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Welcome to Peoria’s Cathedral!

In the middle ages, it was common for cathedrals to decorate their floors with elaborate labyrinths. These mazes in stone were very physical metaphors for the intentional wandering of the spiritual life. While there is no labyrinth in this cathedral, I invite you to wander nonetheless. This booklet is not designed to be an exhaustive historical guide or museum catalogue. This is not a theme park map to move you from point to point. Instead, we hope to provide a bit of history, a theological context, and an overview of this cathedral that is mother-church to Catholics across Central Illinois.

I have been praying in this church for nearly 30 years. Over these past few years of restoration, I have especially been spending a lot of time here. I still never tire of wandering the church, talking to saints who are old ‘friends,’ discovering new details in the windows, gazing at the “stars.”

I invite you to wander, to wonder, to pray.

St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, pray for us!

Msgr. Stanley Deptula
Rector
HISTORY OF SAINT MARY’S CATHEDRAL

The story began in 1851, when Bishop James VandeVelde of Chicago asked a Vincentian missionary, Father Alphonse Montouri, CM, to build a new church in Peoria, offering him $200 to carry out the plan. In a year, St. Mary’s Church (pictured) was built on the corner of Eaton (now Bryan) and Jefferson Street. It was said to be one of the finest churches between Chicago and St. Louis. In 1870, the parish had about 2,000 members.

With the arrival of the First Bishop of Peoria, John Lancaster Spalding, in May of 1877, St. Mary’s Church was designated as the Cathedral. In September of 1884, Peoria architect Casper Mehler submitted plans for a new gothic stone church. Rev. Benedict Spalding, the Bishop’s brother, personally supervised the construction of the new Cathedral.

On May 15, 1889, exactly four years after the first stone had been laid, the new edifice was dedicated. Nine years later, the old St. Mary’s was torn down.

“...He never preached as beautifully anywhere else as he did to the children at 8:30 Mass.” (The Peoria Star, 1916, about Bishop Spalding)

“I remember how the people of all faiths were wont to flock to the High Mass at the Cathedral on Sunday, at which he was accustomed to preach.” (Fr. Culemans)

At the turn of the century, the Cathedral became the home parish of Venerable Servant of God Fulton J. Sheen. Here he was an altar server and received his First Holy Communion. “Being an altar boy at the cathedral fed the fires of vocation,” he says in his autobiography Treasure in Clay.
In 1913, Bishop Edmund M. Dunne, the Second Bishop of Peoria, initiated the Cathedral’s first major renovation for Bishop Spalding’s Golden Jubilee.

Three new marble altars were installed and twelve windows depicting the life of the Blessed Virgin Mary were donated by diocesan clergy (right).

In December of 1930, Bishop Joseph H. Schlarman, the Third Bishop of Peoria, contemplated a thorough renovation of the Cathedral. The “Redemption” as he called it lasted more than ten years. Among many other things, it included a new Lady Chapel, a makeover of the old winter chapel, twelve unique stained glass windows, new sanctuary floor, and frescoing (below).

In 1953, before the celebration of the diamond jubilee of the diocese, Bishop William E. Cousins redecorated the Cathedral. The royal magenta with gold stencil was changed into solid pastel turquoise blue with modern paints of the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary.

Under Bishop Edward W. O’Rourke, the Cathedral underwent another major renovation in 1986. Most notably, the entire Cathedral interior, including altars and woodwork, was painted cream-white.

In 2014, Bishop Daniel R. Jenky, C.S.C., initiated a much needed outside and inside restoration of the Cathedral. Inspired by previous works throughout the history of the Cathedral, the renovation united past and present and provided continuity in design and historical significance.
ENTRANCE DOORS
The prominent colors of the entrance doors symbolize the beginning of Christianity in the territory that one day would be the Diocese of Peoria. Blue and gold stand for the French, honoring the French Jesuit missionary and our Forefather, Jacques Marquette. Blue also signifies Our Lady, the principal Patron Saint of the Cathedral.

VESTIBULE

Ceiling
The vestibule ceiling depicts the exact constellation of the stars as they appeared on the night of February 12, 1875, when by decree of Pope Pius IX, the Diocese of Peoria was created. The shooting star represents a large meteorite that fell on the same day near Homestead, Iowa.

To further the appearance as the Mother-Church of the Diocese and the Seat of the Bishop, the diocesan coat of arms is embedded in the floor at the entrance and images of the crests of previous bishops adorn the vestibule walls.

Diocesan Crest
The diocesan crest was first developed by Bishop Schlarman. His love of history and deep appreciation for Fr. Marquette and his fellow missionaries led him to put the beginnings of the diocese in a crest.

The golden cross on blue background indicates that the entire territory of today’s Diocese of Peoria was originally French. The top fleurs-de-lis honors the Forefather of the diocese, the Jesuit missionary Father Jacques Marquette; the lower fleurs-de-lis is for his companion, Louis Joliet. The eight-pointed gold star comes from the personal crest of another companion, the nobleman Robert Cavalier de La Salle. It is also a symbol of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in whose name the Cathedral is dedicated. The calumet, or peace pipe, in the center was a gift of the Indian chief to Father Marquette. The calumet was magical for the Natives, but it was protection for Father Marquette from their attacks.

