
A new look for the cathedral

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Above: *The new main altar retablo of the cathedral – grand and majestic!*

During the Spanish colonial era, the cathedral of Cebu used to be described as “nothing but a barn.” When plans for expansion and renovation were presented, such a plan was criticized as being too “grandiose” and too “big” for a town of merely a few thousand faithful. But one has to imagine that the jurisdiction of the then Diocese of Cebu extended all the way up to the Marianas Islands, making it the most extensive in the country during those times.

Right now, being the birthplace of Christianity in the country and in the Far East, Cebu is honored with an archbishop who is also a member of the College of Cardinals having the exclusive privilege of participating in the conclave that elects a new pope.

The cathedral now has new retablos for the main altar and the side altars. The side chapels including the Blessed Sacrament Chapel have also been renovated and embellished. Three sets of chandeliers, the biggest in the middle, now light the crossing and the transepts. A newly restored pipe organ, damaged by accumulated dust due to unuse, now gives life to liturgical music.

A cathedral “too big” and “too grandiose” perhaps would no longer be a necessary euphemism now. Besides, the “few thousand catholics in the town” have now swelled to millions scattered to different parishes that have grown during the last 75 years.

Below: *The newly renovated interiors.*



Below: *The new side altar retablos containing images of some of Cebu's popular devotions.*





Below: *The newly restored pipe organ. This pipe organ was built in 1996 by the Diego Cera Organbuilders company.*

