733	Podersdorf am See, Austria	Podersdorf Parish Centre	Lichtblau Wagner Architekten	2002 REL

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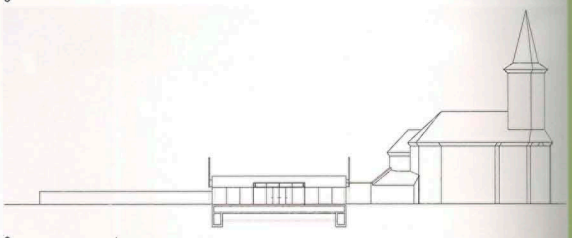

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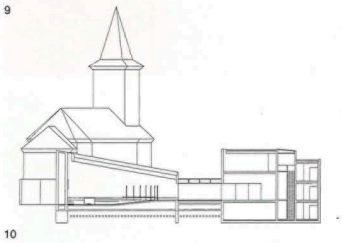

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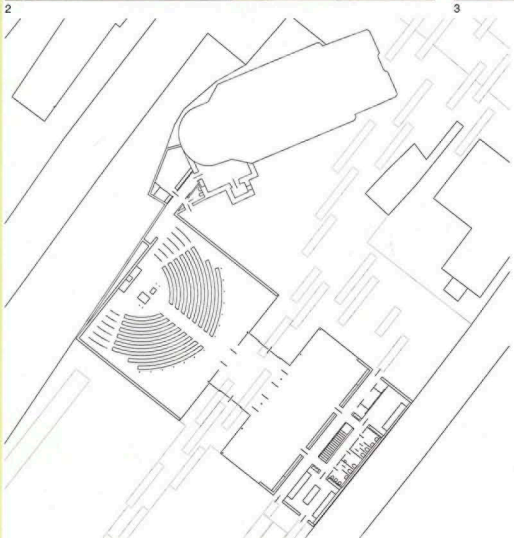

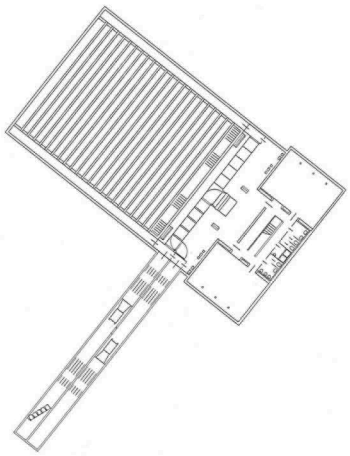

733 'We are not building a church!' declared the Cistercian monk who initiated the extension, or rather completion, of the existing parish centre and church. Podersdorf am See exists largely on tourism, and with about 10,000 people visiting during high season it has, in the past, been necessary to hold up to four masses on Sundays. The planning process of the new Parish Centre, and even the design of its facade, involved intense discussions with the community, thus tailoring the building to local circumstances and to the role of religion within the village. The facade's glass panels are printed with sentences on the topic of family, formulated by parishioners of all ages, and quotations from the Bible. Against the initial requirement, the architects positioned the building transversely to the local east-facing building pattern. The new centre is a thoroughly appropriate contemporary religious building, and contains an entrance area, a mass room and parish office as well as free spaces. The mass room is a particularly successful solution: natural light sources and white walls make the contours blur and the room appear bright and pure, almost clinical, while its dimensions and relation to the exterior seem to lose their significance.

1 The glazed entrance facade is covered with printed biblical quotations to enforce the message of the centre
2 Interior staircase
3 The room in which mass is held is almost scaleless, creating a sense of purity
4 Ground-floor plan
5 First-floor plan
6 The welcoming but understated entrance
7 View of the entrance area
8 View from outside of the mass room
9 Cross section
10 Longitudinal section

Client
Father Josef Riegler O Cist
Area
2,049m²/22,047 sq ft
Cost
US$2,310,000