Annunciation
The main door leading to the church nave is flanked by two distinct murals depicting the Annunciation.

On the left stands Archangel Gabriel, vested as deacon, prepared to announce the beginning of the Gospel. The dalmatic he wears is from a historic set of gold-embroidered vestments that belonged to the First Bishop of Peoria, John Lancaster Spalding.

On the right stands the Blessed Virgin Mary; she is dressed in a blue garment, which matches what she wears on the sanctuary window.
SANCTUARY

Altar
The altar is the chief object of the sanctuary. It should offer an irresistible appeal to the worshipper, the just, and the sinner. Bishop Schlarman insisted that “everything centers on the altar. Nothing, no matter how artistic, should obstruct the people's view of the altar and of the divine mysteries celebrated there.”

The high altar of Mankato marble from quarries in Minnesota has been restored to its original natural soft-cream color with a new mosaic of the Lamb of God from the closed St. Peter Church in Peoria.

In 1906, the Henebery family of Peoria donated a white marble communion rail, sanctuary steps, and two angels holding lights (now standing near the holy water fonts in the back of the main nave). In 1913, the high altar was dedicated in the memory of Matthew and Mary Henebery.

Before this altar, on September 20, 1919, the young Deacon Fulton J. Sheen (right) was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Peoria by Bishop Edmund M. Dunne.

Both the Altar of Sacrifice and pulpit were constructed in 1986 from the communion rail.

The Crucifixion
The image on the high altar is an exact replica of an original painting. Bishop Spalding purchased the painting The Crucifixion by Yzquierda (1873), a Spanish artist. This almost life-size image originally hung in the old St. Mary's Cathedral. In order to protect the painting from frequent exposure to light, candle smoke, and incense, the original has been moved to the wall above the altar in the Saint Thomas More Chapel.

In appreciative words of Bishop Schlarman: “It is probably the only reminder of old St. Mary’s, where it was originally. In the course of these many years it suffered a great deal...it is a priceless treasure of the Cathedral and it constitutes a tender bond of grateful memory and love between the present Cathedral and this generation, and Old St. Mary’s and the first beloved chief shepherd of the Church of Peoria.”

Tabernacle
The tabernacle was constructed to be a worthy vessel for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament. On the inside back wall of the tabernacle are three golden angels, which are components of a previous tabernacle. After the likeness of the ancient Ark of the Covenant, two adoring cherubim grace the outside of the tabernacle doors. The small spires on the top suggest the design of old St. Mary’s Cathedral four-pointed tower.

On the marble below the tabernacle shine prominent large gold letters saying “ECCE,” which means “Behold.” A beautiful mosaic of the Lamb of God underneath the lettering indicates the words said by John the Baptist about Jesus and repeated at every Mass, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world.”

Sanctuary Lamp
The sanctuary lamp is a candle burning constantly near the tabernacle. It offers a first-glance sure sign of Jesus’ Real Presence in the tabernacle. The lamp features a silver relief of the Twelve Apostles. The beautiful, rich ornamentation is another reminder of the reverence due to the Eucharist.
**Saints Peter and Paul**
The statues of the Apostles Peter and Paul have been in the Cathedral sanctuary since Bishop Dunne’s renovation in 1913 and are now restored to full color.

Saint Peter holds keys, which refer to the authority given to him by Jesus, “I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven” with the power to bind and loose.

Saint Paul is holding a sword, a reference either to his martyrdom by beheading or to the Word of God being sharper than a two-edged sword.

**Great Window**
This magnificent window, one of the highpoints of Bishop Schlarman’s renovation, was made in 1936. The central figure of the window is the Virgin Mary under the title of the “Theotokos” (God-Bearer in Greek). It is a copy of the ancient mosaic discovered in 1933 in the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul, Turkey.

On your left is the Prophet Isaiah, holding tongs with burning coal, which symbolizes his calling and his purification by the hand of an angel. He had prophesized many years before Jesus’ birth that “a virgin shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel.”

Pictured on your right is St. Cyril of Alexandria, a Bishop, who defended Mary’s title of Mother of God, the God-Bearer, at the Council of Ephesus of 431 A.D. Both Saints stand as witnesses to Mary’s singular role as the God-Bearer.

**Sanctuary Walls**
The sanctuary is distinctly set apart from the rest of the church by a three-color arch—deep red for the Blood of Christ, silver for the water that flowed from his side, and blue for Mary, the Patroness of the Cathedral. The sanctuary walls are adorned with elegant white-gold stenciling alternating four designs of Eucharistic and Marian symbols.

**Procession of Angels**
The angels in a long procession toward the altar are modeled after the Victorian style of the white marble angel statues near the entrance. The angles on the left side of the sanctuary are processing as altar servers, while the angles on the right side are carrying the bishop’s liturgical vesture. The most unique detail of the entire procession is that all of the items carried by the angels are the same as those used in this Cathedral.

