

# ACLS



# NEWSLETTER

## ASSOCIATION OF CONSULTANTS FOR LITURGICAL SPACE

### In this issue:

ACLS/LTP Webinar Series

Life Changing Experiences of Friendship and God’s Love South of the Border by Ken Griesemer

President’s Letter - James Hundt

#### Upcoming Events

Vote on Bylaws Change -  
Jan. 13-17, 2020

SWLC Tucson Jan. 15-18,  
2020

Oberammergau - May 27-  
June 6, 2020

ACLS Retreat  
San Antonio, Tx Sept. 2020

LTP/ACLS Webinar Series -  
“Built of Living Stones”  
Jan. 21 - G.Sunghera, SJ  
Feb. 4 - M.Morgan, RSM  
Feb. 18 - C.Frenning

#### Webinar Schedule

January 28 - Debra Luke, artist  
showcasing her art and process  
March 17 - Brother Micky McGrath,  
speaking on Participatory Group  
art

April 21- Lauren Berge speaking  
on historic preservation  
May 19-Jim Hundt, architect and  
Ken Griesemer, consultant speak-  
ing on the changing role of the  
GatheringSpace

## New Webinar Series Announcement

***Liturgy Training Publications, in partnership with the Association of Consultants for Liturgical Space, invite you to join us for a Virtual Workshop series exploring Built of Living Stones: Art, Architecture, and Worship***

Through the ages, Roman Catholic church buildings have taken on different layouts and adopted styles of the times in which they were constructed. Documents have been generated by the Church over time to assist architects, builders and artisans in the creation of these transcendent structures. This series will look at *Built of Living Stones*, the current guidelines of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, which guides the process for church building and renovating. Session one will look at key foundational concepts found in Chapter One. Session two will be focusing on architectural implications, and Session three will look at the role of art in worship spaces.

The presenters representing The Association of Consultants for Liturgical space are Gilbert Sunghera, SJ, Marilyn Morgan, RSM and Carol Frenning.

**BUILT OF LIVING STONES, PART I: THE LIVING CHURCH, GOD'S BUILDING**

Presented by Gilbert Sunghera, SJ

Tuesday, January 21, 2019, 1:00-2:30pm ET (10:00-11:30am PT)

Order Code: VWBLS1

<https://ltp.org/products/details/VWBLS1/built-of-living-stones-part-i-the-living-church-gods-building>

*Built of Living Stones* is the primary document used in the United States to assist Parish Building Committees and their Design Teams create and remodel worship spaces. Session one will look at key foundational concepts that underpin this document issued by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops.

**BUILT OF LIVING STONES, PART II: THE CHURCH BUILDING AND THE LITURGICAL RITES**

Presented by Marilyn Morgan, RSM

Tuesday, February 4, 2019. 1:00-2:30pm ET (10:00-11:30am PT)

Order Code: VWBLS2

<https://www.ltp.org/products/details/VWBLS2/built-of-living-stones-part-ii-the-church-building-and-the-liturgical-rites>

This session will break open the second chapter of *Built of Living Stones* focusing on the interior of the church building, the art and architecture and what is needed to celebrate the liturgy and the sacraments. If you are thinking of building or renovating your worship space, this session will help you in your deliberations. Even if you are not renovating or building at this time, this session will be helpful in looking at your space and how you use it for worship.

**BUILT OF LIVING STONES, PART III: ART AND ARTISTS ASSISTING THE CHURCH**

Presented by Carol Frenning

Tuesday, February 18, 2019, 1:00-2:30pm ET (10:00-11:30am PT)

Order Code: VWBLS3

<https://www.ltp.org/products/details/VWBLS3/built-of-living-stones-part-iii-art-and-artists-assisting-the-church>

Windows and statues may be the most obvious visual arts in your worship space. Do you know why they are there? How do you select art for a new worship space or add pieces in an existing space? This workshop addresses the role of the visual arts in support of the prayer life of the church. We will look at how art - both permanent and seasonal art - functions in the worship space. We will explore practical aspects of commissioning a work of art, working with artists, and placing and using art in the worship space.

