St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church

444 Metairie Road, Metairie

St. Francis Xavier Church has played an important role in Old Metairie for many decades. Originally a part of St. Catherine of Siena Parish, it became an independent parish on January 1, 1924. The first priest, Fr. Francois Xavier Rombouts, a Dutchman, named the new parish for his patron saint.

Mass was first celebrated in a small chapel in Bucktown and then in a rented home at Orpheum Street and Avenue E until a stucco church/school/rectory was completed in 1926. Later, this versatile building housed the Sisters of Mercy who taught at the school. Named for Father Rombouts, it still stands and serves as a parish house. The school has continued to grow over the decades, and is recognized by the prestigious Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

The congregation soon outgrew the sturdy 1926 building, and another church, now renamed St. Joseph Hall, was dedicated next door in 1938. Its stained glass windows, with cartouches containing religious symbols or pictures surrounded by pastel diamond-shaped panes, were donated by individual members and were all installed as a set.

St. Francis Xavier Parish continued growing, and in 2010 with much fanfare it dedicated a splendid new building. Over fifty detailed windows by New Orleans artist Ruth Goliwas surround the sanctuary as well as the Adoration Chapel and the connecting hall. These portray individual saints or historic figures, along with symbols of the featured persons life. St. Katharine Drexel, St. Frances Cabrini, Venerable Henriette Delille, and Blessed Father Francis Xavier Seelos all played important roles in the New Orleans community.

Mrs. Goliwas created mosaics for St. Peter Claver Church as well windows for: Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Marrero, St. Angela Merici Catholic Church in Metairie, St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church near Thibodaux, and other churches. In addition, she recently installed two windows portraying Henriette Delille in St. Louis Cathedral, as well as a window in St. Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh, Scotland.

Even before Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Bywater officially closed (in 1997), plans were laid for moving its organ to a future St. Francis Xavier Church. Roy Redman, of Fort Worth, Texas, completely refurbished the instrument and then stored it until the new home was ready. On January 31, 2010, the new organ contributed to the dedication festivities.

*Visited March 26, 2017*

If citing information from this document, please acknowledge the

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**Windows of St. Francis Xavier Church**

 Altar

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22 29

21 30

20 31

19 32

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17 33

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16 35

15 36

14 37

13 38

12 39

11 40

10 41

9 6 5 4 3 2 1 50 49 48 47 46 45 42

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8 43

7 44

 Holy Family

 (Above entrance)

1. Vincent de Paul

2. Junípero Serra, 18th-century Catalan Franciscan who founded numerous missions in California.

3. Angela Merici (1474-1540), an Italian saint who focused on education for girls and founded the order that became the Ursulines.

4. Juan Diego, first indigenous Catholic saint from the Americas. His visions formed the basis for the cult of our Lady of Guadalupe.

5. Peregrine [Laziosi], patron saint of cancer patients.

6. John the Baptist

7. John Vianney, patron saint of parish priests (Pax Tecum: May peace be with you.)

8. Maria Faustina Kowalska, 20th-century Polish saint who created the Divine Mercy devotion (Divine Mercy image)

9. Katharine Drexel, saint who generously supported churches and schools for African Americans and Native Americans (chalice and sprigs, symbolizing the Eucharist, as she founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament)

10. Kateri Tekakwitha, 17th-century Algonquin-Mohawk who was canonized in 2012 (branches with thorns)

11. Francis of Assisi (bunny rabbit)

12. Rose Phillipine Duchesne, French saint who founded the first American communities of the Order of the Sacred Heart (sacred hearts)

13. Stephen. He holds a rock, as he was stoned to death.

14. Joan of Arc

15. Maximillian Kolbe, Polish Franciscan who died in the place of a stranger at Auschwitz

16. Rosalie, 12th-century hermit. In the 17th century, she revealed the location of her bones in a vision to residents of Palermo. The bones were carried around the city, ending a plague, and she is now celebrated as a patron saint of that city.

