

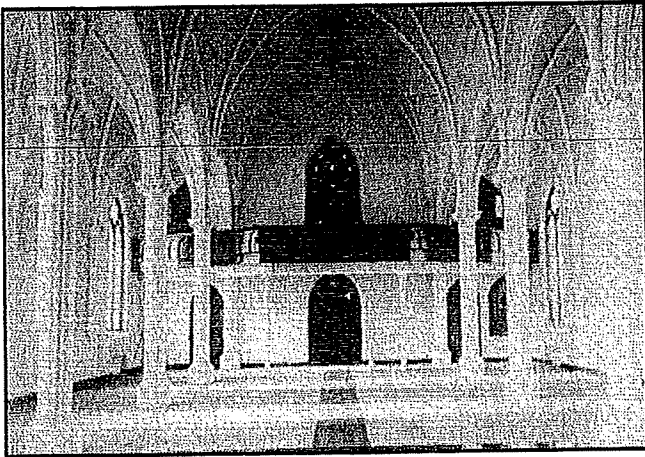
St. Bede's Church

Kelly, Kansas

"This limestone trimmed, dark reddish brown, German Gothic inspired church stands atop a gentle rise amid a cluster of small buildings surrounded by fields."



he architect of beautiful St. Bede's Church was Henry Brinkmann of Emporia, Kansas. He specialized in the design of Catholic churches. He was born in Germany in 1881 and came to Kansas as an infant. He began his practice in 1907 upon graduation from Kansas State University. His early church commissions included St. Joseph's Church (1910) in his hometown of Olpe and Sacred Heart Church (1911) in Emporia. Before the end of his forty-year career, he designed more than seventy Catholic churches in Kansas and surrounding states. He was adept at a variety of styles, tailoring his designs to the taste of the various congregations he served.



Six clustered cast iron columns support a series of cross-ribbed pointed plaster vaults.

The Stauffer Construction Co. of Wichita was the contractor. St. Bede's Church, a Gothic structure, measures 54 feet by 100 feet and from the platform as you enter the church to the top of its tower is 125 feet. The church is built of matte-faced pressed dark red brick, trimmed in Algonita stone which harmonize together in a structure pleasing to the eye. The tower contains a 1,000 lb. bell noted for the beauty of its tone. The actual construction work was under the supervision of William Wallace of Wichita. He spent nine months of very efficient and faithful work on this church. The men of the parish excavated the basement and did the hauling of materials. Undoubtedly much of the materials including the bell arrived in Kelly via the old Kansas City Wyandotte and Northwestern Railroad which ceased operation December, 1919. The O'Neil Brothers of Atchison spent 4 to 5 months in plastering this church. Their work is truly a work of art as one can see when you look at the beautiful arched ceiling and interior walls.

The altars in the front of the church are constructed of wood in the form of triptychs. You will notice that each altar has a set of three panels. Each side panel is half the size of the center panel. The altars conform to the 19th century Neo-Gothic style of architecture which has more decorative qualities than does the classical Gothic style. The main altar bears a representation of Da Vinci's interpretation of the Last Supper. The statues on the altars are identified in a separate printed guide.

An interesting bit of history related to the main altar was found in the memoirs of Rev. Edwin Kassens O.S.B. who was the first pastor of St. Bede's Parish and stationed in Kelly when the church was built. Older parishioners also told of this occurrence. "Before the U. S. entered into the 'World War' at the time that Admiral Von Spree's war fleet in the Pacific Ocean appeared on the western coast of the U. S., I had ordered a High Altar from Deprato Co. in Chicago for St. Bede's Church, Kelly, Kansas. I received notification that shipment had been made. After two or three weeks delay and no altar, I made inquiries of Deprato Co. Received answer that shipment had been made and they would trace shipment. In a few days received word that car with altar was on a side track between Valley Falls and Goff, KS. After three more weeks of delay, received car with altar -- which was unassembled in many small boxes. The altar was set up in church when one day a deputy sheriff from Washington D.C. arrived in Kelly and accused me of being disloyal and said he had information that the St. Bede's Catholic Church at Kelly, KS, had machine guns and ammunition stored in church and that the church was wired for broadcasting purposes. After thorough inspection, he turned to me, shook my hand, and said, 'Continue in your good work.' About three weeks later I saw a little note in the Kansas City Times which states,-- 'The U.S. government had followed a shipment of machine guns and ammunition from Chicago to San Diego, Ca. and had caught the men who had tried to sell the shipment to the German fleet.'

