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Professional Consultant
Architect
Other

News Article
Site Plan
Construction Details
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Photo's

MJBarone & associates, P.C.
Architect • Planners • Interior Designers
2003 RUDY BRUNER AWARD
PROJECT DATA
PROJECT DATA

Please answer questions in space provided. Applicants should feel free to use photocopies of the application forms if needed. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Name</th>
<th>Saint Gerard's National Shrine</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Newark, New Jersey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owner</td>
<td>Saint Lucy's Catholic Church, Newark, New Jersey</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Use(s)</td>
<td>worship, feasts, private worship, funerals, weddings and religious occasions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Size</td>
<td>2 acres</td>
<td>Total Development Cost</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual Operating Budget (if appropriate)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Date Initiated</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Percent Completed by December 1, 2002</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Completion Date (if appropriate)</td>
<td>continuous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attach, if you wish, a list of relevant project dates.

Application submitted by:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Mario J. Barone, Jr.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>President</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>MJBarone &amp; associates, PC</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>(732) 605.9198</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key Participants (Attach an additional sheet if needed)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Key Participant</th>
<th>Telephone/e-mail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Agencies</td>
<td>Mario J. Barone, Jr. AIA</td>
<td>732.792.2400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architect/Designer</td>
<td>Gilbert Lasatello</td>
<td>201.315.8765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developer</td>
<td>Louis A. Garruto</td>
<td>973.377.2980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Consultant</td>
<td>St. Lucy's Development Corporation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Group</td>
<td>Arsenio Saporito, PE</td>
<td>973.485.5022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Rev. Msgr. Joseph Granato</td>
<td>973.482.6663</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please indicate how you learned of the Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence. (Check all that apply).

- Direct Mailing
- Magazine Advertisement
- Previous RBA entrant
- Professional Newsletter
- Previous Selection Committee member
- Organization Magazine Calendar
- Internet

X. Other (please specify)

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Signature
2003 RUDY BRUNER AWARD
ABSTRACT
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Please answer questions in space provided. Applicants should feel free to use photocopies of the application forms if needed. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

Project Name: Saint Gerard's National Shrine

Address: Saint Lucy's Church, 118 Seventh Avenue, Newark, New Jersey

1. Give a brief overview of the project, including major project goals.

The National Shrine of Saint Gerard started as a mission to allow sunlight to shine through the entry of Saint Lucy’s Church and the beautiful stained glass windows. The mission and scope rapidly increased in 1998 when Saint Lucy’s Church was adapted to the National Historic Registry as building number 98001570. As a result of the induction and the dedication of the National Shrine in 1977, the scope of the mission increased to encompass a Plaza. Unfortunately, many obstacles stood in the path for this dream to become reality.

The first obstacle Saint Lucy's had to conquer was the street adjacent to its entry. This street would require relocation for the Plaza to be built. This posed logistical difficulties with various agencies such as the Utility Company, the City of Newark and the Federal Government. The Utility Company would be required to move the easements; the City would be required to rezone the city street; and, lastly, the Federal Government mandated 350 units of low-income housing to be placed on this particular site.

With the various obstacles presented many individuals and organizations combined their efforts to negotiate a solution. Ultimately, they acquired two acres of land adjacent to the Church for trade with the City to accommodate the Federal Government and its mandate. Unfortunately, the site procured to trade required asbestos removal before the trade could be completed. Once again, various individuals and organizations combined their efforts and found the funds to clean the site, trade the site and complete the desired Plaza.

The Plaza moved to its next phase—design and construction. The design was a challenge, it required the incorporation of street relocation, demolition of curbs, utility pole relocation, easement relocation for the sewer piping under the streets and the incorporation of something beautiful to be constructed and prevail. Saint Lucy’s Church, its patrons, worshippers, committees and personnel should be commended for all the hard work, dedication and accomplishments it has completed. It has overcome various obstacles, including monetary, to produce an urban environment worth considering.

2. Why does the project merit the Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence? (You may wish to consider such factors as: effect on the urban environment; innovative or unique approaches to any aspect of project development; new and creative approaches to urban issues; design quality.)