17. Matthias. Selected as the 12th disciple to replace Judas Iscariot after the death of Christ. Possibly he was stoned to death in Jerusalem. (stones)

18. Simon (Mark 3:18, “Zealote,” fish)

19. Jude Thaddaeus, patron saint of lost causes (palms, as he was martyred)

20. James the Lesser (Psalm 115:1. “Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory, . . .”

21. Matthew, a tax collector before being called by Christ. (coins)

22. Thomas (fleury cross)

23. Bartholomew, who was said to have been flayed alive (crossed swords)

24. Philip the Apostle. Christ asked him how to feed a crowd of five thousand. (basket of bread)

25. John the Evangelist, who, according to legend, proved his holiness by drinking a glass of poison (venom) without being harmed. (snake in a wine glass)

 **Windows of St. Francis Xavier Church** (continued)

26. James the Major (Cross of St. James, symbol for the Order of Santiago, based in Spain.)

27. Andrew, like his brother Simon Peter, was a fisherman. (two fish)

28. Peter, first pope of the Roman Catholic Church (pope’s hat)

29. Paul the Apostle

30. Luke

31. Mary Magdalen

32. Mark

33. Therese of Lisieux, a 19th-century French nun also known as The Little Flower. With Francis Xavier, she is co-patron of all foreign missions. (rose)

34. John Paul II (Holy Spirit dove)

35. Francis Seelos (monstrance)

36. Louis [IX], King of France (red cross of the Crusades)

37. Martín de Porres (1579-1639), Peruvian Dominican who worked on behalf of the poor and those seeking peace. (Psalm 84:10)

38. Padre Pio, Italian Capuchin noted for stigmata on his hands and feet. (heart with crown of thorns, as he liked the Cor Jesu symbol)

39. Maria Goretti, Italian virgin-martyr who was stabbed to death at age 11 (knife with drops of blood)

40. Mother [Frances] Cabrini [signed window], first naturalized American to be canonized (ship with Chi Rho on the sail)

41. Henriette Delille (scallop shell)

42. Andrew Dung Lac, a Vietnamese priest and martyr (1839). (bamboo stalk)

43.Damien, a Belgian missionary to Hawaii who cared for lepers and eventually contracted the disease–note his skin (building from the leper colony on Moloka’i Island, Hawaii)

44. Catherine McAuley, Irish nun who founded the Sisters of Mercy (cross)

45. Thomas Aquinas

46. Edith Stein, Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, a 20th-century German Jewish philosopher who converted to Catholicism, became a Discalced Carmelite nun, and died in Auschwitz

47. Mother Teresa

48. Pope John 23rd

49. Elizabeth Seton, first native-born American to be canonized; founded the American Daughters of Charity order.

50. Rev. Michael McGivney, founder of the Knights of Columbus

**Windows of the Adoration Chapel**

Michael the Archangel (sword)

Gabriel the Archangel (horn and lily)

Raphael the Archangel (staff and fish)

 **Foyer between the Adoration Chapel and the Sanctuary**

Three children who witnessed the Fatima miracle (Lucia, Jacinto, and Jacinta). The bottom of the window depicts the miracle of the sun, which they and the townspeople witnessed.

 **Windows of St. Francis Xavier Parish Hall**

Stage

Haystacks

Grapes in chalice

Monstrance

Agnus Dei

Alpha & Omega

“S” & “H” (Sacred Heart) interlaced with a cross

Papal symbol

Crown of thorns and INRI

Enthroning the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Immaculate Heart of Mary

Anchor

Lilies

Crossed keys of Peter with stole

Dove of peace

Cross and crown

Alpha & Omega on Bible

Confessionals

St. Francis Xavier Church

“M,” crown & lily

St. Francis Xavier Church

Castle

Cross on map of Mississippi River

Red cross in shield

Roses and “Maria”

Palm (?) fronds