**Sanctuary Dome**
The high dome above the main altar features a rich gold leaf design in which are set fourteen medallions with traditional symbols of the Catholic Faith.
Seven Medallions of Jesus

Sacred Heart  Crucifixion  Eucharist  Christ's monogram

Pelican  Lamb of God  Anchor

Seven Medallions of Mary

Immaculate Heart  Morning Star  House of God  Queen of Heaven

Vessel of Devotion  Gate of Heaven  Mystical Rose
Sanctuary Floor
The Travertine tile floor with a quote from the Prophet Malachi in large mosaic letters was installed in 1934 as the beginning of Bishop Schlarman’s renovation. While enlarging the sanctuary, he also made it a vivid reminder that the Mass is truly a sacrifice. In every Mass, Christ’s sacrifice for the redemption of mankind is truly made present. Thus, along with the theme of the Cathedral windows—the spreading of the Gospel to all nations—this Sacrifice is offered “from the rising of the sun to its setting.”

FROM THE RISING OF THE SUN
EVEN UNTO THE SETTING THEREOF
MY NAME
SHALL BE GREAT AMONG THE GENTILES
AND IN EVERY PLACE
THERE SHALL BE SACRIFICE.

(Malachi 1:11)

Cathedra
The Latin word *cathedra*, a chair, signifies the official seat of the bishop’s authority as the Successor of the Apostles. The bishop occupies it when he presides at solemn functions. In the language of the Church, it conveys the idea of authority.

“Though I have heard many of his sermons and lectures, he was at his best in talking to his priests. Then it was that he rose to the very heights, and all his vast erudition and golden eloquence were given to us.” (Fr. Culemans about Bishop Spalding)

The renovated cathedra is composed of several original elements of Bishop Schlarman’s cathedra of 1938. The originally sixteen-feet-high ornate throne was simplified in 1986, and its multiple-spire carved canopy, which was then placed above the tabernacle, is once again part of the cathedra. Traditionally, the chair also features the crest of the diocese and the crest of the current bishop.

The diocesan crest is explained in the Vestibule section on page 6.
**Bishop Jenky’s Crest**

The bishop's personal crest takes up the right half of the coat of arms while the diocesan crest takes up the left side. In the Bishop's crest, the red symbolizes the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Bishop's Polish heritage, the blue honors the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the gold honors the Holy Trinity.

The silver (white) crescent and the red seraph honor the patrons of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and the Co-Cathedral of St. Matthew in South Bend, Indiana, where Bishop Jenky served as Auxiliary Bishop.

As a member of the Congregation of the Holy Cross, Bishop Jenky also incorporated the insignia of the Order (two anchors and a cross on a blue background) into his episcopal crest.

The motto ‘HIS WILL IS OUR PEACE’ is from the *Divine Comedy – Paradiso*, by Dante Alighieri (1265-1321). It is a beautiful summary of the spiritual advice of the prophets and saints from ancient times.
MAIN NA VE

Lanterns
Christmas morning of 1935 unveiled the new light fixtures for the Cathedral. They were made by the Kinsley & Mahler Co. of Peoria according to the plans of Ralph Adams Cram, renowned Boston architect. Each lantern, over 7 feet tall, weighs 485 pounds.

Medallions of the Prophets
The medallions are listed here beginning chronologically from above the pulpit, around to the back of the church, and back toward the cathedra on the right.

Prophet Amos
Before Amos became a prophet of Divine Judgment, he was a shepherd by profession, which is represented by a shepherd's staff.

Prophet Jonah
Jonah was a disobedient prophet who rejected his divine commission. He was cast overboard in a storm and swallowed by a big fish. After three days, he was spewed on the shore and returned to his task of preaching repentance to the people of the city of Nineveh, who believed his message of doom and repented immediately. Jonah also prefigures “the Son of Man in the heart of the earth three days and three nights.”

Prophet Hosea
The Book of Hosea opens with his marriage to Gomer, a prostitute, who symbolizes Israel's infidelity to God through sin, while Hosea stands for God's fidelity to Israel in spite of its sins.
Prophet Micah
The tower symbol comes from Micah’s prophecy, “And you, O tower of the flock, hill of daughter Zion! To you it shall come: the former dominion shall be restored, the reign of daughter Jerusalem.”

Prophet Nahum
The image of the broken yoke comes from Nahum’s prophecy about the restoration of Israel: “And now I will break his yoke from off you and will burst your bonds asunder.”

Prophet Jeremiah
The princes of Judah imprisoned Jeremiah in an old cistern, because he kept preaching a disturbing message for the king. The image is a powerful reminder that fidelity to the truth may bring persecution, but no matter how deep the mire may seem to be, God always provides.
**Prophet Daniel**
Daniel, faithful in worship of the true God in spite of the king’s command, was thrown into the lion’s den. The next morning, the king found Daniel alive, because God Himself preserved his servant from death. Thus, Daniel is represented by a pair of lions.

**Prophet Ezekiel**
The image of a gate is a reference to Ezekiel’s vision of the Temple. It reminds us that though the Temple in Jerusalem has been destroyed, all the baptized are part of the New Temple of Christ’s body.

**Prophet Baruch**
The image of a fallen idol conveys Baruch’s condemnation of all forms of idol worship, which plagued Israel throughout its history. “Better therefore is a just man who has no idols, for he will be far from reproach.”
**Prophet Obadiah**
Obadiah’s prophecy is a cry for vengeance against the pride and crimes of Edom, symbolized in this image. “The pride of your heart has deceived you, you who live in the clefts of the rock, whose dwelling is high, who say in your heart, ‘Who will bring me down to the ground?’”

