



Divine  
Light





Saint Angela Merici's Vision  
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# Divine Light

The Story of the  
Windows and  
Appointments of the  
Motherhouse Chapel  
of the Ursuline Sisters  
of Mount Saint Joseph

Maple Mount, Kentucky

By Sister Annalita Lancaster, OSU



# Divine Light

## The Story of the Windows and Appointments in Mount Saint Joseph Chapel

For more than 125 years, the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph have gathered to celebrate Mass in their own chapel. Though the chapels have changed over the years, what visitors see today is the culmination of a history of lives spent in service to the Lord, in the spirit of Saint Angela Merici.

In 1874, Saint Alphonsus served as the parish church and the convent chapel for the pioneer Ursulines and the students of Mount Saint Joseph Academy in western Kentucky. Beginning in 1879, the Blessed Sacrament was reserved in a small oratory in the academy building. Following the erection of the south wing in 1882, a larger room on the second floor housed the first chapel where daily Mass was celebrated. As Ursuline vocations increased and enrollment in the academy expanded, a larger chapel was necessary. To accommodate the profession ceremony in 1899, the first at Mount Saint Joseph, the chapel was relocated to the auditorium/recreation room of the 1882 addition where it remained for the next 30 years.

Plans for a new chapel were begun in 1924. On Dec. 18, 1929, feast of the Expectation of Mary, Right Reverend Bishop John A. Floersh, D.D. of Louisville dedicated the present Tudor-Gothic chapel under the patronage of Saint Joseph.

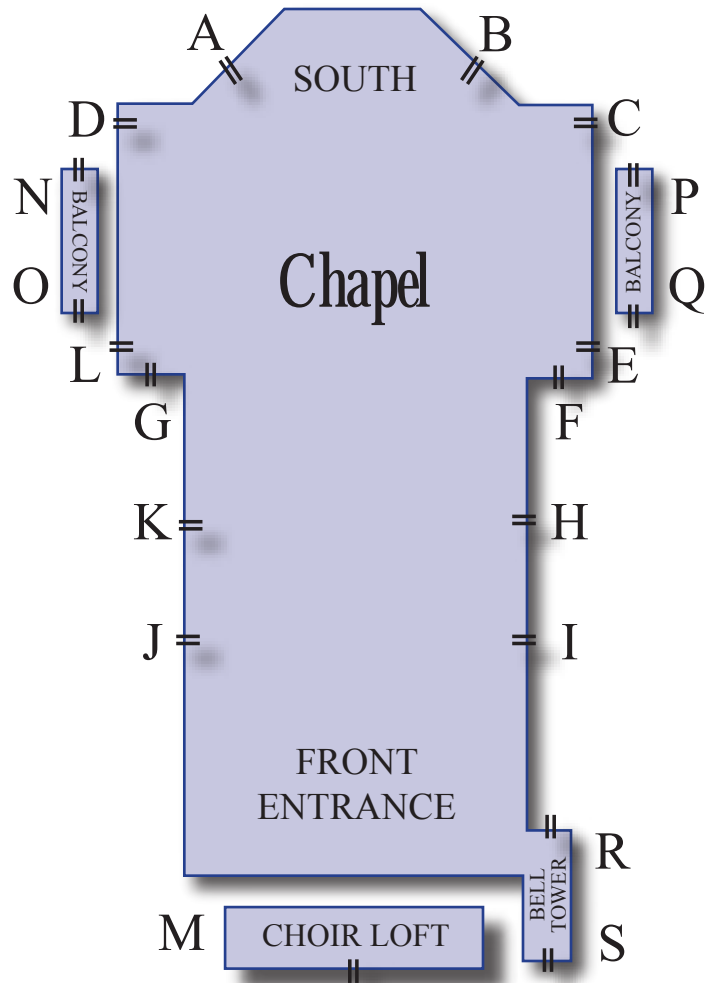
The chapel is designed with large Gothic-style windows so that light – God’s first creation – shines throughout the holy place. The panes are crafted in stained glass. The scenes are deeply rooted in Catholic heritage and the lives of the saints associated with Ursuline history.

Since medieval times, stained glass in church windows has transformed ordinary light into something divine, creating a language of color. Washed in a flood of sparkling light, the stories of faith and sainthood depicted in the windows lift the level of spiritual consciousness by proclaiming the noblest qualities of humankind. The color RED gives voice to love and its related virtues of courage, compassion and self-sacrifice. WHITE tells of faith, purity, peace, and joy, while the color BLUE announces wisdom, mercy, and justice. PURPLE, uniting the red of love and the blue of wisdom, becomes the voice of integrity and faithfulness. The color of nature, GREEN, speaks of hope, spiritual growth, and eternal life. YELLOWS and GOLDS proclaim treasures of the spirit and virtuous acts. Together, the colors form a brilliant collage imaging praise and glory to the Creator and make a significant contribution to the prayer of the worshipping community.

