

Michigan City Company Makes New Doors for Holy Name Cathedral

by Charles McKelvy

Chicago's Holy Name Cathedral had a saintly new set of doors ready to be blessed on All Saints Day thanks to the tireless efforts of Michigan City business owners, Mike Methner and Bill Hurley of Entryways Unlimited.

Methner and Hurley worked skillfully and diligently since July to recreate the famous Cathedral's four front doors as part of a restoration project, and Cardinal George was expected to bless those portals on All Saints Day, November 1.



Entryways Unlimited owners Bill Hurley (left) and Mike Methner pose proudly with two of the four doors they crafted from Douglas Fir for Holy Name Cathedral in Chicago.

The contractor for the Archdiocese of Chicago hired the Michigan City company to replace bronze doors designed by Albert J. Friscia during modernization and expansion projects at the Cathedral between 1939 and 1978.

As he and Bill Hurley put the finishing touches on the four doors at their shop at 207 SR 212 on October 25, Mike Methner said officials at the Cathedral wanted to "lighten the load of those bronze doors that weigh 1200 pounds a piece. We have made doors using three layers of vertical grain Douglas Fir that weigh 400 pounds a piece, and about 500 pounds a piece with the metal fixtures attached. We worked 120 hours just grinding the doors to give them a textured look."

Methner said he and Hurley crafted the doors to look like carved planks of wood. They are three inches thick and required eight coats of sealer.

"We will maintain them for a year and will spray them with spar varnish which is used on boats to protect them against the weather."

The two large doors and two smaller ones will face State Street. "It will be wet where they are," Methner said.

Methner and Hurley had planned to be present at the installation ceremony on All Saints Day, but they were also going to get right back to their shop because business has been good for Entryways Unlimited what with residential work both locally and



New doors for Holy Name Cathedral were made right here in Michigan City at Entryways Unlimited. These are the two large doors. The two small doors are not shown.

in Chicago and such projects as crafting the hand-rail for the Band Stand in Washington Park and refurbishing the chapel doors at Culver Academy. "We even did a window for a cathedral in Croatia that had been bombed during the war there," Methner said.

Entryways also employs Tim McDonald, who assisted Methner and Hurley with the cathedral doors, and office manager Brenda Bigfire. Phone 219-878-1761 for more information about the company.



Entryways Unlimited owners Bill Hurley (left) and Mike Methner with one of the two small doors they crafted for Holy Name Cathedral in Chicago.