Saint Gerard’s National Shrine merits this award for various reasons.

First, the area of Newark, which Saint Lucy’s Church stands, was a thriving community, fifty years ago. The Church was the pillar of the community. All patrons were involved in the Church from Church Youth Organizations (CYO), to ethnic festivals, to family oriented gatherings, and, finally, worship. Saint Gerard’s Shrine has re-centered Saint Lucy’s Church; it has reformed a low income, deteriorating area with much turmoil into the focal point/pillar of the community, again.

Secondly, it displays the ability that City, State and Church can work together to form an environment for all to enjoy. The Church and City worked very closely in trading land, establishing relationships, and developing the Shrine, successfully.

In addition, it has brought great numbers of people Nationally and Internationally to worship and view the beautiful place. During the Feast of Saint Gerard, held in October of each year, the Shrine has brought people in from all over the world, including busloads of people from Canada. The icon brings many worshippers and patrons, since the development of the Shrine attendance has increased considerably. Saint Gerard’s National Shrine has been acknowledged as the only place like it in the United States.

Lastly, the community and its representatives cooperated to construct and procure the funds to create an outstanding urban environment. It was created on donations labor intensive and financial, including private funding.

As a result of the hard work and commitment dedicated to Saint Gerard’s National Shrine, which was dedicated as the National Shrine in 1977 by the National Conference of US Bishops, the National Historic Registry has recognized Saint Lucy’s Church as building number 98001570.
2003
RUDY BRUNER AWARD
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

RUDY BRUNER AWARD
FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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1. How has the project impacted the local community?

The area of Newark, New Jersey, which Saint Lucy’s Church resides, was an ethnic community comprised of Italians for over 100 years. The community known as Newark’s Little Italy was devoted and familiar. What was once the center of the city (in 1880 to 1925) soon became the setting for the Christopher Columbus Homes, a series of twelve story low-income high-rises, which brought much devastation to the community in 1952. Most Italians moved on and out of the community. Over the next 10 years, the setting of the Church, First Ward, became ethnically diverse. Eventually, hardship, riots, and devastation engulfed the community. The period known as “urban renewal” failed. With the construction of the Columbus Homes – 100 families per acre living in the same area became a recipe for disaster causing drama, trauma and tension among the various ethnic groups.

Saint Lucy’s with its interior shrine to Saint Gerard and it’s dedication to the community kept what little hope was left alive. Nearly, forty years after the development and construction of the Columbus Homes, the buildings were deemed unfit for occupancy, condemned and destroyed. With the vision of many people, primarily Rev. Msgr. Granato and Mario J. Barone, Jr., Saint Lucy’s and the development of the National Shrine to Saint Gerard would bring back the sense of community and devotion to this once loyal community.

Since the demolition of the Columbus Homes and inception of the National Shrine, attendance to the feast among other events, including Sunday Mass has increased considerably. On the 100th Anniversary of Saint Gerard in October 1999, Saint Lucy’s Church anticipated and received over 100,000 devotees and worshipers. The resurrection of this Shrine has proven to be an excellent example of urban environment. *

* Facts cited from the New York Times, Sunday, October 10, 1999 News and Topics Section, How a Church Brings Life to Newark’s Little Italy Article

2. Describe the underlying values of the project. What, if any, significant trade-offs were required to implement the project?

The underlying values of the National Shrine of Saint Gerard lie within ourselves and have a different meaning and value for all who visit the Plaza. Saint Gerard is the patron Saint of motherhood in the Roman Catholic religion, although not isolated to only the Roman Catholic religion. Many attribute their success of conception or joyous resolution of a troubled pregnancy/labor to the prayers of this Saint. Each person who visits this Plaza has their own story to tell, or many will visit to see and understand the value, which has been placed upon this Plaza. This Plaza has great meaning to many people, whether it’s the individuals who partook in the conception and construction, the individual visiting the site for the first time, the individual who visits each year, the individual who lives in the area, or the individual who is revisiting the Church for the first time since childhood. This Plaza has been constructed by sheer determination and dedication. The values of this establishment are immeasurable. It has reconnected a deteriorating community to its original state. A troubled area has once again become safe to walk in.