**Prophet Joel**
The horn comes from the prophet’s call to repentance: “Sound the horn in Zion!” The first section of the Book of Joel is also concerned with the locusts plaguing Israel.

**Prophet Malachi**
An angel symbolizes the Prophet Malachi, whose name means “messenger” or “angel.” Malachi foretold the coming of the Messiah and John the Baptist.
Ceiling and Floor
Above the main nave and side aisles is a magnificent starry sky, complete with shooting stars and all the planets of the solar system, including Pluto, which was discovered by Clyde Tombaugh, who was from Streator, Illinois, a city within the Diocese of Peoria.

Below the stars rests a marble floor featuring a deep burgundy tile, representative of the Blood of Christ, with inlaid cream diamonds that highlight the main aisle. A dark green tile is in the side aisles between three sections of new pews as well as in the St. Thomas More Chapel and its entryway.

Three Priesthood Medallions (ceiling)

Book of the Gospels
The Book of the Gospels represents the diaconate as the first degree of Holy Orders. At the ordination of a deacon, the bishop presents him with the book of the Gospels. The book depicted in the first medallion belonged to Venerable Fulton J. Sheen; this book is used at all diaconate ordinations in the Diocese of Peoria. The book is housed at the Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen Museum at the Spalding Pastoral Center just a block away from the Cathedral.

Chalice
The chalice is a symbol of priesthood. This particular chalice belonged to Bishop Joseph H. Schlarman, the Third Bishop of Peoria, who in his time dedicated much of his efforts to the Cathedral renovation and proper understanding of the liturgy. Today the chalice is used at priestly ordinations in our diocese.

Miter
The miter represents the third degree of Holy Orders, the bishopric. It is a sign of the authority of the bishop, and it is from him that all priests and deacons of the diocese receive their authority. The image of this miter is modeled after one belonging to Bishop Daniel Jenky.
SIDE ALTARS
Both side altars are surrounded by stencil designs of St. Joseph’s and Our Lady’s monograms as well as fleurs-de-lis to honor the French origin of this territory. Each side altar features the Saint in the main image, corresponding mural, and a monogram mosaic from the closed St. Peter Church in Peoria.

St. Joseph Altar
In 2007, the statue of St. Joseph was added to the Cathedral statuary by Bishop Jenky. The statue was carved by the grandson of the artist who made the statue of Christ the King in 1937.

The Death of Saint Joseph
According to tradition, Joseph died before the beginning of Jesus’ public ministry. The mural depicts the blessed death of St. Joseph, with Jesus pointing him to heaven with a tear in his eye and Mary at his side. For this reason, he is revered as the Patron Saint of a happy death. At the foot of the bed is the Archangel Gabriel holding a lily, a symbol of purity. He was the one who had brought God’s message to Mary and reassured Joseph to take Mary as his wife.
Our Lady of Guadalupe Altar
The Cathedral parish has served a large Hispanic population that has a great devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe. Very appropriately, the large framed painting of Our Lady of Guadalupe was painted by a Mexican artist, Jesús Jauregui.

Juan Diego Before the Archbishop of Mexico City Juan de Zumárraga
In 1531, the Virgin Mary appeared to a Mexican peasant, Juan Diego, on his way to Mass. She asked that the bishop of Mexico City build a church on Tepeyac Hill. Desiring to ensure the authenticity of the apparition, the bishop requested a sign. In the midst of winter, Juan Diego brought him roses blooming on Tepeyac Hill in his garment called a tilma. However, it was not the roses that caught the bishop’s eye but the image of Mary, miraculously imprinted on Juan Diego’s tilma. The bishop then believed Juan Diego and gave permission for a church to be built in the Virgin Mary’s honor on that hill.
SAINT THOMAS MORE CHAPEL (Relic Chapel)
In the 1930s, Bishop Schlarman, who had a great devotion to St. Thomas More, dedicated the adjacent winter chapel and new stained glass windows to St. Thomas More and his two fellow martyrs of the Church in England, John Fisher and Oliver Plunkett. The chapel was integrated with the sanctuary and used as a daily Mass chapel.

The St. Thomas More Chapel is also the usual place for the sacrament of baptism. The marble baptistery, ambry (cabinet with the holy oils), and the Easter candle are housed in the chapel. During the Eastertide, the celebration of baptism takes place near the sanctuary.

Most recently, the chapel has become a treasury of relics of Saints of all times and places. These include several Relics of Our Lord’s Passion. According to the ancient tradition, a vigil light burns constantly before them. The newest relic is the original painting The Crucifixion, which was transferred to the chapel from the high altar (see the Sanctuary section above).

STAINED GLASS WINDOWS OF THE SAINT THOMAS MORE CHAPEL
The following are the stained glass windows of the relic chapel.

Saint Thomas More
An accomplished intellectual and lawyer, St. Thomas More was the chancellor of England under King Henry VIII. Seeking an annulment of his marriage, the king declared himself the head of the Church in England. Thomas More refused to take the Oath of Supremacy, which resulted in his martyrdom in 1535.