To register for the entire series, please follow this link: <https://www.ltp.org/products/details/VWBLS3/built-of-living-stones-series>

**Life Changing Experiences of Friendship and God's Love South of the Border**

By Ken Griesemer, Liturgical Design Consultant, Albuquerque, NM (Dec. 12, 2019)

In 2009, my Catholic parish in Albuquerque, NM, Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary, established a covenanted Sister Parish relationship with San Eugenio in Tijuana, Mexico, the poorest parish in the diocese. The mission parish of San Eugenio has been staffed by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate since its establishment in 1997. Just four OMI priests serve 15 chapels spread around the colonia hills along the border in the far eastern reaches of Tijuana. An estimated 200,000 people live



within the San Eugenio parish boundaries.

This year, at the request of the diocesan bishop, the OMI's began serving at a newly established parish and have moved the focus of their ministry further east along the border. It's a place where the poorest of the poor migrants from the south arrive and try to establish a new life. My first experience in Tijuana 10 years ago was a very profound weekend formation retreat with parishioners from San Eugenio and Holy Rosary. Little did I know that all these years later I would still be traveling to this rugged border town and be blessed with so many friends there.

Over the years, my trips to the Sister Parish with small groups from Albuquerque have involved diverse mission activity in the community. We visited families with children facing physical and developmental challenges, delivered food and clothing, visited the local HIV/AIDS clinic, assisted the priests on small projects, walked the neighborhoods, and attended fiestas. We witnessed devastating fires that consumed multiple homes and even one of the chapels. Everywhere around us we witnessed significant poverty.

We also visited Playas de Tijuana at the coast line south of San Diego and saw the border wall disappear down into the Pacific. We shared many meals and worshipped on a regular basis at the main church and at many of the chapels. Members of my parish have supported the scholarship program that is helping young adults get a college education for just \$400 per semester as they strive to lift themselves out of poverty. We participated in youth group events and were blessed to experience their great faith and hospitality, energy and enthusiasm for service. On one trip, I was asked to evaluate multiple homes for possible reroofing. The measurements and photographs included in my report were used to obtain a \$6,000.00 grant to provide new roofs. The reroofing projects are an ongoing effort of the Oblate Youth Team.

Early In 2018, the OMI fathers learned that the bishop of Tijuana was going to send diocesan priests to staff San Eugenio parish requiring the Oblates to relocate.



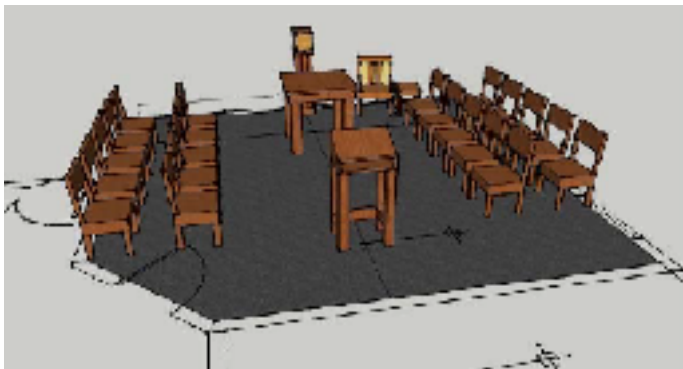
Multiple building projects needed to move forward to prepare for the transition, including the construction of a new residence for the Oblate priests and brothers

serving the Tijuana mission. A site was selected and planning began with a young and talented architecture student and a construction engineer who were both active in the young adult ministry.

In July of 2018, The Superior of the Mission, Fr. Jesse Eequeda, OMI, asked if I would come to Tijuana to assist with the planning of the new church that was expected to be built further east along the border in a more recently established colonia. Upon my arrival I was expecting to focus on just this one project, but at our first meeting

I learned there were 11 different projects under consideration. However, the highest priority was the new home and chapel for the Oblate community.

During my four-day visit, we held long meetings and work sessions that lasted into the late hours. We visited various project sites spread across the colonias. We even did some invasive exploration of the structure of a geodesic dome at the Youth Center to evaluate the possibility of expansion to accommodate the vibrant



youth ministry and retreat program developed by the Oblates. Much of the time was spent on the design of the house and chapel. My meager skills with SketchUp (3-D modeling program) came in handy as I developed the layout for the chapel and the kitchen. After the trip, I participated in lots of follow-up communication with the help of Google Translate, learning a little Spanish along the way.