The trade-offs, significant as they are, have created a community again. They have established relationships between the City, Church, State, Federal Government and the community. The exchange of land and the length of the project due the financial burden are trade-offs alone. But what was once a dream has become reality, successfully six years later.
3. Describe the key elements of the development process, including community participation where appropriate.

As a result of Saint Lucy's Church being initiated as the National Shrine of Saint Gerard in 1977 and inducted to the National Historic Registry in 1998 the process began of designing a Plaza, which would represent the esteem honor. The Plaza started as a dream for many, which became a reality, eventually. It was created with the intent of non-denominational, therefore all religions and ethnics may pray and worship in a safe area.

The community was the key element to this entire project. The community participated in raising the money and creating the conclusion.

4. Describe the financing of the project. Please include all funding sources and square foot costs where applicable.

Saint Gerard's National Shrine was completed and constructed by donations alone. The donations included manual labor, supplies and monetary. The patrons of the Church, community and visitors contributed financially in values ranging from $25.00 - $50,000.00. In addition, patrons were invited to have the name of their loved ones inscribed on a paver or the black marble wall Saint Gerard stands in front of for a nominal fee. This project has taken six years to complete due to the difficult task of raising the proper funds to finance the project.

The original project stated in 1996 and was to be completed in one year with an estimated fee of one point two million dollars. Unfortunately, with the unforeseen circumstances, the project took six years and three million dollars.

5. Is the project unique and/or does it address significant urban issues? Is the model adaptable to other urban settings?

The National Shrine of Saint Gerard is unique and certainly one of a kind. It was constructed as a symbol for worship. The project addressed the urban issue of rejuvenating a community gone array.

The model could certainly be used in other settings of tradition or spiritual worship and meditation.
2003
RUDY BRUNER AWARD
COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE
COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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This sheet is to be filled out by someone who was involved, or represents an organization that was involved, in helping the project respond to neighborhood issues.

Name Arsenio Saporito P.E.  Title Executive Director

Organization St. Lucy's Development Corp. (a non profit corp.)

Address 133 Seventh Avenue

City/State/Zip Newark, New Jersey 07104

Fax ( ) 973-485-3220 E-mail

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Signature Arsenio Saporito P.E.

1. How did you or the organization you represent become involved in this project? What role did you play?
   a) We participated in the planning of the St. Gerard Plaza.
   b) We provided a substantial amount of financial assistance.

2. From the community point of view what were the major issues concerning this project?

   The community had no opposition to the construction of the plaza. Some persons in the community expressed joy at the news the plaza was to be partly built on the former site of the demolished Columbus Homes.

3. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the project? How did your organization participate in making them?

   a) A trade of 2.7 acres of land which was the former site of the Columbus Homes was consumated with the Newark Housing Authority by the Archdiocese of Newark who eventually sold this land to the Pastor of St. Lucy's Church. Total land which now comprises the plaza consists of the vacated Ruggiero Plaza and the previously mentioned 2.7 acres of land.

   b) We did not participate in the decision making process. All negotiations were handled by the Pastor of St. Lucy's Church.
COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE (cont'd)

4. Has this project made the community a better place to live or work? If so, how?

The St. Gerard Plaza has improved the community an enormous amount. Visitors to the plaza cannot believe that they are seeing such an outstanding achievement which was a crime ridden area.

5. Would you change anything about this project or the development process you went through?

The project has improved the immediate area tremendously and has left many individuals in awe as to the improvement of the community. As I have indicated in item 4 I would not change the project.
2003
RUDY BRUNER AWARD
PROFESSIONAL
CONSULTANT
PERSPECTIVE
PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT PERSPECTIVE

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This sheet is to be filled out by a professional who worked as a consultant on the project, providing design, planning, legal, or other services.Copies may be given to other professionals, if desired.