Saint John Fisher
Bishop St. John Fisher was renowned for his writings in defense of orthodox Catholic teaching. His zeal for the truth brought him into opposition with King Henry VIII over the king’s desire to annul his marriage. Bishop John Fisher vigorously defended papal supremacy, which led to his imprisonment and beheading shortly before Thomas More’s martyrdom in 1535.

Saint Oliver Plunkett
The Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of Ireland, St. Oliver Plunkett worked to strengthen the faith among the struggling Irish Catholics, especially during times of persecution, which forced him to live in hiding. He was accused of rebellion, condemned to death, and martyred in 1681.

Father Gabriel de la Ribourde
In 1680, a French Franciscan Recollect missionary, Father Gabriel de la Ribourde, and his companions stopped near Seneca, Illinois, to repair their canoes. While he walked away to pray his breviary, Father Gabriel was attacked and killed by members of the Kickapoo tribe. A cross near Saint Patrick’s Parish in Seneca stands as a memorial to this first martyr of Illinois. A window in the Relic Chapel with Father Gabriel’s image is connected to four additional windows in the chapel’s hallway. These windows portray the North American martyrs.
The following stained glass windows, in the hallway outside of the relic chapel, are of North American martyrs.

**Saint Jean de Brebeuf**
A French Jesuit, St. Jean de Brebeuf worked among the Huron Indians for twenty-four years, converting seven thousand to the Faith. In 1649, he was captured and tortured to death by the Iroquois. After he died, the Iroquois cut out his heart and ate it; they were so impressed by his courage that they wished to receive a portion of it by consuming his heart.

**Saint Rene Goupil**
A Frenchman, St. Rene Goupil was a skilled surgeon who joined Isaac Jogues for a mission to the Hurons. They were captured by the Iroquois. St. Rene was tortured for two months, and the wounds disfigured him so much that St. Isaac Jogues was reminded of the Prophet Isaiah’s words, ‘He had no majestic bearing to catch our eye, no beauty to draw us to him.’ In 1642, St. Rene was killed for teaching one of the Iroquois children the Sign of the Cross.

**Saint Jean de Lalande**
A lay assistant to the Jesuit missionaries in Quebec, Jean de Lalande went with Isaac Jogues to mission to the Iroquois in 1646. They were captured by Mohawks. Isaac Jogues was beheaded and his body was thrown into a river. Jean de Lalande was martyred the next day as he attempted to recover the body of Isaac Jogues.

**Saint Isaac Jogues**
From a wealthy family in Orleans, France, St. Isaac Jogues joined the Jesuits and requested to work in Quebec. Along with Rene Goupil, Jogues was captured by the Iroquois in 1642. He endured a year of torture until he escaped and returned to France. His index fingers had been cut off, requiring him to obtain special permission from the pope to say Mass. By his own request, he returned to Quebec. Peace had been reached with the Iroquois, and he set out to mission to them, the very people responsible for his mutilation. On the way, the Mohawks captured him. St. Isaac Jogues was tomahawked and beheaded near Albany, New York, in 1646.
TWELVE NAKE WINDOWS
Spreading of the Gospel Throughout the World

This is the order of the windows beginning at the Our Lady of Guadalupe altar, around the church, and back toward the sanctuary to the St. Joseph altar on the right.

The Great Commission

- The Dove, symbol of the Holy Spirit
- “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.” (Matthew, 28, 16-20)
- The Key of the Kingdom
- St. Peter in Rome
- The tiara, symbol of the papal authority

The Apostles in Rome and Spain

- The Roman Eagle holding a sword, symbol of St. Paul’s martyrdom; the words Paulus Civis Romanus (Paul, a Roman Citizen) are inscribed underneath the eagle
- St. Paul and St. Barnabas converting Sergius Paulus, the Governor of Cyprus
- The coat of arms of Spain where the Apostle James preached the Gospel; the eagle holds a script that reads Una Gran de Libre (One Great Free Country)
- St. James in Compostela, Spain
- S.P.Q.R means Senatus Populusque Romanus (Senate and People of Rome); pictured are the columns of Hercules, called by the Romans the Rock of Gibraltar and Ceuta

Augustine and Constantine

- The Chi-Rho, the Christian emblem Constantine placed on his banner
- Constantine was told, “In this sign you shall conquer” and the sign of the Cross was placed on the shields of all his men (313)
- St. Menas standing between two reclining camels, the symbol of Christian Egypt
- St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo in North Africa (d. 430), with his mother St. Monica
- Angel piercing a heart with an arrow symbolizes St. Augustine’s words, ‘You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you”
Saint Patrick and Saint Remigius

- Hand holding shamrock, symbol of the Holy Trinity
- St. Patrick preaching the Gospel in Ireland (461 A.D.)
- Coat of arms of Eire (Ireland)
- St. Remigius, Bishop of Rheims, baptizing Clovis, King of Franks (496 A.D.)
- Coat of arms of Clovis

