Come Visit Our Chapel

A word about the new Chapel at St. Elizabeth Hospital:

It is a quiet, peaceful place where we feel God’s presence in a more intimate manner. A place to tell Him about our troubled thoughts, and to thank Him for the blessings received. It is a place we like to come often when we realize the comfort and peace experienced from a visit to God’s House.

The original Chapel was dedicated to the Sacred Heart in 1923 in conjunction with the laying of the cornerstone.

The new Chapel is a study in quiet simplicity. The choir loft was eliminated to help bring the music and the people together. A priest’s sanctuary was added at the entrance, and the Chapel windows were changed to accommodate the new stained glass panels which represent the Word and the Seven Sacraments. The window subjects are explained later.

Two of the most outstanding features of the new Chapel are the six-foot imported hand-carved lindenwood statue of the Resurrected Christ, and the small Eucharistic Shrine altar which houses the Tabernacle—a memorial to our late Sister M. Bilfrieda. Two bronze candlesticks finish off the hammered bronze and satin-finished altar.

Seating capacity of the Chapel is about 120. Doors are open day and night and patients, visitors and personnel are always welcome. Mass is offered daily at times posted in the Chapel lobby.

The story of St. Elizabeth’s Chapel windows describes the artistry of Emil Frei Associates of St. Louis. Their work is widely known.
The story of our Chapel windows

The theme of seven of the windows is the Sacraments. The eighth window is "the Word."

1. HOLY EUCHARIST—the fish is the symbol of the Body of Christ received in the Sacrament of the Eucharist. It is superimposed on the Chi Rho which takes the cross form. From the side of this emanates the stream of blood to the Chalice completing the command of Christ—receive you My Body, receive My Blood. The wheat and grapes are the material substance while behind the fish and Chi Rho is a suggestion of the banquet table over which Christ (Chi Rho) presides.

2. BAPTISM—Emphasis is placed on the effect of Baptism namely the ingrafting of the branches to the vine or the acceptance of the baptized soul into Christ's community. The shell, traditionally a symbol of Baptism is suggested with the baptismal waters pouring over the vine and branches. The white garment taken on by the baptized person at Baptism is suggested in the background.

3. HOLY ORDERS—various reasons for reception of the Sacrament of Holy Orders are indicated symbolically here; the ultimate gaining of heaven is suggested by the crown united with the triangle—symbol of the trinity; the saving of souls and leading of the faithful spiritually is symbolized by the shepherds staff; the imitation of Christ is suggested by the birds at the base of the Chi Rho, symbol of Christ along with the flame. A simple flower at the base of the window suggests the sublime state of the Religious.

4. MATRIMONY—the crossed rings indicate mutual consent and acceptance of the marital vows and responsibilities; the flame emphasizes that the motivation of this consent is love. The Hand of God along with the sun, the moon, and the stars refers to the creation since the principal reason for the reception of the Sacrament is the continuation of the creative act of God. The tree suggests the importance of the family in the marital state.

5. EXTREME UNCTION—the hour glass denotes the passing of time and the ultimate coming of the time of death—hopefully this time may be a joyous one suggested by the crossed palms and it may be in unity with Christ (Chi Rho). The fortification with the sacred oils through the Sacrament is indicated in the lower panel along with the peacock, traditionally a symbol of a renewal of oneself—the peacock yearly sheds its old feathers and takes on its beautiful new plumage as the faithful beautify their souls through the Sacrament of Extreme Unction.

6. Penance—"Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained. The two keys suggest forgiving and the retaining of sins. One implies purification suggested by the lily and the other condemnation suggested by the serpents descending into eternal fire. By the flame reference is made to the Holy Spirit and penance as the Sacrament of Love.

7. CONFIRMATION—the dove, symbol of the Holy Spirit is suggested along with the tongues of fire recalling the Pentecostal descent among the apostles in the form of fire and the imparting of wisdom and strength. The seven crosses represent the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit which are strengthened by the reception of the Sacrament.

8. THE WORD—the Greek form of the Logos is indicated proceeding downward through the center of the window. St. John considers the Word as all encompassing: The Divine and human natures combined in one person. Symbolically, the attempt is made in this window to show the Word as omnipotent. His presence is felt in all the elements; in the sun, in the air, on the earth, in the waters. By His coming he has filled the universe with His goodness.

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Diagram: Tree with branches, peacock, hourglass, palm trees, flowers, Chi Rho, Tabernacle, Alter.