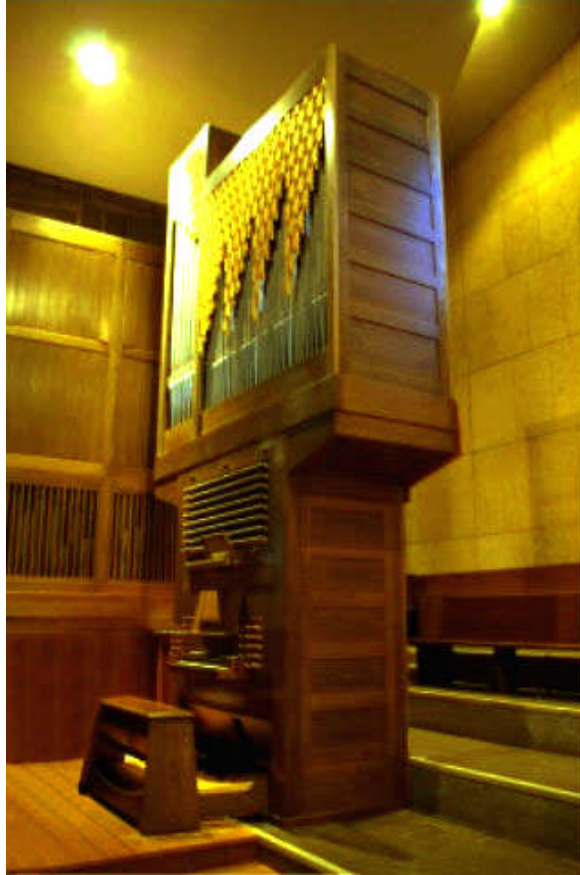


Casavant Frères



St. Paul, Minnesota – Church of the Maternity of the Blessed Virgin

Two manuals and pedals, 18 stops, 22 ranks
Attached drawknob keydesk, compass 56/32
Mechanical key action and stop action
Opus 3302, 1976
Photograph: Tom Erickson

The parish of the Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in St. Paul, Minnesota was established in 1949. The first church was a modest surplus army barrack, which housed a reed organ. In the 1950's the parish abandoned the temporary building and moved into a basement structure that was the foundation of the present church that was completed in 1962. The building, seating 1,000, makes use of Mankato stone for both exterior and interior surfaces and the unbroken interior space has excellent acoustics and a reverberation period of three seconds.

The process leading to the installation of the first pipe organ for the parish began in the spring of 1974. At their first meeting the organ committee established the following vision for the organ. It was to be a modest instrument, yet one of tonal beauty and grandeur, capable of leading worship and song and with enough depth to accompany a variety of choral and solo literature. In the following months the committee decided unanimously to recommend the purchase of a mechanical action organ and by early 1976 a contract was signed with Casavant

for a two manual instrument of eighteen stops that would be located in the gallery of the church. The dedication ceremony and inaugural recital were held on May 22, 1977. Randolph Bourne, who served as the consultant also made a recording on the instrument. In the notes he writes the following about the organ.

The disposition of the organ's main division (*Hauptwerk*) fulfills the first element of our collective vision. To lead worship and song, we decided on a flexible chorus of just eight stops, capable of both gravity and brilliance, grace and grandeur. For the most part, the five-stop *Pedal* division complements these aesthetic goals. The five stops of the organ's secondary division (*Brustwerk*) minimally provide those additional tonal resources to complete our aural mission: luscious flutes for accompaniment, combined with distinctive color registers, establishing this smaller division as a sonic foil to the *Hauptwerk*. By design, no two flutes within the specification are alike, the reeds all contrast in color and function, and the elements of the full-organ chorus are scaled to create a seamless wall of sonority from the longest pipe of the 16-foot *Bourdun* to the highest pitch of the 4-rank *Mixtur*.

The organ is situated at the left side of the rear gallery, allowing generous space to the right for choristers and instrumentalists. There are two cases with the *Hauptwerk* at the top of the main case in an excellent position to speak down the length of the nave. The expressive *Brustwerk*, located immediately below the *Hauptwerk* just above the keydesk, is in close proximity to the choristers for fulfilling its role in providing accompaniment. The Pedal division is housed at the left side of the gallery in its own case that is positioned at a ninety-degree angle to the main case. The polished principals in the façade contrast with the stained oak organ case. The organ is reservoir winded and the tremulant affects the whole organ.

Hauptwerk		Brustwerk	
Bordun	16	Gedackt	8
Praestant	8	Spitzgedackt	4
Hohlflöte	8	Flöte	2
Oktave	4	Terzian II	1-1/3
Quinte	2-2/3	Regal	8
Oktave	2		
Mixtur IV	1-1/3		
Trompete	8		
		Pedal	
		Subbass	16
		Oktave	8
		Oktave	4
		Posaune	16
		Trompete	8
Coupler			
Hauptwerk to Pedal			