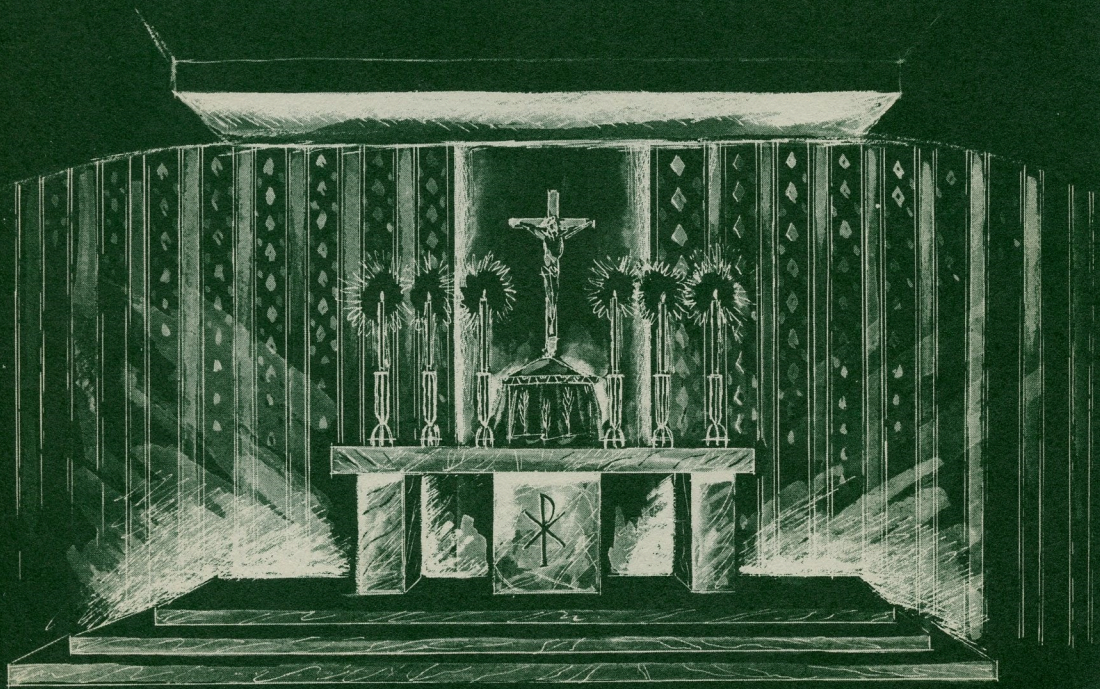


ST. JOSEPH CATHEDRAL Hartford, Connecticut



THE main sanctuary is as simple as it is spacious. It is dominated by the altar of sacrifice, and nothing competes with this for the attention of the congregation. The altar, of verde antique marble, is of plain table style, with the Chi Rho, a symbol of the Saviour, incised and gilded on the central support. Behind the altar is a reredos of travertine set with diamonds of contrasting marble. On the central panel of the reredos is a bronze crucifix, a sculpture by O. Aliventi. The tabernacle, also of bronze, is ornamented with a design of wheat, a symbol of the Eucharist.

Within the main sanctuary, on the Gospel side, is the throne of His Excellency, the Archbishop.

The communion rail has wooden pillars and a top of verde antique marble, relating it to the altar. On the wooden gates in the rail are symbols of the Passion. The symbols are (beginning at the east side and proceeding west): nails, spear, ladder, scourges, dice, cock, reed and sponge, crown of thorns.

There are two side chapels.

The entire chapel on the Epistle side, with the exception of its sanctuary area, is devoted to the Baptistry, to stress the importance of the Sacrament of Baptism. A ten-sided screen encloses the baptistry area. The screen has a cipollino marble base and pillars. Running from pillar to pillar is bronze strapping. Set into this strapping are crystal panels etched by Giovanni Hajnal, representing historic administrations of Baptism, as follows: Baptism of Clovis, King of the Franks; Baptism of St. Ethelbert, King of England; Germans baptized by St. Boniface; Baptism of St. Stephen, King of the Hungarians; Baptism of King Andog of Austria; Baptism administered by St. Francis Xavier in the Far East; Baptism of American Indians; Baptism administered in Australia by Blessed Pierre-Marie Chanel.

In the Baptistry's entrance and exit gates are crystal panels, also etched by Giovanni Hajnal, with the following subject matter: 1. Entrance gate (south end) Noah's dove with an olive branch; deer drinking at the water font. 2. Exit gate (north end) a fish in an eagle's grasp, a fish with an anchor: All are symbols of Baptism.

The marble font itself is decorated with twelve bronze panels, the work of Tommaso Peccini. On each panel is a representation of one of the Apostles, a symbol, and an article of the Creed. The representations and symbols are as follows: ST. PETER—the hand of God; ST. JOHN—the tree of life; ST. JAMES—the monogram of the Saviour; ST. ANDREW—the lily of Our Lady, the monogram of the Saviour, the symbol of the Holy Spirit; ST. PHILIP—the T-shaped cross and bronze serpent; ST. THOMAS—the phoenix; ST. BARTHOLOMEW—the linked trinitarian circles; ST. MATTHEW—scales; ST. JAMES, son of Alphaeus—the symbol of the Paraclete

and the pontifical keys; ST. SIMON—the cross conquering Satan; ST. JUDE—a skull, representing the death to the world which the baptized undergoes; ST. MATTHIAS—a serpent forming a perfect circle, a symbol of eternity.

