

# The Keck Group, Inc.

*The Keck Group Inc. specializes in the restoration of pews, furniture and woodwork.*

## *The Basilica of St. Patrick's Old Cathedral*



*We specialize in restoration, which often means changing the pew design for more comfort, eliminating a divider wall found in many older churches, and adjusting the finishes to today's standards.*

*A recent highly technical restoration project stands out as one of our biggest challenges. We nearly lost these beautiful old, historically significant pews to new pews; fortunately Msgr. Donald Sakano, Rector, and Mick Doyle, Architect, understood the importance of restoration vs. new.*



*The pews were removed from Old St. Pat's in September of 2014 for a yearlong church restoration. Note the divider wall from front to rear (which prevented parishioners from sliding through).*

*The following pictorial display illustrates the restoration of pews at The Basilica of St. Patrick's Old Cathedral in lower Manhattan (Old St. Pat's was the first Cathedral, later replaced with St. Patrick's Cathedral in mid-town...whose pews we recently restored as well).*

*A typical street scene, we had to maneuver the pews through the various tour groups visiting the Cathedral.*



*The pews were carefully loaded for the trip to our refinishing facility in Middletown, NY, which coincidentally, houses the orange county Catholic Charity facility in our attached building. Upon arrival, the pews were disassembled, which is not our standard procedure. There is no need to take pews apart for refinishing unless there are to be serious modifications such as these.*



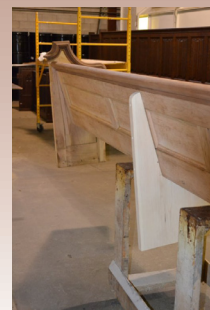
*The angle of the back, which was perpendicular to the seat, was changed to provide a more comfortable seating for the Parishioners. Additionally, we extended the seat two inches from the rear, for the same purpose.*



*After disassembly, the pieces had the many years of paint and finish removed.*

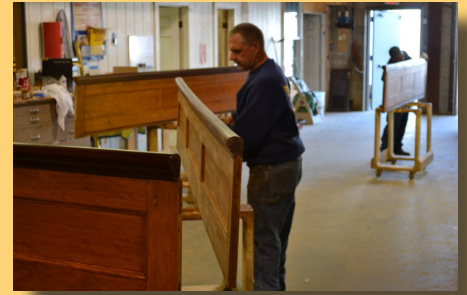
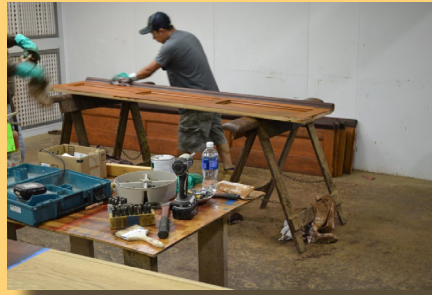


*Once the finish had been removed from all of the pew parts, we began the modification of re-routing the pew ends to accept the new angle, filling in the old rout. We then extended the seats from the rear. Next came new mid-supports to make the pews more structurally sound. Finally, the divider wall that ran from the front of the church to the rear, was removed and replaced with walnut joiners which we manufactured in shop.*





*All of the original and modified parts were finished. We waited to assemble until we got the six week warning.*



*When the word came for the mid November install date tied closely with the rededication of the 200 year anniversary, assembly began at a feverish pace. The finished pews were loaded for delivery on a cold November morning.*



*Arrival at the Cathedral was heart stopping. Every trade was hard at work trying to complete their work within a two week window. The front steps were being installed, so we had to use a side entrance. The floor was just finished, the marble on the sanctuary was being installed, the painter's lifts were right in the middle of our pew install area, and the large heavy Altar was poised to be moved up the main aisle.*

*Trying to be cooperative, we counted heavily on the GC to help coordinate with the other trades. After all, how could there be a service with no seating. With the help of Chris Fitzgerald, Fitzgerald Contracting, we were able to complete the installation in one week, and that included the new Atwood Hamlin Kneeler which were not a necessity for the celebration, but would be nice to have if possible. We all know the feeling coming up on a very important deadline, and you can feel the tenseness within these photos.*



*These are the photos of the installation just prior to the dedication on Sunday November 15th, 2015.*