

Amici Terrazzo Earns National Recognition for Church Renovation Project

Award-winning terrazzo installation brings spiritual symbolism, durability, and custom craftsmanship to St. Joan of Arc Catholic Church's centennial renewal.

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[National Terrazzo & Mosaic Association](#)

(NTMA) has recognized [Amici Terrazzo](#)

of Elk Grove Village, Illinois, with a 2025 Honor Award for its work on the St. Joan of Arc Catholic Church in Lisle, Illinois. The honor celebrates the exceptional terrazzo craftsmanship showcased in the church's centennial renovation.



THE NATIONAL
TERRAZZO
& MOSAIC ASSOCIATION

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This project demonstrates how terrazzo can enhance both the visual and symbolic aspects of a space, while also passing down craftsmanship to a new generation of skilled artisans.”

Chad Rakow, Executive Director, National Terrazzo & Mosaic Association

The project was cited for its masterful execution, technical precision, and seamless blend of tradition and contemporary design, creating an inspiring and enduring worship space. Amici Terrazzo received the award on May 21 in Brewster, Massachusetts, during NTMA's annual convention.

Creative Design

The 11,450-square-foot church's transformative renewal, completed in 2024, incorporated five-color epoxy terrazzo flooring designed to enrich the worship experience. The handcrafted, poured-in-place installation introduces a

neutral field accented by flowing wave patterns, a religious crest, altar stairs, and a baptismal font—artistic elements intended to enhance the parish's spiritual life. NTMA judges praised the intentionality of these understated details that elevate the space and complement the elegant, contemporary interior design.

Douglas Lasch, principal with [Faith Environ Studio Architects](#) of La Grange, Illinois, recommended terrazzo for the project, citing both its aesthetic and practical advantages. Initially, the church team considered replacing the existing carpet, but Mr. Lasch advised against it because of its

difficulty to maintain. Instead, he highlighted terrazzo's ease of maintenance, long life cycle, and acoustic properties. The hard surface amplifies sound, enhancing volume and clarity throughout the space.

"Terrazzo offers unmatched durability and endless creative possibilities," Mr. Lasch said. "Its beauty, low maintenance, and longevity not only enhance any space but also eliminate the need for future replacements."

Mr. Lasch reported that the biggest surprise for the church members was how the terrazzo installation transformed the worship space. "I love the results, and people were amazed by the difference. Everything I've heard has been very positive," he said. Though he'd provided renderings for the church team early on, he explained that "when you see it in person, it's such a great experience."

The terrazzo art was designed to create a celebration in the central procession aisle with interweaving ribbons leading to the sanctuary. According to Father Gabriel Baltes, parish pastor, the bands in the central aisle serve both decorative and symbolic purposes: "They can symbolize a number of realities: the dynamic movement of the Christian journey, the two natures of Christ—human and divine. They are open to other personal interpretations as well." Golden steps in terrazzo mark the transition from the nave to the sanctuary, symbolizing ascendance.

The Amici Terrazzo team developed the epoxy terrazzo colors based on Mr.



AWARD-WINNING TERRAZZO in St. Joan of Arc Catholic Church in Lisle, Ill., was installed by Amici Terrazzo of Elk Grove Village, Ill. (Viken Djarrien/Fotografix, courtesy of Amici Terrazzo)



A BENEDICTINE CROSS in terrazzo memorializes the ministry of the Benedictine monks and sisters who founded the parish and served it for its 100-year history.

Lasch's renderings, pinpointing the precise custom mixes of epoxy and aggregates through extensive sampling. Mirror chips in the marble and glass aggregate blends enriched the colors and added sparkle to the finish.

Technical Expertise

During construction, when terrazzo was taken into the narthex, it became apparent in comparison that other elements needed an upgrade, the architect noted. The pastor then asked to add the tile baptismal font to the scope of terrazzo. Terrazzo was applied in phases over a base of ceramic tile that was scratched, primed and waterproofed. The phased casting allowed meticulous grinding inside the water bubbler, ensuring perfectly aligned edges with laser-guided accuracy. In the pew area, the divider strip layout was carefully planned, allowing for the removal and reinstallation of pews in precise alignment with the new terrazzo pattern.



THE BAPTISMAL FONT was clad in terrazzo during the church's centennial remodel.

The renovation also presented significant technical challenges. The altar and stairs were constructed on 12-inch-on-center wood joists with three-fourths-inch plywood over tile. Following tile removal, a second plywood layer was bonded with notch-troweled epoxy and screws every eight inches. The approximately 150-foot-long terrazzo stairs were poured in place with laser-aligned straight edges for precision.

The perceived drawback of terrazzo on such projects is the upfront cost, which can be higher than some less durable alternatives, Mr. Lasch said, adding that it can be more labor-intensive and time-consuming to install correctly than some other options. "But what you gain is unmatched durability and endless creative possibilities."

The most significant advantage of terrazzo, Mr. Lasch noted, is its long lifecycle and durability. It's also easier to maintain, more environmentally friendly, and more sustainable—offering high-quality performance that endures. "A church is around a long time; it's a good use for terrazzo."

This project also created an opportunity for seasoned terrazzo artisans to pass their skills to a new generation of craftspeople, preserving the traditions of the trade, according to Carmine Tucci of Amici Terrazzo. Amici Terrazzo was established in 2006 and is a member of NTMA.

About NTMA

NTMA is a full-service nonprofit trade association headquartered in Fredericksburg, Texas. Founded in 1923, the association establishes national standards for terrazzo systems and promotes terrazzo as a sustainable, durable, and versatile flooring material. The NTMA provides complimentary services to architects, interior designers, artists, general contractors, maintenance professionals, and property owners. From helping the design community write specifications to providing technical assistance, NTMA's goal is to help ensure quality terrazzo installations.

The association's annual Honor Awards program celebrates design and construction excellence, recognizing outstanding terrazzo installations that exemplify quality, craftsmanship, and innovation. By recognizing members' accomplishments, the program promotes member contractors as the sole qualified resource for terrazzo installations that meet industry standards. Terrazzo veterans and design professionals evaluate the submitted entries.

Terrazzo originated in 15th-century Italy, evolving from the mosaic techniques of Ancient Rome. It was first created when Venetian marble workers found an innovative reuse for discarded stone chips. Terrazzo artisans still pour terrazzo by hand on-site, with options for precast and waterjet-cut elements. Aggregates such as stone, recycled glass, or other materials—often sourced locally—are embedded in a cement or epoxy base and polished to reveal the chips. Terrazzo combines design flexibility with ease of maintenance and durability to last the life of the building.

Chad Rakow

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