

Bethinking of Old Orleans

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STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

"He was on the shore when one of the synagogue directors, named Jairus, came....and strongly pleaded with Him, 'My daughter is at the point of death. Come, place Your hands on her, that she may recover and live.' And He went with them...."

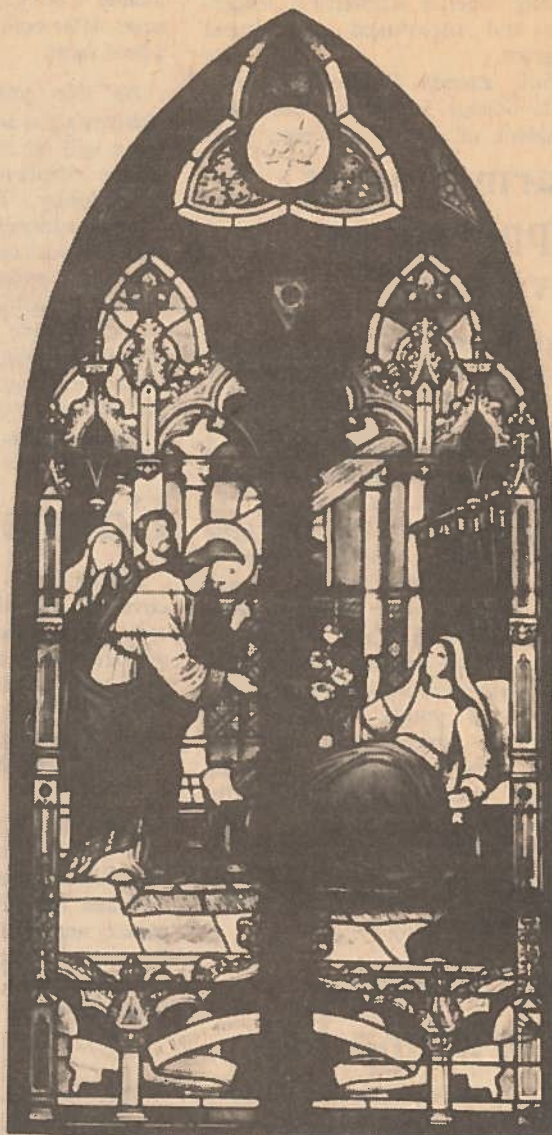
While He was still speaking, there arrived those from the ruler's house who told him, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher further? But Jesus...said to the ruler of the synagogue, 'have no fear, only believe'... Arriving at the ruler's house he observed the bedlam - loud weeping and wailing - and as He entered He said to them, 'Why this commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but sleep.' They ridiculed Him; but He personally put them all out, took along the child's father and other... and entered the room where the child was. Then taking the child's hand, He said to her, 'Talitha Koum' which means Little Girl, 'I tell you, arise!' and instantly the little girl got up and walked around. She was twelve. They were astonished beyond all expression..."

Mark 5:21-24, 35-36, 38-42

This miraculous story of "The Rising of the daughter of Jairus" is the subject depicted in this stained glass window located at St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church in Medina. Jesus has just uttered the words "Talitha Koum" and released the little girl's hand. She has instantly come alive and is about to get up out of the bed. In brevity that is what we see here. However, let us look more closely at the imagery and symbolism. In the right hand lancet we see the daughter of Jairus with her hand raised to Jesus in an avowal of faith and thankfulness. Half reclining in her bed she is dressed in white which suggests her purity and innocence. She is covered with a blue blanket or coverlet signifying truth. Beside her is a vase filled with lilies which are a symbol of resurrection. Recalling her story we must remember she was pronounced dead. In back of her pillow, forming a backdrop not unlike a dossal, is an amethyst drapery. This color may suggest here, the girl's suffering prior to her death.

In the left lancet Jesus is shown bending towards the little girl. He is dressed in a gold-colored robe which symbolizes the goodness of God and kindness. Over this is a red mantle, which color denotes the Holy Spirit, creative power and divine love. He wears a halo symbolic of the veneration of a sacred personage. And from the right lancet a golden beam of light is cast down from God on to Jesus. This light beam suggests the divine nature or holiness of Jesus. It is the life-giving spirit and divine authority placed upon Him for this miraculous act from the Creator of Life.

Standing behind Jesus we see Jairus and his wife, the parents of the little girl. Their faces express overwhelming joy at the reinstatement of their daughter's life. The mother is dressed in green which is a color symbolic of hope of the future and immortality. The father wears blue sig-



nifying his constancy and belief in the power of the Lord. In the apex of the window is a triquetra shape which denotes the Trinity. Within this is a crown and cross which symbolizes the reward of the faithful in life after death, to all those who believe in the crucified Savior. "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee the crown of life." (Rev. 2:10).

The window is composed of both painted and stenciled glass within a Gothic Revival framework. This Gothic design is repeated within the decorative glass borders in the window. The imaginary banner in the base has painted upon it, "In Memory of Patrick Kennelly and Wife, by their children."

The construction of St. Mary's Church was begun in 1902 under the pastoral leadership of Father Peter Berkery. The first Mass was celebrated in the new church on July 11, 1904. The window is an original installation and typifies the mode of religious art frequently found in Roman Catholic Churches of this time period. It is located on the south side of the nave and is one of many such works of art to be found at St. Mary's. The combination of brilliant liturgical colors and illustrative painting and imagery makes this a delight for the eye to behold.