England and Germany

- Coat of arms of former Catholic See of Canterbury
- Pope St. Gregory the Great sending St. Augustine of Canterbury and the Benedictines to England (596 A.D.)
- White horse on red field: the crest of Widukind, King of Saxons
- Baptism of Widukind (785 A.D.) with Emperor Charlemagne as his sponsor
- The Magic Thunder oak felled by St. Boniface, Apostle of Germanic tribes

Scandinavia and the Slavic Peoples

- Coat of arms of the former Catholic See of Uppsala, Sweden
- St. Ansgar, a Benedictine, preaching the Gospel in Scandinavian countries (865 A.D.)
- Crests of Greece, Bulgaria, and Romania
- Brothers St. Cyril and St. Methodius, Apostles to the Slavic nations (863 A.D.), and baptism of St. Stephen, King of Hungary (1000 A.D.)
- Coat of arms of Hungary

Poland and China

- Polish and Bohemian crests joined under crown
- The Catholic Bohemian Princess Dobrawa consents to marry the Polish Duke Mieczyslaw on condition that he become a Christian and Christianize his people (956 A.D.)
- Coat of arms of China, the Chinese dragon
- Pope Nicholas IV sends to the Emperors of China and Persia the Franciscan John of Montecorvino, who became Archbishop of Peking, China (1294 A.D.)
- Lion, symbol of Persia
Columbus and the Americas

- Coat of arms of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain
- Columbus' ship, the *Santa Maria*, touches San Salvador on October 12, 1492; his other ships, *Pinta* and *Nina*, are in the background
- Coat of arms of Christopher Columbus
- Planting of the Cross by Columbus, accompanied by Spanish Benedictine Bernard Boyl
- Crest of San Salvador, two palm trees bending over a cross

Saint Francis Xavier and Saint Peter Claver

- Coat of arms of the Xaverio family
- Jesuit St. Francis Xavier preaching the Gospel in India and Japan (d. 1549)
- Coat of arms of Japan
- Jesuit St. Peter Claver, the Apostle of the Colored races, preaches the Gospel to Black slaves at Cartagena, Colombia, South America (d. 1654)
- The white hand of Saint Peter Claver releases a shackle from the black hand of a slave

Father Marquette and Father Kino

- A Native American and calumet
- Jesuit Father Jacques Marquette celebrating Mass near Starved Rock in Illinois on Holy Thursday and Easter Sunday (1675); he is considered the Forefather of the Diocese of Peoria
- Tyrolean eagle
- Padre on Horseback - Jesuit Father Kino (d. 1680), native of Tyrol, known as, missionary to the Southern California, Northern Mexico, New Mexico, and Arizona
- Coat of arms of Mexico
Saint Junipero Serra and Maryknoll

- Santa Barbara mission, California
- Franciscan Junipero Serra, founding the Mission of San Diego, California, the oldest of the California missions (1769)
- Coat of arms of Maryknoll
- Bishop James A. Walsh and Father Thomas F. Price, cofounders of Maryknoll, the American Foreign Mission Society, and a Maryknoll Sister
- The American Eagle

Pope Pius XI and the Church of Peoria

- Coat of arms of Pope Pius XI
- The Pope of the Missions Pius XI, Cardinal Pacelli, the future Blessed Pope Pius XII, and Cardinal Mundelein, Archbishop of Chicago
- Coat of arms of Pope Benedict XV
- The first three Bishops of Peoria—(center) John L. Spalding (1877-1908); (left) Edmund M. Dunne (1909-1929); (right) Joseph H. Schlarman (1930-1951)—kneeling before Mary, Queen of the Missions
- Reaper of Allotting, the symbol of death
STATIONS OF THE CROSS
These traditional Stations of the Cross are oil paintings on tin. They came from the St. John Newman Center in Champaign, Illinois. Restored and reframed, they were installed in the nave of the Cathedral in 2007, replacing modern art Stations from the 1986 renovation.

STATUE OF CHRIST THE KING
The inscription at the base of the statue reads “Rex Sum Ego” (I am a King), which was Christ’s response to Pilate asking him, ‘Are you a king?’ In his left hand, Christ holds the globus cruciger, a globe with the cross on top, symbolizing Jesus’ dominion over the world. In his right hand, he holds the scepter, a symbol of majestic authority. The statue was installed on Thanksgiving Day of 1938.

STATUE OF SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI
This statue of St. Francis of Assisi was installed by Bishop Jenky out of respect for all of the Franciscans who have served the diocese of Peoria throughout its history. In his left hand, St. Francis holds a skull, the symbol of death. Death is inevitable for every person, but those who live according to the will of God, having died already to sin in Baptism, need not fear ‘the second death’ of the body.
LADY CHAPEL
In 1937, the Lady Chapel was added and dedicated to Our Lady. All images in the chapel are of women only. The chapel was built to provide a proper connection with the sacristy for full pontifical ceremonies.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help
The titular patron of the chapel is Our Lady of Perpetual Help, the designated Patroness of the Diocese of Peoria since 1930. In 2007, on the 130th anniversary of the arrival of our First Bishop John L. Spalding, her icon was solemnly enthroned by Bishop Daniel R. Jenky, C.S.C., in a gilded triptych.

