SAINT PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL
NEW YORK

THE NEW HIGH ALTAR

and

THE ALTAR FOR THE LADY CHAPEL

A PRELIMINARY DESCRIPTION

ARCHIVES
ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL
14 EAST 51st STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022

PREPARED FOR THE MOST REVEREND ARCHBISHOP
BY THE ARCHITECTS — —
MAY 9, 1942
A dramatic change has been wrought in the familiar aspect of the Cathedral by the withdrawal of the High Altar which has familiarly served it since 1879 and its replacement by an altar of notably different design. This momentous process resolved upon the issue of a study which was concerned, not only with the architectural perfection of the building as a Catholic monument, but with an enshrinement of the Divine Presence which would at the same time be conformable to liturgical laws that are independent of mere architectural fashion.

It is of present as well as of historical importance that the rationality of this process, which has excited a wide public interest, should be thoroughly appreciated. Happily, as will appear, the enterprise involves no reflection upon the genius of the architect whose skill and imagination have given us one of the most beautiful cathedral churches of the world. Evidence is available that the type of design which he chose for the altar did not represent his ultimate conviction. It is indicated, indeed, that, had his plan of the building been completely realized under his hand, he would have favored the principle of the composition that has now been carried to effect.

In its totality, the original altar had never received the sanction of Gothic critics who, especially since the completion of the Lady Chapel, have perceived its marked unsuitableness. The extreme width of its huge reredos seemed to choke the sanctuary and to blunt the reasonable perception of the great length of the Cathedral. It permitted no implication of the presence of the Lady Chapel nor of the East ambulatory but instead effectually stopped the nave vista. Such a condition clearly frustrated emotional possibilities which were latent in the edifice.

One speculates why Renwick should have elected for a Cathedral of this style a type of altar which is pertinent only to the Gothic of England, whose chancels almost uniformly have a flat termination. Norwich and Westminster Abbey have apsidal ends: also Peterborough, quite significantly, has an altar of the canopy or baldachin type. It is to this English East wall that we owe the development of the reredos, some examples of which, as at Wells, are so elaborated as completely to cover the entire width and height of the chancel.
We praise God in the Mass—on a green field a golden lyre symbolizes this.

On a violet shield, a red yoke with green cords and silver scales balanced on a gold cross express in design the expiatory purposes of the Mass.

The fourth shield in red carries a gold vase of pomegranates, traditional symbol of prayer as the Mass is also a sacrifice of petition.

On the Gospel side of the baldachin are the other four shields. Their designs are based on famous objects of Celtic design.

The Irish chalice of Ardagh (7th century). In the Mass the Most Holy Redeemer is adored.

A harp inspired in design by one found on the Seal of the Dublin Museum. It denotes praise and thanksgiving.


An open book and arrows are symbols of prayer and petition. The design reminds us of the famous Gospel Book of Kells (7th century).

On the underside of the double arches on the side elevations, two angels hold shields which refer to Malachias’ prophecy concerning the Mass.

This shield on the Epistle side bears a design of the sun at dawn.

On the Gospel side is the Setting Sun.

On the border of the mensa or the table of the altar is the following Latin inscription, taken from St. John’s Gospel, (on the front) “This is everlasting life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Him whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ”. (on the epistle side) “Take courage, I have overcome the World”. (on the rear of the altar) “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you” and finally (on the Gospel side) “Abide in My love”.

The decorative motif on the face of the altar; carved in marble, the design depicts St. Peter guiding a boat and holding the keys of his Apostolic Primacy. On the sail is engrossed a chalice, and the banner of the Resurrection flies from the masthead.

The bronze altar-cross supports the image of Our Redeemer, and its arms terminate with the traditional emblems of the Four Evangelists.

Symbols of the Four Major Prophets: Isaiah, Daniel, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel are on the reverse side of the quatre-foil designs of the Evangelists.

