

# St. Patrick's to

## New church to replicate old one

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STAFF WRITER

Yesterday's announcement that the wrecking ball will claim one more Watsonville landmark was met with applause by parishioners of St. Patrick's Catholic Church.

Since the 89-year-old Main Street fixture was rendered useless by the 1989 earthquake, officials of the Diocese of Monterey have decided to demolish the building and rebuild a duplicate of the Gothic-style brick structure.

"What we're looking at is a replication," said the Rev. Michael Miller, pastor of St. Patrick's.

Parishioners, who've been attending services in the gymnasium of Moreland Notre Dame School since the disaster, learned of the decision during weekend masses. Miller told parishioners officials will attempt to construct an identical facade in front, using the original stone doorways and front doors, and bricks from the existing church.

The Gothic ribs of the inside ceiling will be retained as will stations of the cross, statuary, stained-glass windows, pews and kneelers.

Former City Councilman Paul Milladin, whose ties to St. Patrick's date back to his baptism more than 60 years ago, was among the multitudes who greeted the news favorably.

"It's too costly the other way," he said.

A familiar figure at mass, Milladin welcomes the idea of again attending services in a tradi-

tional setting.

"We need to get into a church, instead of a gym," he said.

Officials hope the entire project can be covered with \$2.5 million.

Previously, the plan was to retrofit the building, add extensions and renovate the interior, until bids came in well over the anticipated amount. The bids, which ranged from \$3.9 million to \$4.5 million were "something we couldn't handle," Miller said.

Miller said a completely rebuilt edifice will be safer than an unreinforced structure.

The rebuilding campaign has

## come down

raised \$1.8 million, and about \$300,000 has been spent on soil tests and related expenses. Once plans are established, Miller said, there is a "remote" possibility grants could be obtained from Catholic foundations.

In keeping with their plan to hire locally, diocese officials selected architect Russ Haisley of Monterey to draw up designs. Haisley he will present concepts as early as Thursday at a meeting with church rebuilding representatives.

"We're on a fast track," said Leo Ruth, past chairman of the church's coordinating commit-

tee. He projected it may take a year to 15 months to complete the new church. A retired engineer, Ruth will guide the plans through the permit process.

"We know that the town wants to see some action, as does the parish," Miller said this morning.

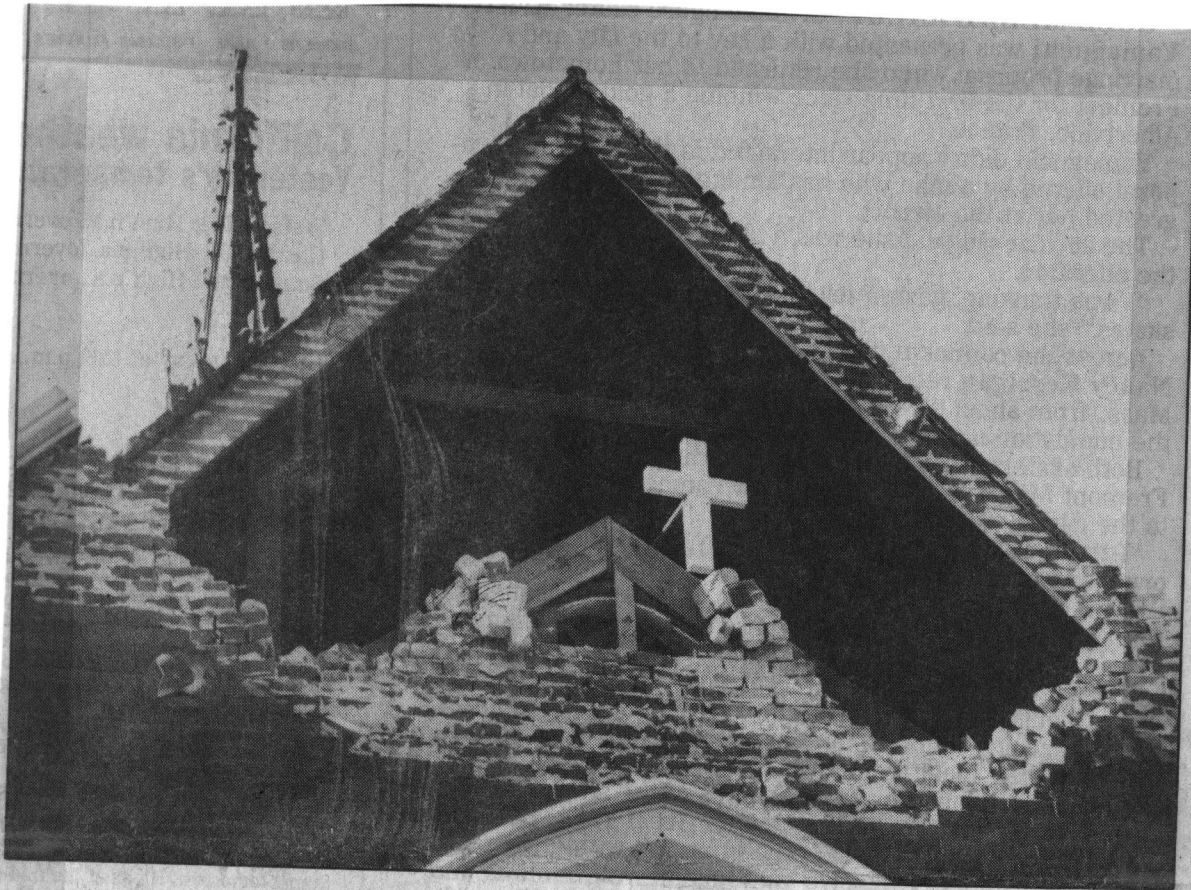
Jim Borrego, a life-long Watsonville resident and parishioner, agrees.

"I think we need to move on," he said. "It's been too long that we've done nothing."

Once activity picks up at the church, people may be motivated to donate to the rebuilding effort, Borrego said.

REFERENCE

WATSONVILLE  
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Mike McCollum

**St. Patrick's was badly damaged during the Loma Prieta earthquake.**