The large Greek initials on both sides of the image say that Mary is the Mother of God. The child Jesus, clinging to His Mother, is almost losing a sandal; he is frightened by a vision of two angels revealing to Him the instruments of the Passion. One of them is Michael the Archangel, who holds the lance and a reed with sponge soaked in gall. The other one is the Archangel Gabriel, who holds the cross and the nails. Jesus’ little hands are pressed into Mary’s as a reminder to us that, just as while on earth, He placed Himself entirely in her hands for protection, so now in Heaven He has given into her hands all graces to distribute to those who ask her.

The wooden gilded triptych is richly ornamented and contains various symbols of Mary:

- Mary’s monogram with twelve stars around it: “… a crown of twelve stars” (Revelation 12:1)
- Navicula (Latin for “small ship,” meaning the Church) and a star (Mary) above it
- Tower of ivory, indicating Mary’s singular beauty and purity
- Ark of the Covenant, because as the Mother of God, Mary became His exclusive dwelling place

Shrine of Saint Teresa of Calcutta
The portrait of Mother Teresa was made during her memorable visit to the Peoria Cathedral in 1995. Her connection with Peoria has been maintained since the late 1950s through yearly donations from our Diocesan Council of Catholic Women and also through the presence of her Sisters in Peoria. Below the portrait is a relic of St. Teresa’s hair, donated by her Sisters, the Missionaries of Charity.

Statue of Saint Anne
The statue was modeled after the famous sculpture of Saint Anne de Beaupre in Canada, when, in 1937, Bishop Schlarman chose to make its replica for the Cathedral in Peoria. St. Anne is depicted wearing a crown as is the Child Mary, who will become the future Queen of the Universe.
**Statue of Madonna and Child**
In 1913, on the occasion of Bishop Spalding's Golden Jubilee of priestly ordination, a young Peorian and talented architect, sculptor, and designer Joseph G. Cowell was given the task of the Cathedral redecoration. Along with three new marble altars and windows, the work included a new statue of Madonna for a side altar.

Sometime during the 1960s, the statue found its new home in the garden of the Guardian Angel Orphanage in West Peoria, where it stayed for several years. Roughened by the weather yet still beautiful, the tender Madonna finally returned to the Cathedral to a place of honor in the Lady Chapel. This statue was here when a young Fulton Sheen served Mass in the Cathedral.

**Statue of Saint Therese**
By the age of fifteen, Therese of Lisieux, France, desired to become a Carmelite. She was at first rejected as too young, but a year later was allowed to enter the cloister. She devoted herself to doing small tasks with great love, formulating a spirituality of her 'Little Way.' Out of obedience, she wrote her autobiography, the popular *Story of a Soul*. During the last three years of her life, she heroically suffered from tuberculosis and died in 1888 when she was only twenty-four. She is venerated as the Patroness of Vocations for the Diocese of Peoria.

**Golden Roses of St. Therese**
On both sides of the statue of St. Therese of Lisieux are encased six golden roses with one beautiful message. A priest once promised that for every vocation to consecrated life from his parish he would give a Golden Rose to St. Therese. He has done so twelve times. As a special Patroness of Vocations for the Diocese of Peoria, St. Therese is honored and frequently invoked by our seminarians and for all discerning a vocation in the Church.
STAINED GLASS WINDOWS OF THE LADY CHAPEL

The windows depict Old- and New-Testament women and their modern day counterpart Saints.

Eve
Eve, the first woman from the Book of Genesis, is surrounded with relating characters: the first man, Adam, the Hand of God, and the angel guarding the Garden of Eden with a flaming sword. Lurking at the bottom is the serpent, the Devil, who seduced Adam and Eve to sin.

Ave Maria
This window depicts Mary at the Annunciation. At the top of the window is the Holy Spirit, symbolized by the dove, descending on Mary. A candle, symbol of prayer, and string, symbol of work, illustrate Mary’s devotion to both. A golden tower with blue shields references Mary as the Tower of Ivory and House of Gold, as a symbol of her purity. At the bottom of the window is the Archangel Gabriel appearing to Mary.

Ruth
The Book of Ruth in the Old Testament tells the story of a Moabite widow who left her native land to accompany her mother-in-law to Israel. There, Ruth gleaned barley in the fields of Boaz in order to provide for herself and her mother-in-law. Boaz espoused Ruth, and they became the parents of Obed, the grandfather of King David.

Saint Clare of Assisi
Born to a noble family in Assisi, Clare chose a life of poverty like her contemporary St. Francis, whose preaching struck a chord in Clare’s soul. Later, inspired by her joyful life, her own mother, sister, and other women joined Clare in a new religious community, the Second Order of Saint Francis, also known as the Poor Clares. St. Clare is often depicted with a ciborium or monstrance due to a famous story about her defense against a mob invading the convent. Raising the ciborium in their sight, the attackers fell backward and fled.

Judith
To save the Jewish nation, Judith made her way into the Assyrian camp and the tent of Holofernes. Intoxicated by wine, he was enticed by Judith’s beauty. Taking advantage of his inebriated state, she cut off his head, leading the Jews to victory over the Assyrians.

