

AIA Minnesota Announces **2016 25 Year Award Recipient** St. Elizabeth Seton Parish in Carmel, Indiana



The American Institute of Architects

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Photo credit: Phillip M. James, RRTL Architects

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA – AIA Minnesota announces that St. Elizabeth Seton Parish in Carmel, Indiana, designed by Rafferty Rafferty Tollefson Lindeke Architects, Inc. (RRTL and formerly Rafferty Rafferty Mikutowski and Associates, Inc.), is the recipient of the 2016 25 Year Award. Project team members from RRTL include: George Rafferty, FAIA; Craig Rafferty, FAIA; Frank Mikutowski, AIA; Chip Lindeke, FAIA; Lee Tollefson, FAIA; and Craig Roney, AIA.

Established by the American Institute of Architects Minnesota in 1981, the prestigious 25 Year Award annually recognizes one exemplary architectural project that has withstood the test of time. The award is given to recognize completed building projects, either individual buildings or groups of buildings, completed at least 25 but not more than 50 years ago, designed by firms with architects registered and practicing professionally in Minnesota.

The intention of this award-winning project was to create an inviting, welcoming, complex for a new parish in Carmel, Indiana, a bedroom community of Indianapolis. Saint Elizabeth Seton Parish is located on a 20-acre farm in a rapidly emerging suburb that was once a rural landscape dotted with farm buildings. The design of the parish buildings recalls that heritage by using strong, simple, rural forms.

Completed in 1985, the parish complex is composed of five independent structures arranged around a commons area. The church is set back within the arrangement, allowing other functions to have greater expression within the plan. It seats 800, creating a barn-like setting with its open rafters and wood ceiling. The height of the worship space imparts a sense of quiet reverence when the church is empty; when filled, there is a sense of anticipation.

A social hall, administrative functions, children's activities and a weekday chapel are housed in separate but connected structures. Linking the complex is the commons area. It is a multi-purpose space, serving as an entry area to each of the separate structures and a gathering space for fellowship. Collectively, the

buildings create a small, clustered village that identifies the church and parish as a community.

The AIA Minnesota 25 Year Award jury was comprised of architectural experts from Minnesota, including: **David Dimond, FAIA, CID, LEED AP**, Perkins + Will; **Angela Wolf Scott, AIA, LEED AP**, MacDonald & Mack Architects; and **Lisa L. Hsieh, PhD, Assistant Professor of Architecture**, University of Minnesota.

Some of the jury comments were:

“The forms and spaces draw from traditional church architecture in ways that are fresh and relevant thirty-one years after it was constructed. The play of light on the brick and wood interiors highlights the sculptural and delightful qualities of the materials, making for dynamic and inspiring spaces.”

“This design shows an appreciation and understanding of rural vernacular buildings by skillfully organizing program components into individual building forms. These simple forms are then deftly collocated to allow an identifiable gathering common to emerge as the 'in-between' space. Timeless design and place-making strategies have likely helped the community transition the social landscape between rural and suburban cultures since 1985.”

“The architecture of the St. Elizabeth Seton Parish employs simple yet sophisticated geometry. Variations of the gable end throughout the complex’s exterior make a strong gesture of symbolically joining a community; they demarcate and declare the distinct programs within.”

Project principal consultants include: LKPB – Mechanical /Electrical Engineers (formerly LWPB); BKBM – Structural Engineers; and Liturgical Designer – Frank Kacmarcik, Obl, OSB, Hon. AIA.

RRTL will receive their award at the annual AIA Minnesota Awards Dinner on Friday, December 2, 2016, at International Market Square in Minneapolis, MN. Learn more about the 25 Year Award at http://www.aia-mn.org/get-involved/aia-minnesotaawards/25_Year-award/

The American Institute of Architects Minnesota, founded in 1892, is dedicated to strengthening our communities, improving our built environment and providing exceptional design. For more information on the organization and Minnesota architectural firms, reference our web site at www.aia-mn.org. Pick up a copy of Architecture Minnesota, the award-winning architectural magazine of the Midwest.