Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church

3200 Canal Street

Under the care of the Holy Cross Fathers, this parish was established in 1879. Although it encompassed the enormous area bounded by Howard Avenue, St. Louis Street, Broad Street, and Lake Pontchartrain, the parish at first included fewer than forty families.

A tiny three-room chapel was replaced by a frame church in 1889 and then by a brick structure, completed in 1896, that could seat 800. That building was damaged by the infamous hurricane of 1915 and was replaced in 1924 by the present church, designed by the distinguished local architects Emile Weil and Albert Bendernagel. Much of the interior decorating, however, took place well after the church dedication, culminating in the installation of the stained glass windows in the 1950s.

Paralleling the growth of the parish was its school system, which began with an elementary school in 1882. In 1929 the parish added a high school. During the 1970s, both closed because of the declining parish population. In 1997 the school buildings and the convent of the School Sisters of Notre Dame were converted into a residential complex for the elderly, Malta Square at Sacred Heart.

The windows are striking because the plain backgrounds of opalescent glass surround and emphasize the central figures. The upper section of each window bears an inset tondo, or medallion, with a symbol relating to the figure or figures below.

The figurative sections of the windows are believed to be German, based on style. The source of the opalescent sections is not known, as this was not used in Europe. A neighborhood iron-working shop assembled and installed the windows (see the next page), which later began to sag. The clerestory windows above, with a rather flat floral pattern, are assumed to be of local manufacture.

These lovely examples of stained glass art complement and enhance the uncluttered and serene feel of the entire sanctuary.

**Windows**

Altar

Annunciation Coronation of Blessed Virgin Mary

Visitation Assumption of Mary into Heaven

Nativity Descent of the Holy Spirit

Presentation of the Infant Jesus in the Temple Ascension

Finding the Child Jesus in the Temple Resurrection

Agony in the Garden Carrying of the Cross

*Epilogue: Sacred Heart of Jesus Church and Malta Square flooded in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. The church remains shuttered, but Malta Square has reopened as an assisted living facility.*

*Visited*

*March 25, 1995*

*October 24, 2004*

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