St. Joan of Arc Catholic Church

8321 Burthe Street

Carrollton-area Catholics of various nationalities worshiped at The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church beginning in 1848. When the Franco-Prussian War in Europe (1870-1871) exacerbated friction between French- and German-speaking Catholics, however, the German Catholics bought property near the corner of Freret and Cambronne streets and built the original Mater Dolorosa Church and School. The present Mater Dolorosa Church, with a reunited French-German congregation, followed in 1907.

Archbishop Blenk took that opportunity to begin work for African-American Catholics in the Carrollton area, asking the Josephite Fathers to take over the former Mater Dolorosa site. Funds from Mother Katharine Drexel, the great benefactress of African Americans and Native Americans, helped secure the success of the venture. On the site of the future St. Joan of Arc Church, in 1909 St. Dominic Church became the first Josephite parish in New Orleans.

The 1915 hurricane, which damaged so many New Orleans churches, completely demolished St. Dominic Church. A temporary building served until 1920, when Reverend Joseph Wareing, S.S.J., was appointed pastor. The new church, named for St. Joan of Arc in fulfillment of Reverend Wareing’s wartime vow, was dedicated in 1923. Having no geographic boundaries, it draws an enthusiastic congregation from both Orleans and Jefferson parishes.

A corner location, together with the dark reddish-brown brick and its simple trim, sets St. Joan of Arc Church off handsomely. Filled with light and peace, this building has straight-forward and uncomplicated windows with bright borders and backgrounds of diaper glass, which has a surface decoration composed of small repeated patterns. In each window, an inset medallion incorporates stenciling to depict a religious symbol. Each of the four Evangelists is represented by his icon, such as the lion of St. Mark and the eagle of St. John. Especially appealing are the Lamb of God and, opposite, the symbols of Holy Communion: the chalice, wheat, and grapes.

We have no information about the maker of these windows. It is possible that the medallions were imported and the backgrounds were produced locally.

After Hurricane Katrina, Blessed Sacrament Church was shuttered, and its congregation combined with St. Joan of Arc. Now this musically talented congregation worships as the *Parish* of Blessed SacramentSt. Joan of Arc, in the *church* of St. Joan of Arc.

**Windows**

Altar

Paschal Lamb Chalice, Water, and Grapes

Angel of St. Matthew Eagle of St. John

Sacred Heart of Jesus Winged Ox of St. Luke

Winged Lion of St. Mark Heart with Lilies (Mater Dolorosa)

Monstrance, Alpha & Omega Authority of the Church (Censer, Bible, Shawl)

Wall facing Cambronne Street Stairs to choir loft

Cross with symbols of the Elements of the Passion

Passion and the Gospel Writers

*Visited September 22, 1996*

Citations from this document

should acknowledge the

Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans, 2021.