Looking up the date of shipment from Chicago, it corresponded with the date of the shipment of the altar. The boxing of both shipments was of the same wood and about the same size. Hence, the government had followed and traced both shipments."

The beautiful pulpit to the right of the main altar matches the altars in that it, too, is constructed of wood. The canopy of the pulpit is shaped like a large shell. The shell symbolizes the sacrament of Baptism. It is through Baptism that we are initiated into membership in the Community of the Faithful, that we become the Body of Christ. The Word of God is proclaimed from the pulpit, nourishing us and helping us to become stronger in our Christian faith.

Around the outside of the pulpit are six, free-form sculpture pieces. Each piece represents a saint bearing his own personal symbol. Starting from the back of the pulpit we see **St. Peter** holding the Keys of the Kingdom. When Peter acknowledged Jesus as the Christ the son of the living God, the Lord replied, "You are Peter and on this rock I will build my church and I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven." A key is the symbol of authority. St. Peter, then having the keys of the kingdom of heaven, has supreme authority in Christ's Church and was the first Pontiff or Pope in the Catholic Church.

The next saint form shown is of **St. Luke** represented with the face of an ox on his garment. He was one of the four evangelists, author of the third Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles. The sacrificial ox is his symbol, for his Gospel begins with the account of the priest Zachary whose duty it was to offer sacrifice. **St. John**, the next saint, is represented

with an eagle. He wrote the fourth Gospel and three Epistles. He is represented in art as an eagle for the soaring majesty of his Gospel, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." **St. Matthew** is holding a scroll and a child. He was the author of the first Gospel written sometime between 60 and 90. He began his Gospel with the human ancestry of our Blessed Lord. **St. Mark** is represented with a lion's head on his garment. He is the author of the second Gospel. The lion, the dweller in the desert, is emblematic of St. Mark who opens his narrative with the mission of St. John the Baptist "the voice of one crying in the wilderness". **St. Paul** is seen holding a sword which represents the instrument of his martyrdom.



he stained glass windows in St. Bede's Church have an interesting history. They were originally ordered from the E.

Eberhardt & Co., Chicago, Ill. imported from Munich, Germany and used for many years in the church of St. Joseph's Parish, Shawnee, KS. When that parish built a new church in 1963, the windows were carefully stored away.

In 1975, there was a renewed interest in obtaining stained glass windows in St. Bede's Church. Upon learning of a possibility of obtaining the stored-away windows of St.

Joseph's Church, it was further pursued. St. Bede's Parish negotiated with the parish in

Shawnee and bought the windows.

The windows were shipped to Winona, Minnesota, where they were cleaned, repaired and adjusted to fit the window spaces in St. Bede's Church. Two of the windows were in no condition to be repaired. Some of the glass from these two windows was used to repair the existing windows.

On July 19, 1994, Sister Elizabeth Coffey O.S.B. and Sister Helen Buening O.S.B. came to Kelly to view the church, particularly the windows. Sister Helen is Profesum Emerita, Benedictine College at Mt. St. Scholastica's in Atchison, KS. Sister Helen's beautiful artistic description of the windows follows: The windows are examples of good 19th century art in stained glass. Artists of an earlier time used basic colors of red, green, yellow or gold, and blue. In these windows, created in the 19th century, values of the primary colors are also used - such as rose, violet, amber, lavender, and pink.

As one faces the main altar in the church, the windows on the left side depict the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary. The windows to the

right depict the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary. You will notice that there are only four Joyful Mysteries presented and only four Glorious Mysteries. The two windows showing the Visitation of Mary and the Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, were the two windows that were impossible to restore.

There are many symbols used in these windows, for example: flowers and colors. Red roses used in the Nativity of Jesus' window represent both by their color and bloom, the Divine love of God who sent His only Son to be our Savior. The white lilies in the Annunciation window symbolize Mary's purity.

Early artists followed the custom of the time in their use of color. Married Jewish women who were mothers were portrayed wearing a red garment. The red color symbolized a loving and nurturing person. The color blue symbolized fidelity. So in the window representing Mary's being crowned Queen of Heaven and Mother of the whole human race, Mary is wearing a red garment and a blue cloak. Red and purple symbolized royalty or kingship. Christ, in the Ascension window, is thus portrayed wearing a purple garment and a red robe.

An entire book could be written to describe these windows, but the bits of information given here may make it possible for you to view these windows more thoroughly and discover more symbolism and meaning in their depths."



t. Bede's Church stands high atop a hill, where it can be seen for miles

around. The stately and statuesque edifice is not only a work of art but a statement of faith and a sentinel of hope for those who live in and around the Kelly community and for those who pass that way.

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