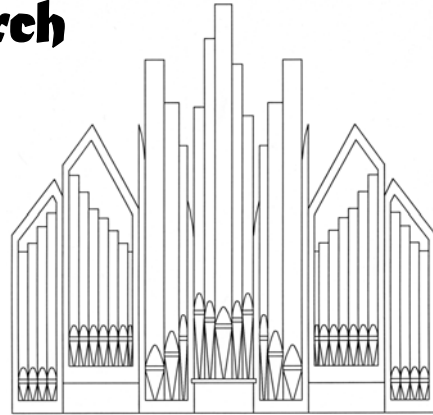


# **St. Ann's Catholic Church**

## **Ministry of Music**

### **Midland, Texas**



Installation Reflection  
Director of Music and Organist  
June 2007

Ours was truly a unique circumstance. In 1989, St. Ann's Church underwent significant remodeling. As a part of that renovation, the electronic organ installed in the balcony six years earlier was moved to the relocated choir area in the south transept. A magnificent pipe façade was constructed to hide the speakers near the front of the church. I began as a contract organist at St. Ann's in 1993 and became Music Director in 2000 and therefore I was not aware of the improvement goals and their apparent incompleteness. Little did I know, the original 1989 plan evidently included eventual winding of the 32 principal pedal pipes in the façade.

When the time came to replace our aging electronic instrument, I proposed purchasing a new digital organ. When we started exploring our options, Dale Johnson of Church Organ Associates in Dallas, Texas was the first to discover our "sleeping giant." He determined that those beautiful polished pipes were not just for looks but actually fitted with languids and ready to be wound. Further investigation by our Tonal Director, Burton Tidwell, revealed that the existing pipes were already voiced and tuned. In addition, a crated wind chest was found in the boiler room which had apparently been stored there for 18 years. Clearly, the 1989 augmenting project was halted for some reason and was realized only as far as the construction of the façade. We are proud to say that finally, some 18 years later, that beautiful façade is not only magnificent to behold but now a fully functioning part of our new pipe organ.

The purchase, planning, and installation of our new Allen combination organ was an incredible experience. From the proposal to the Bishop and Parish Council; solicitation of funds; signing of the contract; planning of the details; anxiously waiting through construction; and finally, installation and dedication - the total process was amazing. Dale Johnson and his team are unparalleled in knowledge, experience, and professionalism. Best of all, the finished instrument is stunning. The seamless blend of windblown pipes and digital voices is unmatched in quality. Its ability to lead our assembly in prayer and praise befits highest glory to God.

Thank you, Church Organ Associates!

Jeff Fentem, Music Director and Organist  
St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Midland, Texas