

Progress Report Façade Restoration Church of the Blessed Sacrament September 2018

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

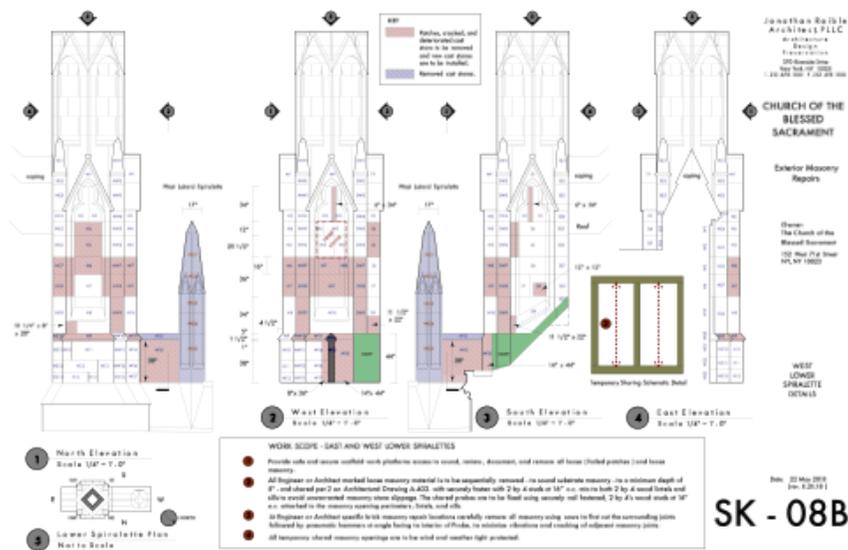
While we had hoped the Façade Project would be wrapping up by the end of 2018, we are now, unfortunately, projecting the work to finish during the summer of 2019. While the beginning phases of the Façade Project, which included the repointing of the entire building, patching up deteriorated pieces of stone tracery, and the removal of the Rose Window, moved at a good pace, this summer's work began to focus on the repairs to the stone façade itself. This work has proved quite a challenge as the extent of deterioration of the cast stones on the façade is far greater than expected. The sheer size and weight of the cast stones are also greater than anticipated.

At the beginning of the summer, the upper portions of the façade, which include the Balcony Rail and decorative Spiralettes, were measured, dismantled, and sent out for re-fabrication with new internal stainless-steel reinforcements. These pieces are about to be reinstalled, but the slow turn around time for stone fabrication is causing delays and has slowed the overall progress of the project. Moving down the façade we come to the three main items: the lower Spiralettes, Sculptural Niches, and one of the most decorative pieces of the façade, the Pentafoil, a freestanding structure which sits atop the main entrance. More scaffold was added around the lower Spiralettes which permitted the measuring and sounding of each deteriorated stone that needs to be replaced. The work of cutting out each damaged stone, while providing shoring to support the greater structure, is quite detailed and painstaking. A diagram of this stone work is provided below. Again, the slow turn around time for re-fabricating stones remains a concern. Because our building is landmarked, on some level it makes sense to stick with the fabricators already chosen. They have been examining and re-creating stones to the original specifications of the building, which itself was quite a detailed process. This summer, hairline cracks were also discovered in the column capitals of the Sculptural Niches, which now necessitates careful removal of those capitals while shoring up the rest of the Niches. Large sections of the Pentafoil, too, whose deterioration is extensive, must be cut out. Because the Pentafoil is a freestanding structure, a special temporary steel shoring has been designed by structural engineers who were brought into the project for this purpose this summer. The increase in Engineers and Contractors needed for these difficult portions of the work has also slowed progress, as now more and more people need to coordinate and work together.

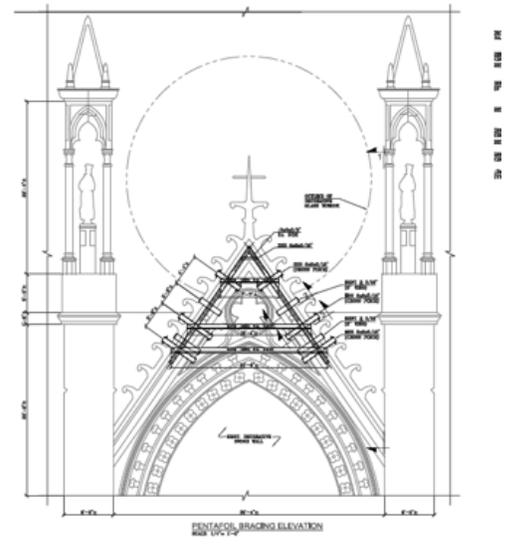
On a happier note, the Rose Window restoration is going quite well. All of the stained glass has been cleaned and restored and is in the studio awaiting its return to us. In August, the crew began chipping out the exterior safety glass, which will be replaced, along with the stained-glass panels, in the coming weeks.

Needless to say, this work is of the utmost importance and as it has progressed, has thrown more challenges our way than initially expected. Thankfully we have a wonderful Architect overseeing the details of the work. Thank you again to all supporting this work. If you have not yet done so and are able, please consider a gift to the Capital Campaign to help see the Façade work to its successful completion this summer.

Father Duffell



SK - 08B



Documentation of the West lower spiralette and the cast stones selected for replacement.

Detail of steel shoring for Pentafoil. Only the interior pieces of the structure will be replaced.



Cast stone removal with exposed brick substrate. The damaged stone will be re-fabricated and replaced.



Deteriorated free standing Pentafoil pediment cast stones.



Hairline crack in the column capital of the sculptural niche. Temporary shoring will need to be installed to extract and replace the cracked column capital while leaving the rest of the structure in place.