Name        Louis A. Garruto   Title  Chairman, St. Gerard Plaza Development Corporation
Occupation  St. Gerard's Development Corporation   Telephone  (973) 377-2960
Address  118 Seventh Ave.   City/State/Zip  Newark, NJ 07104
Fax  (973) 462-6575   E-mail  lgran10061@aol.com

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Signature  

1. What role did you or your organization play in the development of this project?
   a. Project Chairman. My role included to be the church's representative between the city and archdiocese.
   b. Involved in every aspect of the development of St. Gerard Plaza.
   c. Developed a financial plan for the Plaza based on parishioner donations.
   d. We raised $3 million for the Plaza.

2. From your perspective, how was the project intended to benefit the urban environment?

   The Plaza had positive impact on the urban environment.

3. Describe the projected impact on its community. Please be as specific as possible.

   The Plaza has a most positive impact on its community. The St. Gerard Plaza is a peaceful and beautiful architectural edifice. The area has improved tremendously.
PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT PERSPECTIVE (CONTINUED)

4. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? How do you or your organization's participate in making them?

   Cost of the demolition, the high cost of the project was prohibitive. A decision had to be made to stop the project or go forward. We chose to continue the project.

5. How might this project be instructive to others in your profession?

   One must come to visit our Plaza.

6. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of this project?

   The most successful aspect of this project was our architect's intellectual vision and absolute dedication to plan and develop such a beautiful project in an inner city of Newark, New Jersey.
ARCHITECT OR DESIGNER PERSPECTIVE

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This sheet is to be filled out by a design professional who worked as a consultant on the project, providing design, planning, or other services. Copies may be given to other design professionals if desired.

Name  Mario J. Barone, Jr.  Title  President
Organization  MJBarone & associates, PC  Telephone  ( 732 ) 792 2400
Address  28 Harrison Avenue  City/State/ZIP  Englishtown, New Jersey 07726
Fax  ( 732 ) 792 2440  E-mail  mjbdesign.mjbdesign@verizon.net

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Signature

1. Describe the design concept of this project, including urban design considerations, choice of materials, scale, etc.

The concept behind the design of Saint Gerard's National Shrine was to provide a Plaza, which would encompass the same integrity of the Church. Saint Lucy's Church is an Old Italian World Church with life-size and lifelike statues, murals on the ceiling and marble pillars and floors throughout. It was important to me to keep the atmosphere outside as it is inside. It was designed with the intent of thousands of people to enjoy all year long as well as the Feast held every year in October. It also needed to breathe life into a deteriorating community; with life-size statues externally and internally, it creates a focus for the community, once again.

The products selected for construction were meant for longevity. All natural materials such as marble, concrete, granite constructed this Plaza.

2. Describe the most important social and programmatic functions of the design.

I was fortunate enough to be raised in this parish. I witnessed the ethnicity and the community at its best. I, also, witnessed the demolition of the community with the development of the Columbus Homes. My family left the community shortly thereafter. I have maintained communication from afar for 40 plus years. When Father Granato approached me about this dream, I wanted to create something, which would return the community to its original state addressing the urban environment, which once stood. Through many designs and many difficulties, this project took on a life and a shape of its own. It addresses the social and programmatic functions by the community partaking in the various events of the Church. The community has come to life again.
3. Describe the major challenges of designing this project and any design trade-offs or compromises required to complete the project.

The major challenge of the project was to develop something, which was life-size and has a feeling of warmth, which was driven by economics. It was important for people to feel welcome. I believe this was successfully accomplished.

Additional challenges or compromises to the project were the longevity of it. Each time the project was started and brought to the middle of a phase, it would require a pause to raise more money. The project ultimately took six years to develop.

4. Describe the way in which the project relates to its urban context.

The project creates a serene setting for all to live and enjoy. It has increased the community participation and changed the atmosphere to a positive setting rather than the depressing setting it was prior.

5. Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the project's design and architecture.