In December of 2018, my wife and I made a return trip to San Eugenio. The news at that time was full of stories about the Central American caravan making its way north and we suspected we might encounter some of the migrants. Just before the trip, we learned that the parish was hosting 18 members of the caravan. This group of children, young women, and young men had left their homeland to escape very difficult circumstances of poverty, gang violence, and political corruption. On first

meeting, we were warmly welcomed and shared a meal at the Youth Center. During our visit, we learned more about the conditions in Central America and heard many stories about the journey of the migrants. We worshipped together and shared more meals. A highlight of this trip was the celebration of the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe with parades and fiestas. Reminiscent of my first visit to Tijuana in 2009, we shared laughter, tears, and hugs with our friends, old and new. One day, we gathered clothing and blankets into backpacks and made our way through the dusty streets of Tijuana to visit the migrant camp established by the government to temporarily house about 3,000 homeless Central Americans. Surrounded by armed military guards, it was a crowded and tense place with many families living in tents in the concrete yard or inside a large open building on the site. We visited shortly after many days of rain, and the camp was festooned with clothing and shoes, sleeping bags and blankets, all drying in the Tijuana sun. One of the young men from the caravan hosted by San Eugenio, Ernesto from El Salvador, was quietly assigned to keep an eye on me and keep me safe during our (3-D modeling program) came in handy as I developed the layout for the chapel and the kitchen. After the trip, I participated in lots of follow-up communication with the help of Google Translate, learning a little Spanish along the way.

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via Facebook Messenger and Google Translate. Meeting the migrants and our visit to the refugee camp was another in a long series of life changing experiences just south of the border.

In May of 2019, I made a return visit to Tijuana. On the day I arrived, I was treated to a festive dinner with the four Central Americans still at San Eugenio, my friends Ernesto, Brayan, Romeo, and Cristian. All the others of the original group of 18 had moved on legally to sponsor families in the U.S. or returned to their home countries. It was a joyful reunion where we shared stories, laughter, and hugs while enjoying pizza and “dos cervezas.”

Much of this May trip was spent at the construction site of the new house for the priests and brothers – Casa Oblata – and in meetings to discuss various design details. All four of my remaining friends from the caravan had been employed by the Oblates to help with the construction. They are enthusiastic, hardworking, and very grateful. They had rented a small house very close to the San Enrique Youth Center and were participating in the youth activities and Thursday evening youth Mass. On each of my visits to the construction site, I was welcomed with smiles and hugs. Not so typical in my experience as an architect, but much more familiar in my work with faith communities as a liturgical design consultant. As the project has progressed, I have learned much about construction methods in Mexico.

A highlight of this May trip was my participation in SEARCH 14, a weekend retreat for young adults at the San Enrique Youth Center. Over 100 youth attended, and the team was comprised of over 150 more young people from San Eugenio parish, all of whom had participated in previous SEARCH retreats. There were talks given by team members, teachings by Fr. Jesse, elaborate and festive communal meals, skits, music, dancing, adoration, Mass, and community building activities of all kinds. Once again, I was very blessed to be welcomed and included in much of the weekend, even though I don't speak the language. All four of my Central American friends participated, and we exchanged many hugs and smiles – a universal language. They each had deeply moving experiences of being loved by God and accepted by the community of faith. I will never forget their tears and hugs as they thanked me for being there and for being a friend. It has been very fulfilling to share faith with these young men and others at San Eugenio, and to put a loving face on the United States. During the retreat, I was deeply touched and my own faith was strengthened.

As the Casa Oblata project nears completion, I have been blessed to make yet another trip to Tijuana to close out 2019. Among the highlights of my December 7–14 trip were celebrations of the Feasts of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary on December 8 – the Patroness of the Oblate Mission – and Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 12 – Patroness of the Americas. On the night of the 11<sup>th</sup>, accompanied by fireworks and singing, I walked once again in the procession of the Virgin through the neighborhood to the chapel of San Juan Diego for a joyful liturgy. Then on the morning of the 12<sup>th</sup>, I walked in procession for over two miles from the guest house at the remote chapel where I stayed to the main church of Maria

Immaculata. Singing and praying, over 150 men and women, young and old, children in strollers and even an elderly woman in a wheelchair made the traditional pilgrimage from the eastern reaches of the parish to honor Our Lady of Guadalupe. Many others arrived via different routes. We all celebrated the feast day liturgy then enjoyed food, fellowship, and music at the fiesta afterward.

