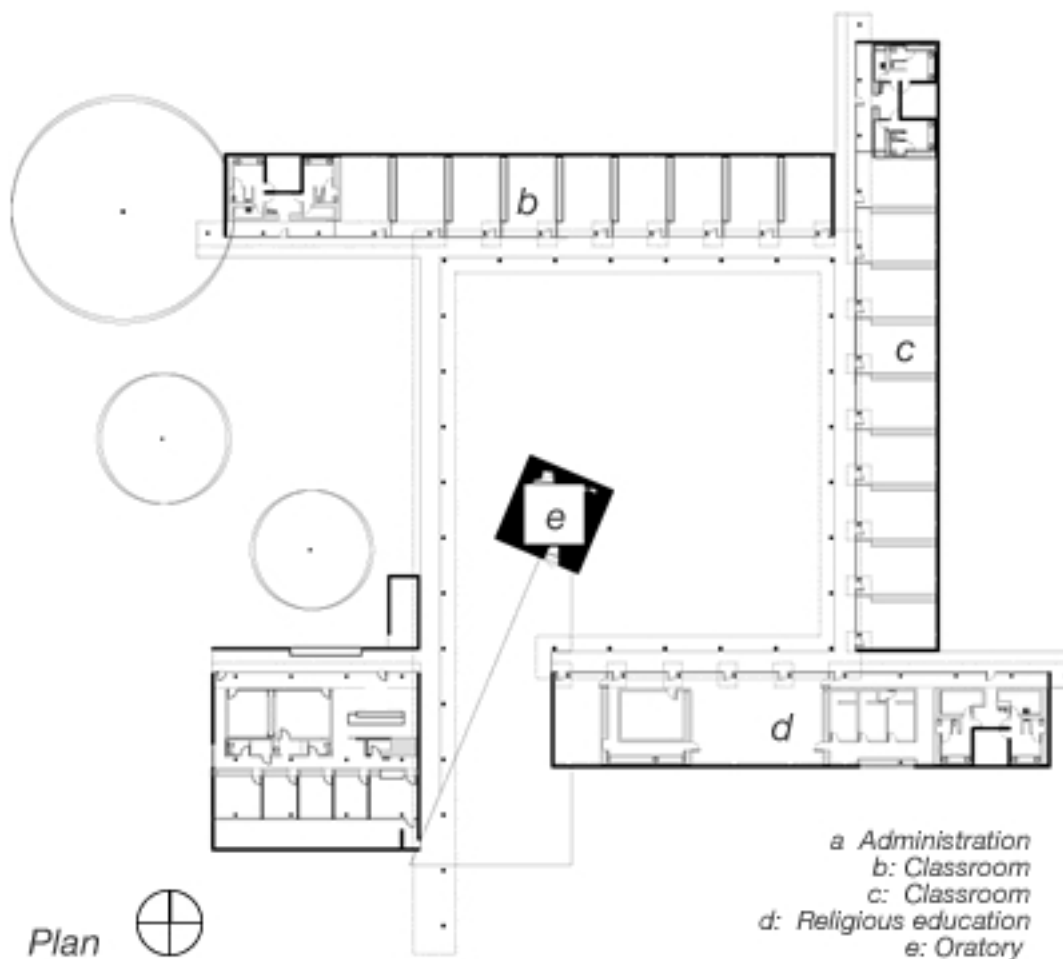


Trahan Architects wanted to relay the spiritual atmosphere of the church complex through its architecture. The project is an honest exploration of form, function, natural light and materials, providing an engaging and profound study in sacred space.

The oratory is the focal point of its rural Roman Catholic campus, predominant by its unique placement and floating within the sacred precinct of a courtyard space.



Photographs courtesy of Timothy Hursley



The master plan of the rural campus creates a strong sense of place for all functions of the Parish, drawing a distinction between the program's sacred and secular components. Secular components of the campus take form as linear or "edge" buildings framing a courtyard where the oratory is located. Traversing the courtyard in a clockwise direction, the path leads ultimately to the oratory. In the opposite direction, the path leads always back to the community.

The oratory, like a crescendo in music, creates a deliberate break in the fabric of the campus. Position, formal purity and height reflect the importance of the spiritual program and serve to distinguish the chapel from its surroundings. Rotation of the chapel further underscores the distinct orientation of secular and sacred lives. The resulting void between oratory and secular pieces create an outdoor room appropriate for large communal gatherings, smaller gatherings or private meditation near the chapel.





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The spatial elements of spiritual experience presents a thoughtful meditation on sacred spaces and the spatial dimensions of spiritual experience.



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