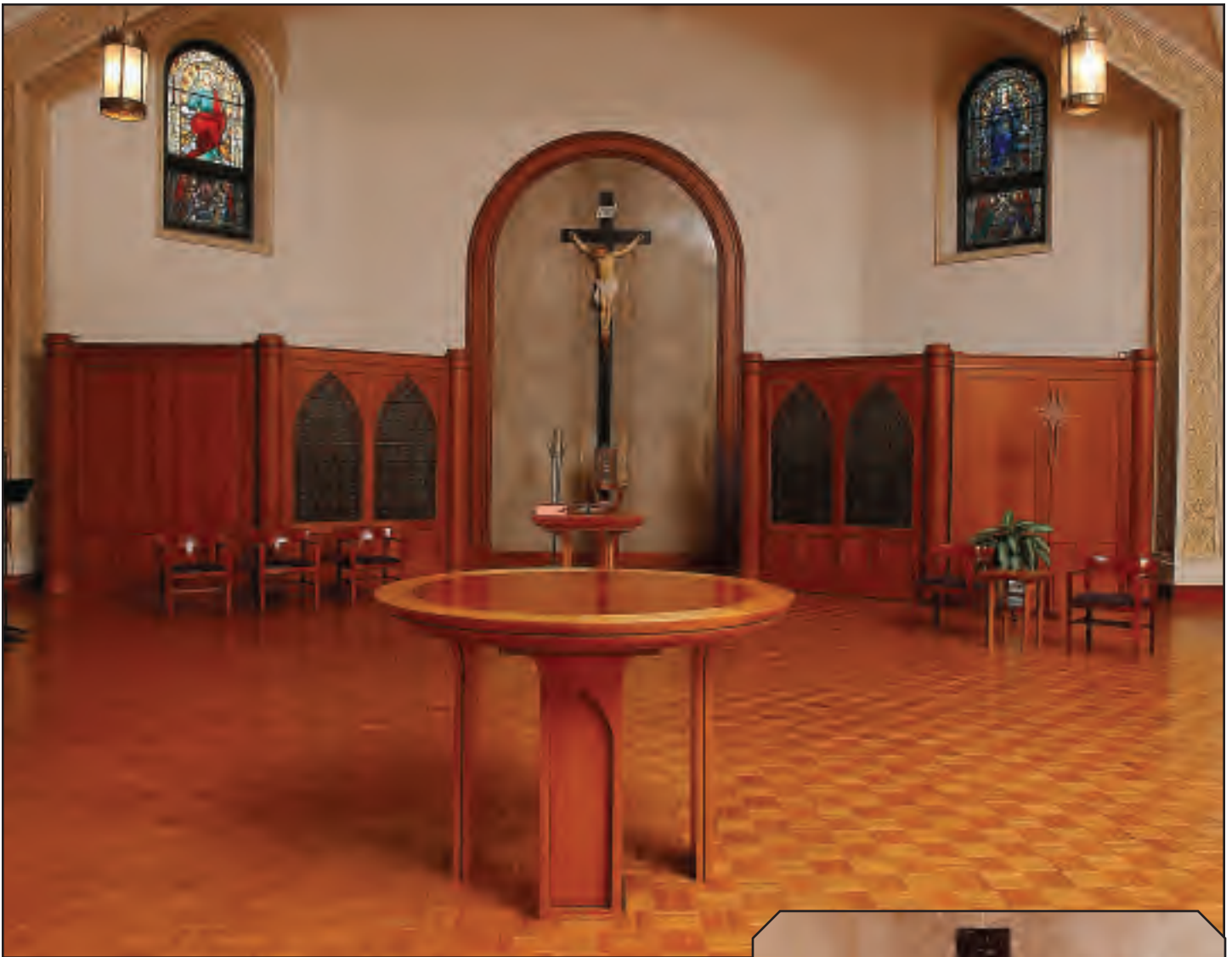
Mount Saint Joseph Junior College and Academy alumnae, many faithful friends and benefactors and the sisters’ families donated many of the windows in the Mount Saint Joseph chapel. The Emil Frei Art Glass Co. of St. Louis, Mo., and Munich, Germany, designed and began the installation of the windows in 1930. Until 1944, the figure work in the windows came from Munich. The work of installation continued through 1954.

Rich in the lives of the saints and the Ursuline tradition of Mount Saint Joseph, each window deserves a history of its own. The following narrative is an attempt to tell that story.

## Key to Chapel Windows



- A. Angels presenting the chapel to Saint Joseph
- B. Angels presenting a Queen’s crown to Mary
- C. Symbols of Saint Joseph
- D. Symbols of the Virgin Mary
- E. Saints Angela, Ursula, Charles Borromeo, and Augustine
- F. The Good Shepherd
- G. Saint Agnes
- H. The Annunciation
- I. Saint Teresa of Avila and Saint Thérèse of Lisieux
- J. Father Paul Volk and Saint Paul
- K. Our Lady of Lourdes and Saint Aloysius Gonzaga
- L. Saint Angela and Mere Marie of the Incarnation
- M. Saints Cecilia and Gregory (Choir loft)
- N. Ursuline Coat of Arms
- O. Ignatian Coat of Arms
- P. Saint Joseph
- Q. Infant of Prague
- R. Ecce Home (Bell Tower/Elevator on first floor)
- S. Mater Dolorosa (Bell Tower/Elevator on ground floor)



On entering the chapel from the north through the front door, one immediately sees a large crucifix on the south wall. The life-size corpus is from the crucifix used in the 1899 chapel of Mount Saint Joseph Academy. This prominent image is a reminder of Jesus Christ our Savior and of Saint Angela Merici's most urgent counsel to the members of her Company, "Always let your principal recourse be to gather together at the feet of Jesus Christ."



