



## “Dives in Misericordia”, the church of the Third Millennium



Designed by American architect **Richard Meier**, Dives in Misericordia church won the international “50 Churches for Rome 2000” award presented by the Vicariate of Rome. The simple yet impressive design of the church, which successfully merges sacred spaces with a large lively outdoor area, is characterized by three white concrete sails that swell out as if blown by an easterly wind. The church,

**symbol of the Jubilee**, was built in Rome’s Tor Tre Teste area and brought new energy and cultural life to this suburban area.

The building’s great symbolic power is immediately evident: the sail, the light, its openness to its surroundings, its whiteness. Matter and transparency, protection and permeability, isolation and gathering characterize this work. The outside is as evocative as the inside: three stand-alone, parallel sails in white concrete and in graduated heights enclose a longitudinal space bounded by a long wall. Intense light flows in from the glass ends and the gaps between the veils and the wall. The internal space is defined by an alternation of large translucent surfaces.

As the main technical sponsor, Italcementi followed the progress of the project closely, by providing assistance with construction techniques and supplying innovative high-tech building materials, amongst which its **TX Active**<sup>®</sup> white cement. Italcementi also developed and tested a special concrete mix design providing continuous supervision throughout all construction steps.

Such a prestigious, symbolic structure called for the use of extraordinary concrete, offering not only high strength and durability but a long-lasting brilliant white color and ability to preserve its appearance over the years thanks to the self-cleaning properties of

the finished surfaces. For the Dives in Misericordia Church project, Italcementi produced a photocatalytic white cement resulting from years of research and experimentation aimed at achieving excellent aesthetic durability of high-quality cementitious elements.

Photocatalysis abates various pollutants,- e.g. exhaust gases from cars, emissions from residential heating systems, chemical emissions from industrial processes and pesticides, which come into contact with cement surfaces, transforming them into environmentally harmless substances and thereby preserving the building's original appearance.

The church was consecrated in October 2003. **Pope Benedict XVI** visited it in March 2006.