



WINNER

Designer's Choice (Master Division)

REPEATED BLESSINGS

NORTHWESTERN HARDWOOD FLOORS

Chicago

Northwestern Hardwood Floors' Floor of the Year award for Designer's Choice (Master Division) may mark a first for the Floor of the Year competition: The company has now won awards in different years for different floors in the same building. Of course, this is no ordinary job site—it's the magnificent St. John Cantius Church in Chicago. In 1998, an extensive renovation of the church flooring involving multiple inlays and

extensive borders swept the Floor of the Year contest, taking home awards for Floor of the Year (Master Division), Members' Choice (Master Division) and Unfinished Craftsmanship and Design. Those awards were shared by Legendary Hardwood Floors and Steamway Inc., which is now Northwestern Hardwood Floors.

The renovation of the church is a continual project led tirelessly by Father Frank Phillips. Most recently, the altar became an increasing concern—the massive structure, imported from Krakow in the late 1800s, was sinking into its supporting platform. Highly esteemed in church circles, general contractor Deprato Regali was called in to rebuild the altar area. With the success of the wood floors that already had been installed in the church, it was not a question that the rebuilt area also would have wood floors. For those, Northwestern Hardwood's Juan Farfan was the clear choice, as he had worked on the church before and had completed many other church projects for the Chicago Archdiocese.

Select-grade red oak flooring was used as a warm background for the altar, coordinating with the floors com-

pleted during the previous renovation. An invisible point approximately 30 feet behind the altar was used to calculate the taper for the 6-inch wide, 10-foot long red oak planks that radiate down the steps from the central altar. Brazilian cherry was bent to form the nosings, which required extra care, as the steps have irregular dimensions. Wenge was used for the risers. A simple inlay of wenge, lacewood, Brazilian cherry and amarillo marks the spot where priests serve communion.

The renovations are funded solely by the dedicated parishioners of St. John Cantius, which draws members from as far away as Iowa and Michigan to attend its traditional masses in Polish. Despite all the foot traffic, the original wood floors are holding up beautifully, as Farfan recoats them once a year, making sure the floors are as magnificent as the rest of this breathtaking place of worship. —*K.M.W.*

Flooring Design:
Juan Farfan, Mark Scheller

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