. I myself should make every effort to love and serve the Lord in every decision, every prayer, every thought, so that my life will be one of discipleship whether others see it or not.