The nine windows in the Baptistry transept are, like all the windows in the lower church, of stained glass by Giovanni Hajnal. They pertain to Baptism, and the subjects, beginning at the sanctuary end of the chapel, are as follows: 1. Moses saved from the waters; 2. The crossing of the Red Sea by the Israelites, led by Moses; 3. Moses strikes water from the rock in the desert; 4. The angel descending to the miraculous Probatic pool in Jerusalem; 5. The Baptism of Christ; 6. St. Philip baptizes the Ethiopian; 7. St. Peter baptizes the centurion; 8. St. Paul baptizes the Ephesians; 9. The Baptism of Constantine. The altar of this transept is of nero marquina marble, with a carved and gilded symbol of Our Lady, the Mystical Rose. The reredos behind it is a sculpture in wood, the subject being Our Lady and the Christ Child, the sculptor being Tommaso Peccini.

The chapel on the Gospel side is devoted to St. Joseph. The altar is of nero marquina marble, with a carved and gilded symbol of the saint, the lily of purity. The reredos behind it has a sculpture in wood by Tommaso Peccini, the subject being St. Joseph and the Christ Child.

The windows in this west chapel represent titles of St. Joseph, as found in his litany. Beginning at the sanctuary, they are as follows: 1. Noble scion of David; 2. Guardian of Virgins; 3. Spouse of the Mother of God; 4. Foster-father of the Son of God; 5. Joseph most obedient; 6. Model of workers; 7. Protector of Holy Church; 8. Patron of the dying; 9. Terror of demons.

The Stations of the Cross are sculptures in wood by Giuseppe Persichetti. It should be noted that the Stations begin on the Epistle side of the church.

Ten shrines line the nave, five on each side. In each is a figure of Our Lord, Our Lady, or a saint; the figures are sculptures in wood by Alcide Tico. The windows in each shrine area are related to the person represented by the statue. The shrines are as follows:

WEST SIDE (beginning at the north):

1. THE INFANT OF PRAGUE. Windows (*beginning, here and in every shrine except that of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, at top left, proceeding to bottom left, top right, bottom right*)—Presentation of the statue of the Infant in 1628; the statue is broken when the chapel in which it stands is plundered in 1630; the statue restored in 1655; the children of America consecrate themselves to the Infant Saviour in 1893.

2. ST. JUDE. Windows—The Saviour calls Jude to be an Apostle; the saint preaches the Gospel; the saint writes his Epistle; the saint is martyred at Edessa.



3. ST. AMBROSE. Windows—a child cries out “Ambrose for bishop” when the See of Milan is vacant; Ambrose is baptized and consecrated; Ambrose leads priests and faithful in sacred song; Ambrose sends the Emperor Theodosius away from the church until the latter does penance for public crime.

4. ST. ANTHONY. Windows—Anthony reaches Morocco to preach the Gospel; he meets St. Francis of Assisi; he preaches to the fishes at Rimini; he reproaches the tyrant Ezzelino of Rome for his cruelty to the people.

5. ST. FRANCES XAVIER CABRINI. Windows (*in reverse of order in other shrines*)—Frances, at 13, makes a vow of virginity; she founds the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart in 1880; she comes to America to assist immigrant Italians; she visits a prisoner at Sing-Sing.

EAST SIDE (beginning at the north).

1. OUR LADY OF LOURDES. Windows—St. Bernadette digs for the miraculous spring; the consecration of the basilica at Lourdes; one of the apparitions to St. Bernadette; the blessing of the sick at Lourdes.

2. ST. AGNES. Windows—Agnes refuses to sacrifice to the pagan gods; in punishment, she is stripped before a crowd, but her hair completely covers her; she suffers martyrdom; she is buried in the catacombs.

3. ST. AUGUSTINE. Windows—Monica, Augustine’s mother, weepingly tells the bishop of Tagaste of her grief over the wayward life of her son; Augustine is baptized by St. Ambrose; the farewell conversation of Monica and Augustine; Augustine, now bishop of Hippo, encounters on the seashore a child trying to pour the ocean into a hole in the sand, which leads him to observe that it is as futile for the human mind to try to exhaust the infinity of God.

4. ST. ROSE OF LIMA. Windows—Rose, as a child, sells flowers to help her poor family; at 20, she is invested with the habit of the Dominican Third Order; she has an apparition of Our Lady, accompanied by St. Catherine of Siena and Rose’s own guardian angel; she gives food to the poor.

5. ST. MARIA GORETTI. Windows—At 10, Maria does the housework and cares for the five younger children in the family; at 12, she receives her first Communion; she is martyred; her canonization takes place in St. Peter’s Square.

The organ is the instrument from the lower church of the old cathedral. It was saved from the fire and has been completely reconstructed and made bigger by the Austin Organ Company. The console is entirely new.

With ecclesiastical approbation.