The strengths of the project entail:
- a revived community
- a living memorial for eternity
- a memory for relocated families

There are no weaknesses.
2003
RUDY BRUNER AWARD
OTHER PERSPECTIVE
OTHER PERSPECTIVE

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Name: Rev. Msgr. Joseph Granato  Title: Pastor
Organization: St. Lucy's Church  Telephone: (973) 482-6663
Address: 118 Seventh Avenue  City/State/ZIP: Newark, New Jersey 07104
Fax: (973) 482-6575  E-mail: jgran10061@aol.com

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Signature: ______________

1. What role did you play in the development of this project?

After our parish lived for forty years in the shadow of Columbus Homes with all the social problems and after its demolition in 1994, I was determined to try to get some open space in front of the Church. Fortunately, Harold Lucas of the Newark Housing Authority and the then Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick supported the idea. Mayor Sharpe James also gave great support. Our role was to act as intermediaries between the city and the Archdiocese for the swap of almost 2 acres of land. That effort was ultimately successful.

2. Describe the impact that this project has had on the your community. Please be as specific as possible.

The Plaza has had a most positive impact on the area. As one city official said "Everyone is a winner, the city, the Housing Authority and the Church."

Our people really love the Plaza and are very proud of it. They gave great financial support.

Mayor James speaks very favorably about the Plaza on his many public appearances. He supported us every inch of the way. The principal of McKinley School and the students are also pleased. In three years there has been no graffiti. The residents of Wyonna Lipman Gardens are happy to look out their windows at a beautiful, serene and peaceful view. There is great respect for the Plaza in the community at large.
Harold Lucas told us that the Housing would bear the cost of demolition. Then he was transferred to HUD in Washington. His successor said they were not bound by any agreement since there was nothing left in writing. They would bear half the cost of the demolition but we would be responsible for the clean-up of the soil. That cost was prohibitive. We had to choose between stopping the project or assuming the tremendous expense that was suddenly cast upon us. We chose to continue the work. That was my decision.

4. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of this project?

The most successful aspect was the dynamic growth from the original design. I maintain that the plaza is a work of art. It took on a life of its own and Mario Barone, the architect, was insightful enough to share in that dynamic. It turned out so beautifully.

The least successful - The extreme length of time to complete the project because of the lack of funds to keep up with the increasing costs.
How a Church Brings Life to Newark's Little Italy

By MARY ANN CASTRONOVO FUSCO

NEWARK

For a century the predominantly Italian-American faithful of St. Lucy's Church have been celebrating the feast of St. Gerard Maiella with a religious procession through the streets of the neighborhood once known as the First Ward.

Most of the Italian immigrants who inaugurated this feast in the city they called Nevarca came from the Southern Italian province of Avellino, where St. Gerard was born and died. Ever proud of their ancestors' local boy who made so good that he became a saint, the widely dispersed descendants of those early immigrants, as well as newly arrived Southern Italians, continue to pour their hearts and souls into the celebration each year.

To the uninitiated, the spectacle can be at once inspiring and shocking. As participants push their way through the throngs to pin ribbons, capses and even blankets made of money in various denominations to the somber cloth habit draping a life-size statue of the saint.

Over the decades, thousands of miracles have been attributed to this 18th-century Redemptorist brother, the patron of mothers who is often invoked by those praying to conceive or to insure a joyful resolution to a difficult pregnancy or labor.

"You'll see people who are trying to have a child walking in the procession," said Michael Immerso, who wrote "Newark's Little Italy: The Vanished First Ward" (Rutgers University Press, 1997). "You'll see them the following year walking in the procession pregnant. You'll see them the following years walking in the procession with a baby carriage or carrying that baby. And many of those children are named Gerard."

Mr. Immerso, who is also chairman of the Nevarca Project, said the monthlong series of cultural events here is designed "to get the people who have moved away from the city to reconnect to its institutions."

This year a major cause for celebration is not a single birth credited to the intercession of St. Gerard, but a rebirth of the neighborhood surrounding the church that houses his national shrine: The area around St. Lucy's, which teemed with life from the 1890's through the middle of this century, ended when blocks of apartments were razed for eight low-income housing projects and a more upscale apartment.

