



Catholic church on OU campus dedicates new sanctuary



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A dedication ceremony for the new church and altar at St. Thomas More University Parish and Student Center on the University of Oklahoma campus in Norman begins with a processional. [Doug Hoke/The Oklahoman]

NORMAN — A church on the University of Oklahoma campus recently dedicated a new sanctuary during a standing-room only ceremony.

The Most Rev. Paul S. Coakley, archbishop of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, presided at the dedication of the new sanctuary at St. Thomas More University Parish and Student Center, 1535 Jenkins Ave.

Brigid Brink, the church's business manager, said the church broke ground on the sanctuary project in March 2018.

She said the congregation has grown over the years and desperately needed more space to hold crowds for Mass and other events. She said the church's former sanctuary seated about 450 people, while the new sanctuary seats an estimated 750.

Brink said the parish, led by the Rev. James "Jim" Goins, had tried several times to move forward with various projects to address the church's growth, but to no avail.

Therefore, she said the Dec. 21 dedication ceremony was the culmination of all of the previous efforts and parishioners were excited to see the project come to fruition.

"We were bursting at the seams," Brink said.

"We had tried in the past to do a few different projects like a new religious education hall. This time, it went and it's amazing."

In a letter featured in the program booklet for the sanctuary, Goins thanked all those who helped see the project to its completion. He also gave thanks to the Lord for making the parish's dream a reality.

"Many people said we could never build this church. We were told that our parish was too small, too poor, jaded from past failures. And yet, the day has dawned. A new St. Thomas More has been built," Goins wrote.

"God is good."