## Saint Ursula

Saint Ursula, a virgin martyr of the early Church, was chosen by Angela as patron of her Company. The legend of Saint Ursula, popular in the Middle Ages, is known to modern readers primarily from the Golden Legend by James of Voragine. According to the legend, Ursula was a Cornish princess whose Christian father arranged his daughter's betrothal to a pagan prince. Hoping to convert her suitor to Christ, she asked her father to grant her three years before her wedding. Having attained that, she set sail with 10 female companions each of whom had 1,000 attendants. With Ursula as their captain and leader, they made a pilgrimage to holy places of Rome. On their return by way of Cologne, all the virgins were beheaded by the Huns, who feared that the virgins' witness of faith in Christ would contribute to the spread of Christianity. The chief spared Ursula, but when she refused to become his spouse, he shot her with an arrow. Ursula and her companions were buried in Cologne where the Church of Saint Ursula is dedicated to her.

The Ursuline Order has helped to spread throughout the world the name of Saint Ursula, revered as the patron of students. In this scene, Ursula is shown presenting Angela the banner of Christian education which highlights the cross, testifying to the truth that all knowledge finds its proper meaning only in reference to Christ. Saint Ursula's feast is celebrated Oct. 21.



## Saint Charles Borromeo and Saint Augustine of Hippo

Saint Charles Borromeo (1538-1584) and Saint Augustine of Hippo (354-430) greatly influenced the development of the Company of Saint Ursula. In 1560, Charles Borromeo became archbishop of Milan. Full of admiration for Angela Merici and the work of the Company of Saint Ursula in Brescia, he established a congregation of Ursulines in his Archdiocese. At his request, Pope Gregory XIII issued a brief confirming the institute of Angela Merici giving the Ursulines the freedom to establish houses wherever requested.

Association with Saint Augustine among the Ursulines began in 1596 with the establishment of an Ursuline house near Avignon, the first Ursuline foundation in France. In accord with the decree of the Council of Trent requiring that all women religious be cloistered, Pope Paul V issued a decree, in 1612, erecting the Ursuline Monastery of the Congregation of Paris. Since the Church considered monasticism as the only legitimate setting for consecrated women, all the Ursulines in France accepted the replacement of Angela's original Rule with the church-approved Rule of Saint Augustine, written in the fifth century for Augustine's monastic community of men. The heritage of the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph is deeply rooted in this French connection – the Ursuline Congregation of Paris. The church pictured in this panel is the Cathedral of Saint Charles in Milan.

The feast of Saint Charles Borromeo is celebrated on Nov. 5; the feast of Saint Augustine of Hippo on Aug. 28.



## Saint Joseph and Virgin Mary

An additional feature in Catholic churches is the presence of statues and other devotional images. In the time when the Mass and readings from the Bible were in Latin and not understood by the faithful, statues and stained-glass windows often became the people's Bible – teaching and explaining the mysteries of our faith and honoring the saints who lived it.

In this chapel, statues of Joseph and the Virgin Mary, sculptured in clay with earth tone patina, evoke devotion to the mother and foster father of Jesus, the principal human figures in God's plan of salvation.

# Production Staff

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## RESOURCES:

I. The Stained Glass Windows

Mount Saint Joseph Archival written records and oral history; various sources of the Lives of the Saints;  
Sacred Scripture; works of spiritual authors; multiple Internet web sites; writings of Saint Angela Merici

II. Additional appointments

Built of Living Stone: Art, Architecture and Worship USCCB; Mount Saint Joseph Archival Records

## ARTISTS:

**Jim Barr, Owensboro, Ky.**

Crafted in premium black cherry:

Baptismal font base

Confessional screen

Tables

Altar

Tabernacle base

Ambo

**Katreen Bettencourt, Cottage Grove, Ore.**

Complete set of Vestments and the Funeral Pall uniquely designed, individually made of hand woven silk, wool and cotton

**Kenneth vonRoenn, Jr., Architectural Glass Art Inc., Louisville, Ky.**

Tabernacle

Sanctuary lamp

Chapel front doors

Processional Cross

Candle sticks and Pascal candle stick, subcontracted to **Guy Vinson, Livermore Brass And Silver Shop, Livermore, Ky.**

**Suzanne Young, Berkley, Mich.**

Sculpted in clay with earth tone patina, statues of:

St. Joseph, holding tool of his trade

Mary and the Child Jesus looking at each other lovingly

Stations of the Cross

**Tom Johnston, Minneapolis, Minn.**

Fabricated the two metal bowls for the baptismal font.

**Jeff Ulrich, Ulrich Art Glass, Louisville, Ky.**

Chalices

Goblets

Communion plates

Wine flagons

Vases

Containers for the holy oils



# Ursuline Sisters

of Mount Saint Joseph

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