On Saturday, the feast day of St. Gerard, Archbishop Theodore McCarrick will dedicate a two-acre plaza around St. Lucy's Church. The area around St. Lucy's, which teemed with life from the 1890's through the middle of this century, ended when blocks of apartments were razed for eight low-income housing projects and a more upscale apartment.

In Nevark, a Time to Honor St. Gerard

Following are "Nevarca Project" and religious events in honor of St. Gerard:

- Oct. 7-15 Novena novenas to St. Gerard, 7 P.M., St. Lucy's Church (973 Clifton Ave., Newark)
- Oct. 17 Archbishop McCarrick will dedicate a two-acre plaza around St. Lucy's Church (245 Clifton Ave., Newark)
- Oct. 23 Novena novenas to St. Gerard, 7 P.M., St. Lucy's Church
- Oct. 23 Church 7 A.M., 8 A.M., 9 A.M., 10 A.M. (in Spanish in the lower church; in Italian in the upper church), 11 A.M., 12:30 P.M., 6 P.M.; procession leaves the church at 2:30 P.M. Live music 6:30 to 9:30 P.M.

On Saturday, the feast day of St. Gerard, Archbishop Theodore McCarrick will dedicate a two-acre plaza around St. Lucy's Church. The area around St. Lucy's, which teemed with life from the 1890's through the middle of this century, ended when blocks of apartments were razed for eight low-income housing projects and a more upscale apartment.

Granato finds encouragement in the fact that members of the local Haitian community have told him that St. Gerard is venerated in their homeland.

Mr. Immerso, who divides his time between his home in Lunenburg, Mass., and the Clifton Avenue home of his parents, where he grew up, hopes that the St. Gerard centennial and the Nevarca Project will bridge differences among the city's ethnic

Photograph by Nancy Wong for The New York Times
afford breathtaking views of the Newark and Manhattan skylines, the Colonnades, designed by Mies van der Rohe, are still standing, though their international styling now seems out of place with the surroundings as they were first erected. The Colonnades were, deceptively, an urban nightmarish that finally ended in an implosive cloud in 1994.

In darkest moments of urban decay, when the poor gradually abandoned the inhumane projects, the residents of the Villa Victoria senior citizen residence, surrounded by low-rent apartments, housing opened in 1881 across from the church's rectory on Seventh Avenue.

Today, the monsignor's church manages the project.

"It's a nonprofit program," Monsignor Grancato, a resident, explains. "It's no longer the rectory, in fact, "The church is getting nothing out of it." Other similarly scaled subsidized town houses, with nearby tending front yards, have been built nearby. Federal mandate calls for 350 more units to be built on the site of the Columbus Homes, which is now vacant.

The opening day of St. Gerard, a two-acre parklike plot will be dedicated by Archbishop Theodore McCarrick in front of St. Gerard's. The Irish families and daughters of this neighborhood, it, too, will bear the saint's name.

After it was only because of contributions generated by the annual feast of St. Gerard that St. Lucy's Church was able to survive when most of its longtime parishioners were displaced.

The money enabled St. Lucy's to buy a nearby warehouse owned by the Archdiocese of Newark's Mount Carmel Guild. The New York City Authority agreed to split the cost of demolishing the warehouse with the church and to swap the land on which the property sat across Ruggiero Place, the street in front of St. Lucy's, which will be rezoned around the new church. "In giving a welcoming feeling to an Old World church," says its architect, Mario Barone of MJBBArace Associates in Englewood, ""Without the feast of St. Gerard, we wouldn't have been able to do anything,"

St. Lucy's Church, under the guidance of the Rev. James McManus, will begin construction within the year, named after Monsignor Grancato, for distinction in preserving and promoting Italian culture and history.

Dr. Connell said: "There's been insufficient appreciation of the wealth of the history and culture that the Italian heritage of New Jersey. This 100th anniversary provides a way for us to celebrate a very important aspect of our history and for all of us to be part of the community that they built when they were here as immigrants."