New Altar Appointments

Several other liturgical appointments used in the Service of the Altar were designed by the architects for the new conditions of the immediate Sanctuary. These are: the Chalice and Paten (executed by Mr. Patrick J. Gill of Boston), The Exposition Throne; The Monstrance, designed in the manner of a Celtic Cross (executed by Tiffany & Co. of New York); New Altar cards rendered in manner and detail similar to the best illuminated manuscripts. (They are the work of Mr. Eugene F. Kennedy, Jr., Associate of the architect, Mr. Maginnis). The altar linens, of Irish origin, are the exquisite handiwork of the donor. The bronze candlesticks candelabra, and vases have grape, rose and shamrock leaves and the monogram of Christ as part of their decoration. An all-silk, green and gold damask, dossal supported from bronze bar at the rear piers of the baldachin, an antependium or cover for the front of the altar; a vesper cloth to cover the mensa when there are no services at the altar: these all are equally and appropriately ornate. (The fabrics were executed by Irving Casson and A. H. Davenport, from designs made by the architect).

Pulpit Tester

Replacing the fan-like sounding board of the pulpit is a new tester or canopy. Its gothic form is embellished with designs of grape, lily, rose, acorn, and oak leaves emblematic of the sublimity, purity, eloquence and strength of the Church’s teachings.

Coat of Arms of the Pope and the Archbishop

At the ends of the marble buttresses adjacent to the location of the former reredos and on a level with the altar predella are the carved heraldic coats of arms of His Holiness Pope Pius XII (No. 49—on the Gospel side), and the arms of His Excellency, Most Reverend Francis J. Spellman, D.D., Archbishop, (No. 50—on the Epistle side).

New Stained Glass designs in the Five Windows over the High Altar

The designs of the new stained glass in the five apsidal windows above the High Altar depict the story of the Kingdom of God in Parables which the Evangelists relate in the first three Gospels. Associated with them are symbols of the Seven Sacraments. Hence these parables and Sacraments are a continuation of the significance or iconography of the baldachin and High Altar.

The parables are arranged according to their meaning following an accepted order. In the central window the parables are concerned with the Head of the Kingdom, who is Christ. In the two windows left of the center the designs deal with the origin, essence, and action of the Kingdom: as the Wedding Garment, The Leaven, and A Pearl of Great Price. Those to the right of the center suggest the duties of the members of the Kingdom: as The Pharisee and the Publican, The Barren Fig Tree.

In the tracery at the head of the windows are symbols of the Sacraments. The Holy Eucharist is placed in the center window; to the left (on the Gospel side) are Baptism, Holy Orders and Matrimony and to the right, Penance, Confirmation and Extreme Unction. Under the supervision and coordination of the architect, these five apsidal windows were designed by
and made in the studio of Charles J. Connick of Boston, and are the gift of the same person who presented the High Altar and baldachin to the Cathedral.

New Statue of Saint Patrick

A new marble statue of Saint Patrick, glorious Apostle of Ireland and Patron of the Cathedral will be placed soon on the nave near the Communion rail of the Sanctuary. A bracket supporting the figure which is seven feet from the cathedral pavement, will give deserved prominence to the Saint and the uniqueness of the original shamrock decoration on the canopy will contribute to the dignity of the statue, whose position then will be an ever present reminder to all in the church that the Blessings of the Redeemer, which he brought to Ireland, are richly conspicuous in the archdiocese of New York.

It is most proper to recall here that the first statue of Saint Patrick, the gift of John B. Manning in 1901 and formerly in the central niche of the reredos of the first altar, now stands in an attractive location on the grounds of St. Joseph's archdiocesan Seminary at Dunwoodie, Yonkers, New York. Before 1901 a statue of the Sacred Heart occupied the central niche of the reredos.

All these changes to the Sanctuary are the result of prolonged thought and meditation both on the part of the archbishops and the architects. The first studies for the baldachin were begun in 1930. When the 1932 depression came, the scheme was set aside and not resumed until 1939. In January of 1941 the contract for the baldachin and altar as erected was signed. The contractors of the marble altar were William Bradley and Sons of New York. All sculptural models were executed from full size details of the architects by Rochette and Parzini of N. Y. The General Bronze Corp. of N. Y. executed all castings of bronze work and of the statuettes. Mr. John Angel, the distinguished ecclesiastical sculptor, designed the statuettes of the baldachin and also the heroic marble figure of Saint Patrick.

Mr. Charles D. Maginnis, F.A.I.A., of Boston, is the architect and designer of the entire work. He acknowledges his debt of encouragement and assistance to His Excellency, The Most Reverend Francis J. Spellman, D.D. And most notable of all is the fact that the entire project, altar and baldachin with all the special appointments as well as the Stained Glass of the five windows and the statue of the Patron, Saint Patrick, was made possible through the beneficence of an anonymous donor.

