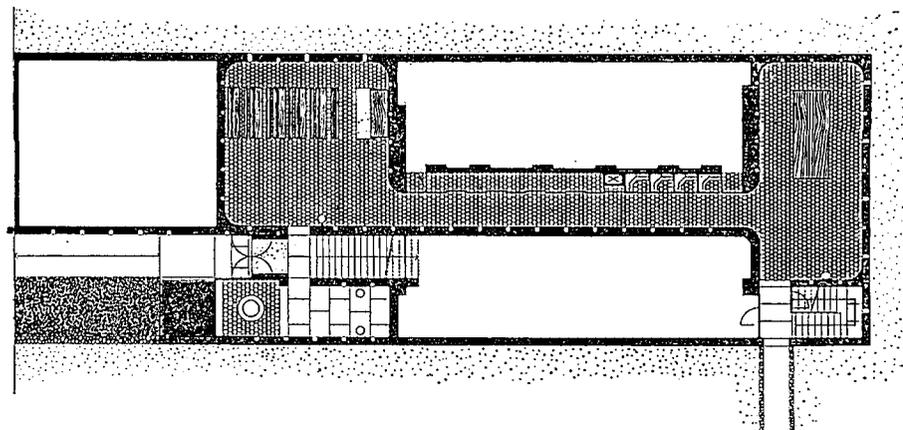
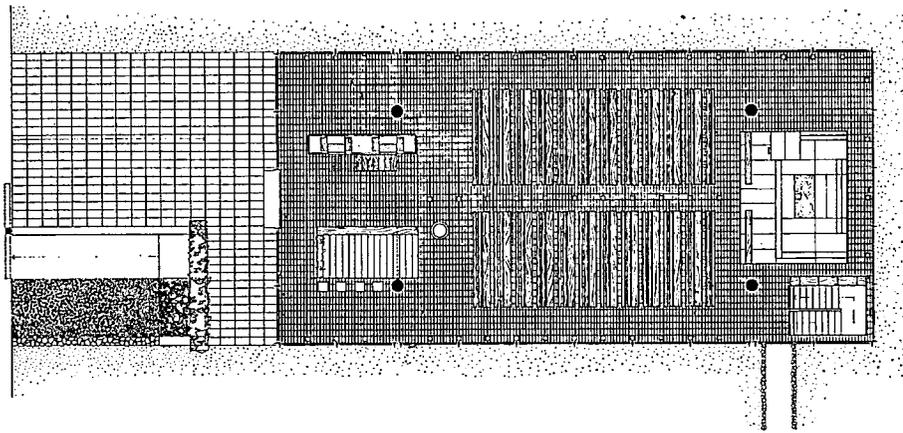




Church of Baranzate

location | Bellate, Milan
architect | Mangiarotti & Morassuti



This new Italian parish church is located on a large open site which links an old and a new residential area of Milan. When landscaping is completed, a series of gardens will provide a gradual transition from the domestic character of the neighborhood to the sacred atmosphere of the sanctuary. This progression in feeling will be augmented by the walled-in courtyard through which one passes to enter the church.

From the courtyard, stairs lead to the upper level and the nave; while a ramp leads to the lower level and crypt where the baptistry, vestry, sacristy, confes-

sionals, and a chapel are located. The floor level of the crypt was determined by the high hydrostatic head; consequently, the floor of the sanctuary had to be raised considerably above the natural grade and has the same elevation as the top of the courtyard wall (*see longitudinal section*). From a distance, the visual effect is that of a masonry platform above which hovers the light and airy sanctuary.

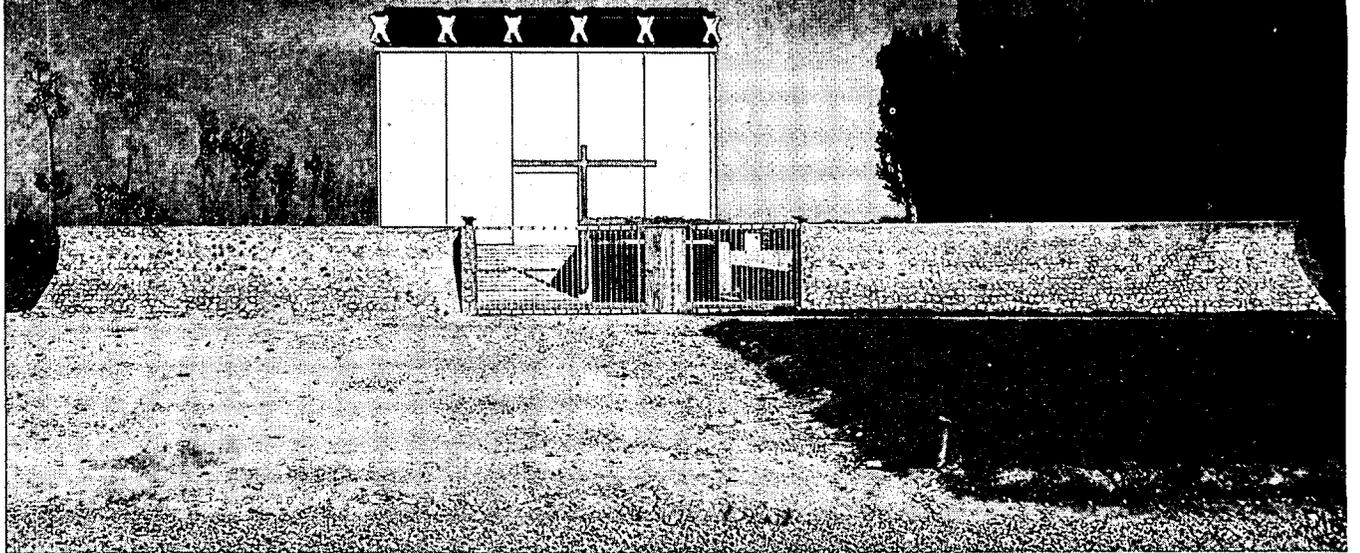
Construction is all concrete. From the thick, curved, and sand-blasted walls of the cavellike crypt rise four slender columns which support the heavy and yet

delicate roof structure. The columns were placed so as to equalize the bending moments in the two main cross-beams. On these cross-beams rest precast and prestressed longitudinal beams whose X shape was chosen in order to achieve a light member able to resist horizontal wind pressures on the walls. The longitudinal beams support prefabricated blocks with an X-shaped rib. This interesting structure was designed with the help of Engineer Aldo Favini.

The four walls of the sanctuary are made of double layers of glass with transparent glass used near the ceiling



Photos: Foto-Studio Casati



and the floor, the rest being translucent. All floors are paved with brick. The green Levanto marble altar is of the Ambrosian type, thus the priest faces the congregation. The ceiling in the crypt is of white marble plaster (powdered marble and lime).

The ancient wooden crucifix suspended from the ceiling near the altar, the stations of the cross placed on the courtyard walls, the statue of the Virgin and Child in the niche of the chapel, and figures of the four Evangelists that will flank the stairs (not installed yet) add further richness, feeling, and scale to this sensitively designed church.

