



A masterpiece of sacral architecture revisited St. Joseph Church, Jasper/Indiana

The splendidly restored St. Joseph Church in southwestern Indiana is illuminated in its richly decorated interior and exterior with ERCO LED lighting technology. Energy efficient 48V spotlights, custom-made product applications and high-power outdoor projectors set the tone for a sustainable and flexible lighting solution with high visual comfort.

Project data:

Project:	St. Church Joseph Jasper, Indiana / USA
Architecture:	Michael Eagan, Indianapolis, Indiana / USA
Lighting Design:	Circle Design Group, Indianapolis, Indiana / USA
Photography:	RLI Photography / USA

Faithful watchman of the city

Benedictine monks who emigrated from Switzerland to Jasper, Indiana, built St. Joseph Catholic Church nearly two hundred years ago. The small town of Jasper, which still lives its German roots and traditions today, has here its "center of spiritual life" and an important landmark: the striking, 235-feet-high bell and clock tower of St. Joseph Church is known as „a faithful watchman of the city". The sacred building, built in the Romanesque style from massive sandstone blocks from regional quarries, has been a National Historic Landmark since the 1980s.

All about the light

In a four-year planning and construction process, the architectural firm Browning Day from Indianapolis, Indiana, renovated the listed church building down to the last detail: Among others, the enormous vaulted ceiling, terrazzo floor and sandstone veneered columns (fourteen in total) were restored, and one of the three Italian marble altars and the historic pipe organ of St. Joseph Church were reconstructed.

„When it came to the lighting, it was important for us to emphasize the outstanding historical architecture and sacred art," says Michael Eagan, Principal, Director

"of Faith based Design Browning Day": "We installed the luminaires as invisibly as possible. We were primarily concerned with the light."

Brightly illuminated firmament

In the impressively elongated nave, 193-feet-long, the aim was to highlight the renewed vaulted ceiling, which is painted a fantastic light blue - the vault above the chancel is midnight blue. A total of 120 ERCO Parscan48V spotlights were used: four [Parscan 48V](#) luminaires, all with narrow spot (8°) lighting distribution, were mounted directly on the capitals of each of the two rows of columns supporting the over ninety-foot-high nave in order to precisely illuminate the individual vaults from below. "The lighting makes the vaulted ceiling appear even higher," says Michael Eagan. Eagan emphasizes that the light reflected from the ceiling also creates indirect general lighting in the church interior, which is perceived as pleasant and calming.

High lighting levels and visual comfort in a holy atmosphere

In order to ensure a sufficient light level for the parishioners during church services, eight custom-made chandeliers were installed above the four seating areas at a height of approximately fifty-feet so as not to obstruct the open church space. Given the immense distance, luminaires with high luminous intensity were essential: six ERCO [Atrium](#) surface-mounted luminaires were integrated into each of the chandeliers, which were designed according to historical models. The Atrium luminaires guarantee a high level of visual comfort within the rows of benches with a total of 1,200 seating berths: and also secures the desired energy efficiency by avoiding spill light.

Flexible lighting design

ERCO [Parscan 48V](#) spotlights were also used for the accent lighting of the interior: among others to illuminate and highlight the holy figures, the magnificent altarpieces, the frescoes, the chancel of the sanctuary and the elaborate stained glass windows from the inside. The lighting system, which can be digitally controlled via [Casambi Bluetooth](#), enables flexible light scenes and also facilitates church operations. Light scenarios can be saved and called up as required - for example for baptisms, communions or for the Holy Days.

Brilliantly set in scene

The exterior of the sacred building is illuminated by a total of 34 ERCO [Kona](#) projectors, brilliantly setting the scene for St. Joseph Church in the dark. Its supporting buttresses are each illuminated from below by an ERCO Kona projector fixed to the ground along their entire length of over sixty-five-feet, highlighting the striking vertical architecture of the church building. All of the Konas used here have a color temperature of 3000 K to accentuate the bright, extremely warm sandstone of the façade.

A signal in the dark

The stone bell tower of St. Joseph Church with a large clock facing all four sides, which is not unlike the famous Big Ben of the English Parliament in London, is illuminated by a total of twelve Kona projectors mounted directly on the imposing church tower. Its bells, it is said, can be heard even from a distance of ten-miles. And illuminated by two ERCO [Konas](#) the gilded cross of St. Joseph Church at the very top of the church spire now shines from afar in the night.

Luminaires used in the project



Parscan 48V



Atrium



Kona

About ERCO

ERCO is an international specialist for high-quality and digital architectural lighting. The family-owned company, founded in 1934, operates globally in 55 countries with independent sales organisations and partners.

ERCO understands light as the fourth dimension of architecture – and thus as an integral part of sustainable building. Light is the contribution to making society and architecture better and, at the same time, preserving our environment. ERCO Greenology® – the corporate strategy for sustainable lighting – combines ecological responsibility with technological expertise.

At the light factory in Lüdenscheid, Germany, ERCO develops, designs and manufactures

luminaires with a focus on photometric optics, electronics and sustainable design. The lighting tools are developed in close collaboration with architects, lighting designers and electrical designers. They are used primarily in the following applications: Work and Culture, Community and Public/Outdoor, Contemplation, Living, Shop and Hospitality. ERCO lighting experts support designers worldwide in transforming their projects into reality with highly precise, efficient and sustainable lighting solutions.

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Copies and links requested.

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