





Study proposal

The purpose of this study is to investigate ritual in order to establish an intimacy between architecture and its users. The liturgy of the Roman Catholic Church is used as a point of departure, but the study is especially concerned with personal secular ritual.

Intervention

The intervention will function as an urban retreat. It consists of a series of contemplative spaces that facilitate a spiritual journey. The Retreat is based on ideas surrounding the traditional Roman Catholic Convent, which informed the accommodation schedule to a great extent. The study recognizes the new approach of the Roman Catholic Religion, which entails a holistic ministry that plays an increasingly critical and social role. The Retreat will therefore function as a base for religious and social organizations to work from in the inner-city of Pretoria. The retreat will also offer limited social facilities such as counselling and seminar rooms.

Site

The site is situated in the inner-city of Pretoria, in the block directly north-east of Church Square. The site consists of two properties: the northern consists of the National Library of South Africa (NLSA), with the southern being a pan-handle erf that functions as a service courtyard for commercial ventures on Church Street. The Noordvaal Thoroughfare runs parallel to the site on its western edge, linking Church and Vermeulen Streets. The site exists unnoticed by pedestrians using the arcade, because of a boundary wall. Of further importance is the 2,8 m slope of the site from south to north over a distance of 140 m.