In addition to these major celebrations with the community, I spent more time at the Casa Oblata construction site and selected the granite for the kitchen counters. With three others, I visited and encouraged Romeo, my Guatemalan friend from the 2018 caravan, who is in a drug and alcohol rehab home in Ensenada. Later, I helped install a new roof on a modest home with the Oblate Youth Team, visited the Oblate run school for children of different abilities, and helped distribute hot meals to local workers on a street corner. As usual, along the way I was also blessed to share meals and table fellowship with new friends and old – homemade tortillas, fresh omelets with hot sauce, amazing street tacos, pizza, mole enchiladas, shrimp ceviche overlooking the Pacific at sunset, and even “dos cervezas Tecate.”

Early in my recent visit during a breakfast meeting with Fr. Jesse, OMI, I was asked to help with the development of a 2-acre site to be the home of the new Oblate Youth Center. There are always surprises in Tijuana! The site will include offices, classrooms, workshops, retreat facilities, dormitories, a kitchen/dining facility, and a chapel to support the successful and growing Oblate youth ministry and life changing SEARCH retreat program. The lives of so many young people and adults have been transformed through contact with the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in Tijuana, their hospitality, outreach, and preaching.

In the midst of all these activities, I also had a number of long, personal, and emotional conversations with my young friend Ernesto from El Salvador. He said he had not been honest with me during past visits and felt strongly about sharing more of his difficult and troubled background along with the many financial challenges he and his family face. With tears in his eyes and the help of Google Translate, he shared the nearly impossible dilemma he faces with economic limitations in Tijuana, the need to earn enough money to support his disabled mother back home, and the very restrictive immigration policies of our government. The experience of solidarity born of faith, friendship, sacred listening, and deep sharing with Ernesto as he faces what feel like insurmountable obstacles

was truly a precious gift that I will long remember. The past 10 years of travel to Tijuana and the Oblate Mission has been transformational. Over time, I have grown to see with new eyes, pray with a new heart, and serve with a new sense of humility as I recognize the many blessings we take for granted in our country. My life and understanding of what it means to



welcome the stranger will never be the same, informed by opening my heart to those of different cultures and backgrounds, but mostly by a deep experience of unity that transcends borders and being warmly welcomed and embraced as a friend in Christ. The mystery continues to unfold. ¡Dios es bueno!

**Ken Griesemer** is a founding member and past president of the Association of Consultants for Liturgical Space (ACLS). He lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico, with his wife, daughter, and granddaughter. Ken has been involved in the fields of liturgy, liturgical architecture, and consulting since 1985. He established his liturgical design consulting practice 20 years ago.

### **ACLS President's Letter**

December, 2019

The last six months have been a very busy time for all of those working on behalf of the ACLS membership. Our hardworking webinar committee has finalized the arrangements for the 3-part virtual workshop series presented in conjunction with LTP focused on *Built of Living Stones*, which will take place in January & February of 2020. You should have received an email about this series by now. Information can also be found on the ACLS website. By hosting these workshops through LTP using their state-of-art technology, participants will be able to engage with the presenter and one another as they provide feedback, reflect on the topic at hand, and discuss strategies for increased engagement in their ministry. For each of the three sessions, there will be a nominal fee of \$15 to participate. We encourage all our members to participate – especially if you have never attended one of our webinars – to add to the success of this new endeavor. A portion of the proceeds from these workshops will go back to ACLS to help fund future educational efforts.

Meanwhile, ACLS members Will Brocius and Johannes Albl have been making final arrangements for the trip to Oberammergau in 2020. A group of 14 members and guests will be participating in this first international ACLS event.

You have already heard about the work that has recently been completed regarding new Bylaws and Policies & Procedures. The new Policies & Procedures are included with the newsletter for your review. Among other things, they include a new dues structure. The new, simplified dues structure is a result of the change to a not-for-profit organization. Rather than different benefits at various dues levels, all Liturgical Design Consultant and Allied members will pay the same amount and receive the same benefits, including email and website links. Please review the complete policy in the attached document. The new dues will become effective for 2020.

I hope that 2020 brings each of you and your families many blessings and that you take time to enjoy all the joys of the Christmas season. I look forward to seeing some of you either in Germany or Texas next year!

In peace,

Jim Hundt, President





<https://liturgical-consultants.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/ACLS-Bylaws-2019-12-05-FINAL.pdf>

<https://liturgical-consultants.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/ACLS-Policies-and-Procedures-2019-12-18-FINAL.pdf>

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### *Website Photos*

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**We are working on the website! Stay tuned to find out when you can add information soon.  
Thank you for your patience.**

*Send your Member News to be included in the next Newsletter to:*

*Shelley@ShelleyKolmanSmith.com*

*We'd like to know more about you and your work.*