

# BUILDING BRIEFS

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**Ideas and  
information  
you can  
build on.**

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## Knights Open A World-Class Museum

Museum construction involves a remarkable level of intricacy. Perhaps that's why the Knights of Columbus chose Petra Construction to bring their vision to life, transforming a 33 year-old concrete office building into a world-class museum for the Knights' historic artifacts.

For Petra, the initial work focused on the challenging task of installing sophisticated new mechanical and electrical systems in the existing New Haven structure. "Museum artifacts require very precise heating, cooling and humidification control, as well as specially designed wet and dry fire protection devices," noted Dennis DaRe, Petra's Project Superintendent. "The solid concrete walls, floors and ceilings also made the job quite a challenge," added Lou Viscuso, Project Foreman.

The museum design also called for a multitude of unusual architectural details and sophisticated finishes. For example, rosewood flooring imported from Asia and porcelain tile from Italy were installed over the existing concrete floors. Translucent onyx from France was used to create the rear wall of the reliquary and then backlit, creating a beautiful appearance. In addition, Petra designed and built many of the display cases for the artifacts and was called upon to develop innovative techniques for hanging some of the larger exhibit pieces. Roy Bogue, Jr., Assistant

Project Manager, remembered one such instance, "We were asked to open a crate of artifacts and devise ways to display them. Inside were priceless relics from the Vatican. What an experience!"

The museum, designed by architect Bruce Detmers of Roche, Dinkeloo and Associates, showcases a wide variety of Knights of Columbus artifacts ranging from the rosary of Father Michael J. McGivney, the Catholic priest who founded the Knights of Columbus in 1882 in New Haven, to a 400 year-old copper cross that once was held in the hands of a statue of Christ atop St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. Countless documents and photographs, as well as various memorabilia, are also displayed. To enhance the museum's interactivity, touch screen video monitors appear along gallery walls and a high-tech electronic research center features flatscreen computers

on a dramatic black granite table.

During the construction period, which began in February of 2000 and ended in January of 2001, Petra completed nearly 77,000 square feet of exhibit area which included six galleries and a spacious two-story atrium. Upon the February 2001 opening of the Knights of Columbus museum, Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson remarked, "The Catholic cultural landscape of the United States...of the world really...has been greatly enhanced by the opening of our new museum. It is a world-class facility."

To put Petra's high quality craftsmanship and attention to detail to work for you in residential, commercial or institutional construction, call Guido Petra or Terry Wooding at 203-865-6043. Visit our Website at [www.petraconstruction.com](http://www.petraconstruction.com) to read descriptions of our projects.



*Backlit  
Translucent  
Onyx Wall  
at Knights  
of Columbus  
Museum*

# The Benefits Of Efficient Construction Management

The main priority of most building owners is the on-time, on-budget completion of their building. This type of service is best achieved by a full-service building professional with the skills and knowledge to turn a vision into reality. It's best to hire your general contractor at the beginning of the project. That will give you immediate access to a building professional with expertise in all aspects of building, including technology, current materials options, construction times and labor costs.

## Your building team

Involving your general contractor from the beginning of the project ensures that the entire building team knows your needs, goals, and budget. Based on this knowledge, the general contractor can assess the costs of various materials and building methods and compare them with the project's budget.

The knowledgeable building professional uses value engineering when evaluating options in building materials. Performance, upkeep costs, and longevity all determine the long-term effectiveness of each component. Over-specifying adds unnecessary costs up front, while under-specifying



can be costly in the long run. When the designer and contractor work in tandem from the conception of the project, fast-track construction can be implemented. The two aspects of the construction project can be coordinated so the project can proceed on a shortened schedule. Many design and construction tasks can be overlapped. This saves time and money and enables building tasks to be prioritized to achieve the highest possible efficiency.

## Total responsibility

When you hire a general contractor, that firm takes on total responsibility for the entire project. Combining their knowledge of the goals of the project with their skills and those of other professionals, the general contractor can

deliver a building that meets your goals. With the right general contractor in charge of your project, delays are minimized because the company is familiar with every aspect of the project. Should a problem occur during any stage of the process, you can rely on your general contractor to resolve it quickly and efficiently.

## Eliminate your burdens

Constructing a new building or renovating an existing one is a major project with major responsibilities and burdens. From planning to economics to overseeing day-to-day progress it can become almost a full-time effort. Hire a general contractor to eliminate those burdens. The result will be a building that meets your specifications, delivered on time and on budget.

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