Annunciation Catholic Church

1221 Mandeville Street

Annunciation Catholic Church was founded in 1844 to accommodate those who had settled in the lands opened up along the Elysian FieldsPontchartrain Railroad axis. Until then, these Catholics had worshiped in the Marigny Plantation chapel, but as their numbers grew, the legendary Bishop Antoine Blanc created the citys seventh parish for them. Legend has it that the real estate developers of this area refused to sell to English speakers, thus ensuring a solid Catholic population, but in 1848 the bishop assigned an Irish priest to the parish to minister to the growing number of English-speaking Catholics. Over the years the church has served the Irish, Germans, and African Americans. Before it closed in 2001, Masses were said in English and Spanish. (After the closure, parishioners were assigned to Blessed Francis Seelos Parish.)

Early in the history of the parish, an asylum for widows and orphans was associated with it, and several schools have also been affiliated with Annunciation Church. One was operated in 18671873 for colored students by Oblate Sisters from Baltimore, the oldest African-American order in the United States.

Todays building, of eclectic style, dates to 1922 and replaces one built in 1846 but battered by the infamous Hurricane of 1915. Architect William Nash included a wall from the older church in the rear wall of the sacristy. Murals and other artwork were added to the sturdy brick church, and the altar was particularly lovely. Outside, two shrines honored Mary.

The stained glass windows, dating to the early twentieth century and apparently American, came from the earlier sanctuary. The parish priest donated the first of these, which was dedicated to his patron saint, Augustine, and parishioners pledged ten cents per family to buy the second window. Photos of the older church show smaller, round-topped windows. Frames of yellow streaky glass were added in 1922 to allow the old windows to be used in the larger openings.

*The church sat empty after the 2001 closure, and in 2013 the buildings were sold to a private owner, who converted the rectory and ancillary buildings to apartments. Attenhofer Stained Glass repaired some of the windows in the sanctuary, which will become a site for meetings, weddings, concerts, and other events.*

**Windows**

Altar

Mary with Child Jesus St. Joseph

Crowning of Mary in Heaven St. Ann with Mary

Sacred Heart on top of the world St. John

Assumption of Mary into Heaven St. Augustine

*Toured March 25, 2001*

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