Sacred Heart Catholic Church

415 Union Street, Morgan City

With its soaring bell tower, pointed-arch windows, and cruciform shape, Sacred Heart of Jesus Church is an example of Gothic-style architecture. It is the third church to serve this parish in the past 150 years. Little is known about the first church, which was destroyed by fire in 1859, the same year that the parish was established. The second, a wood frame building, was built in 1868. It served the parish as the Church of St. Clotilda until it was enlarged in 1885 and blessed as the Sacred Heart of Jesus Church. This church was pushed off its wooden blocks by a flood in 1888, and its bulging walls were kept together only with the will of the faithful and hog chains until it was replaced with the current edifice in 1906.

In June 1898, Fr. Andrew Souby became pastor. Two years later, with the help of the Young Ladies Tabernacle Society, fund-raising functions and door-to-door campaigns for a new church were organized. On June 6, 1902, the Feast of the Sacred Heart, work began. The design of the church was from a sketch by Father Souby, assisted by Charles J Reyneg, a New Orleans architect. In January 1906, stained glass windows, costing $3500 and created by the firm of G. C. Riordan of Cincinnati, replaced the canvas ones.

The windows of Sacred Heart celebrate and instruct both in word and in picture. The St. Clotilda window reminds the parishioners of the earlier name of the parish. The Sacred Heart window above the main altar, with the writers of the New Testament on either side, commemorates the dedication of the parish today. The windows on either side of the nave, with their dedications, state clearly the subject and the reason for choosing most of them. The windows were designed and executed as a set, as the colors of the glass and the designs of the surrounding framework and motifs match too perfectly to have been created over several decades. As we have seen elsewhere, donors sometimes request that a memorial window depict their patron saint; an example here is the dramatic portrayal of the baptism of Clovis (496 A.D.), dedicated to Clovis Foret.

Outside the church is an octagonal baptistery with several windows dedicated to the family of Father Souby. Its altar, carved by the father of Reverend Souby, originally served as the focal point of the sanctuary.

Sacred Heart Church has been altered, updated, and renovated over the past 93 years, including releading all the windows in the 1980s. The essence of Father Soubys vision, however, has been lovingly preserved.

**Windows**

Sacred Heart of Jesus

St. Mark St. Luke

St. Matthew St. John, Evangelist

Side altar Side altar

St. John Berchman St. Daniel, Prophet

St. Vivian St. Patrick

Mary Holding the Crucified Jesus Christ Crowned with Thorns

Annunciation Nativity

Assumption St. Jean Gabriel Perboyne

Immaculate Conception Expulsion of Adam and Eve

St. Joseph Holy Family

St. Peter St. Paul

St. Clotida Baptism of Clovis

St. Vitus St. Thomas

Entrance

Art glass transom

On steps to choir loft

St. Cecilia St. Catherine of Siena

St. Dorothea St. Margaret the Martyr with Dragon

*September 1999*

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