St. Jane de Chantal Catholic Church

72060 Maple St, Abita Springs

The church we visit today is not the first of this name to serve the community since 1884, when Our Lady of the Lake Church in Mandeville established a mission church in Abita Springs. The first St. Jane de Chantal Church was erected in 1887, and the parish considers the completion of this building as its founding date. Shortly thereafter, the mission parish was transferred to St. Peters Church in Covington; not until 1949 did it finally became an independent parish. The present cruciform-shaped building, constructed in 1923, was the first brick church in the town.

Visitors to this relatively small structure immediately notice the beautiful long-leaf pine woodwork on the interior walls and ceiling. This is a reminder of the days when logging was an important local industry.

The church houses 23 decorative windows. The six large ones lining the nave, and the two even larger windows in the small side chapels date to the 1972 renovation. In 2010, charming painted windows were installed in the apse, replacing the gold opalescent glass. These include two beloved religious figures from New Orleans and the North Shore: Mother Henriette Delille and Reverend Adrienne Roquette A small round window decorates the elevated choir loft at the opposite end of the church, and the reconciliation room features four figurative windows.

The figurative windows were all designed and fabricated by Father and other Trappist monks from the Abbey of Our Lady of the Holy Ghost in Conyers, Georgia. These are brilliantly colored with painstakingly detailed painting on the surface of the glass that gives them a highly textured appearance. The sparkling stars were created by etching the blue glass to reveal the clear glass behind. Even a fidgety ten-year-old will be captivated by the depiction of St. Michael casting the devil out of heaven!

**Windows of St. Jane de Chantal Church**

 grapes & wheat chalice and wine

 St Jane de Chantal St. Francis de Sales

 St. Margaret Mary St. John Bosco

 St. Francis Cabrini Blessed Francis Seelos

 Mother Henriette Delille Reverend Adrienne Roquette

Altar

 *above: God and Holy Spirit*

Ascension of Christ *above: Hand of God & Holy Spirit*

 Resurrexit Sicut dixit St. Marys Assumption & God holding her crown

 [He was resurrected as he said.]

 Flanked by symbols of rebirth: butterfly and phoenix

 *above: hand of God pointing up above: globe of fire*

St. Michael casting the devil out of heaven St. Martin of Tours

 *above: water mill above: hand of man reaching for hand of God*

St. Bernadette, Our Lady of Lourdes, St. Jane de Chantal. Sic virtus super astra vehit

 and her vision of the Virgin Que soy era [Thus virtue carries one above the stars] motto

 Immaculada Counceptiou. [I am the of St. Jane de Chantals family, the Fremyots

 Immaculate Conception] in Occitan, St.

 Bernadettes language, from the Pyrenees

 region of France.

 *above: black bird (tempter) & chalice* *Above: arrows referring to St. Francis stigmata*

St. Benedict. Ora & Labora [prayer & work] St. Francis of Assisi with animals

Reconciliation Room

 St. Damian

 St. John Vianney

Padre Pio Divine Mercy

Round window in choir

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