Saint Joan of Arc
Born in 1412 to a French peasant family, Joan lived a simple childhood until the age of thirteen, when she began having visions of the Saints and hearing voices commanding her to assist the King of France against the English. Joan was given command of the French armies and led them to victory, driving the English out of Orleans. Eventually, the English captured Joan and burned her at the stake as a heretic in 1431. Joan was nineteen years old.
Esther
Armed with fervent prayer and penance, Esther risked her own life and dared to approach the king with her request to spare her Jewish people from being destroyed. She won his favor and her nation was saved.

Saint Kateri Tekakwitha
In 1936 when the windows were designed, Kateri Tekakwitha was not even beatified, so it was quite unusual that she should be featured on a church window. Ultimately having been declared a Saint in 2012, it was providential that Bishop Schlarman chose her anyway. She was orphaned as a child due to a smallpox epidemic, which left Kateri Tekakwitha scarred and almost blind. Desiring to be baptized and consecrate herself to Christ, she refused a marriage urged by her adoptive family and was forced to leave her tribe. After her death in 1680, at the age of twenty-four, due to a long illness, her face was cleared of all smallpox scars and became beautiful again. For her purity, she is also known as the Lily of the Mohawks.
ORGAN
In the late fall of 1935, Bishop Joseph H. Schlarman appointed noted church musician Dom Ermin Vitry, OSB, from St. Mary’s Institute in O’Fallon, Missouri, to design the new cathedral organ. He personally supervised the construction of the instrument at the Wicks Factory in Highland, Illinois. It was built to be a three manual organ with 3,329 pipes and keys made of genuine ivory. In 1937, it represented the greatest and latest achievement in organ building.

- The organ weighs 28,000 pounds; about 12,000 pounds of metal were used to make the pipes.
- The wire used for the various electrical connections is long enough to circle the globe several times.
- Eleven kinds of lumber were used to make the various wooden parts.
- A select group of seventy-three experienced organ builders took part in its construction.
- Eight weeks were required for the organ’s installation.
- The most recent tonal improvements were done by Hal Gober in 2005.

Continuo Organ
This small organ was made by the Schlicker Organ Company in 1975. It is usually used for small-scale liturgies, such as the Stations of the Cross or Benediction.

GREAT ROSE WINDOW
In October of 1937, a large great rose window was installed in the organ gallery above the Cathedral entrance doors. The window features the diocesan crest in its center. For a detailed description of the crest, please refer to the earlier section on the vestibule.
CONCLUSION
Bishop John Lancaster Spalding often praised nobleness and beauty. He wrote, “The true function of art is interpretation. It translates nature [and this cathedral] into words and forms of truth and beauty.” This is why and how the Cathedral makes God’s presence so profound and palpable.

May all who enter experience that this is the house of God and a gate of heaven.
RESTORATION WORK PHOTO ESSAY

View the most significant points in the 2015-2016 restoration work.
The Cathedral before the restoration

The first step: painting the walls

Stripping white paint off of the Casota marble high altar

Changing the unusable baptismal font to a permanent floor

A new wall color

Each window taken out, cleaned, and reinforced

Sanctuary in full scaffolding

Angels from 1930s discovered
From solid blue sanctuary ceiling to gold-leaf stencil with fourteen medallions

Canvas with the painting of the first angel for the sanctuary procession

Sanctuary ceiling above the scaffolding

Ceiling transformed into a starry night sky

Changing the protective covers of the stained glass windows

Scaffold-enclosed organ

Mural of the first prophet
The new glow

New pews with still good old ends

The Rose window in particularly bad shape

Exterior work on the Rose window

Left to right: the old and new angelic procession

The capitals of all marble columns being transformed from beige (L) to royal burgundy and gold (R)
New marble steps and a mosaic of the Lamb God below the tabernacle niche

One of the three nave ceiling medallions

Complete makeover of a side altar, including a new mosaic

Temporary chairs, but a brand new burgundy-green marble center aisle

The nave ceiling featuring the nine planets the solar system, among them, Earth

The bird’s eye view from the ceiling

Multiple-layer stenciling of the sanctuary walls
Stripping the old paint off of the main doors

Old and new look of the entrance doors

Detail of the four delicate motifs of a sanctuary walls

Vestibule: from white to wood

New screen design covering the side altar air vents

Side altar receiving a new mural of Death of St. Joseph
A new, bright painting of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Dark green marble tile replacing an old carpet

The new hanging sanctuary lamp depicting the Twelve Apostles

Work in the St. Thomas More Chapel

Final polishing of all floors

Special pulley mechanism for the sanctuary lamp

A molding of adoring cherubim for the doors of the new tabernacle

Angelic décor inside of the new tabernacle
Vestibule art:
Peoria’s night sky
on the founding day
of the Diocese of Peoria

Matching marble pedestals
made for all statues

Diocesan coat of
arms in a new
marble mosaic inlay
in the vestibule
floor

The last piece:
the official Seat of the
Bishop - the cathedra

The historic painting
of The Crucifixion in its
new home - the Relic Chapel

Front doors fully
stripped of old
paint

Stunning blue-gold
new face

JUST ENTER!
The Cathedral of Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception

The Catholic Diocese of Peoria
309.671.1550
www.cdop.org

The Most Reverend
Daniel R. Jenky, C.S.C.,
Bishop of Peoria