The New Altar For The Lady Chapel Erected In 1942

St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York
Architect: Robert J. Reiley, N. Y.

The Lady Chapel has always taken a place of honor in every Cathedral. It is found next to the most sacred part of the Church, the Sanctuary, which is doctrinally and symbolically proper. This recognition has been given throughout the centuries, and it has had a great influence on the design of most cathedrals.

This, too, is the case at St. Patrick's. Erected in 1901, this beautiful chapel added to the east end of the Cathedral, was the gift of the family of the late Eugene Kelly. On Christmas Day, 1906, the first Mass was celebrated in the Lady Chapel. Its architect was Charles T. Matthews and the medallion windows were designed and executed by Paul Woodroffe. Dedicated in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary under the title of the Immaculate Conception, this little shrine has since become a popular place of prayer in the city. An altar designed for another place stood in the chapel for years. Its replacement had long been considered, and with profound coincidence it is completed at the same time as the New High Altar.

The new altar of Our Lady is approached by three steps of golden brown Sienna Marble. The "mensa" or altar table is of Tavernelle marble with a richly inlaid frontal executed in a multitude of shades of colored marble. The design represents the "Annunciation" and is flanked on either side by a conventionalized rosevine recalling the Mystical Rose and referring to the twenty-fourth chapter, 17th and 18th verses of Ecclesiasticus in which we read, "I was exalted like a cedar in Lebanon and as a rose plant in Jericho." Moreover, and particularly pertinent here is Our Lady's relation to the meaning of the symbolism and purpose of the Cathedral High Altar. Her statue and the tabernacle for the Divine Presence of her Son signalize her part as Co-Redemptrix in the salvation of man. Where He is, she must be also, for in the eternal plan of God she brought into this world, the Incarnate Son of God . . . "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us" (St. John 1:14).

This unusual treatment of the frontal was developed by Miss Hildreth Meiere. It was executed by Alexander Pelli and Company, and is an admirable and most fitting mosaic of the finest marble inlay work.

The low reredos, against which the table of the altar rests, and out of which grows the base of the statue, is of a cream-colored marble known as premier buff, which makes an excellent setting for the more strongly colored altar table. Along the length of the reredos, we find a decorative inscription done in gothic lettering. The salutation of Gabriel the Archangel is written on the Gospel side and reads: "Ave Maria, Gratia Plena, Dominus Tecum;" "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee." The invocation of the Church on the Epistle side humbly begs: "Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis;" "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us." It is the expression of the theme found on the frontal of the altar.

Gently growing out from and surrounding the reredos, is the statue of Mary, our Mother. Noble and distinct in design, with a heavenly smile upon her lips, the "Immaculata" of St. Patrick's strikes the central note and provides the climax of the Lady Chapel. One will notice that our Blessed Lady is praying with outstretched arms. This position, although unusual, dates back to the time of the Catacombs, when the soul in heaven, praying for friends on earth, was depicted in this manner. Such a position was called "Orans" or "Orante"; that is, "Praying." One of the most remarkable "Orans" of the fourth century represents the Blessed Virgin Mary in this act of intercession.

This beautiful statue carved in white marble is the creation of Oronzo Maldarelli, the head of the Sculpture Department of the School of Architecture at Columbia University. The sculptor was selected as the result of a
competition in which many models were submitted. A full size plaster figure
was studied and developed and from this final model, the marble statue was
made in the New York studio of Piccirilli Brothers.

A proper setting for the statue has been provided by means of a dossal
and riddles, or cloth hangings of gold and blue damask which is hung on a
gilded wood framework forming the background. This makes a striking
enclosure for the altar and separates it from the walls of the chapel. The
woodwork was done by the Irving and Casson Company.

The tabernacle is round and articulated by four buttresses which sup-
port a crown. The detail has been executed in solid cast bronze in the studios
of the Edward F. Caldwell Company, where also were cast the crucifix and
candlesticks designed especially for this altar.

This altar is the gift of Mr. George J. Gillespie. It was designed and
its construction supervised by the office of Robert J. Reiley, architect. Mr.
Reiley's personal interest in all details was responsible for the splendid col-
aboration of all artists and craftsmen in the execution of the work.
In the Gothic tradition of the Continent, on the other hand, the chancel was equally invariably terminated by the polygonal apse, at the focal point of whose plan was usually placed the main altar. Obviously, this order of geometry held no invitation to the reredos and it has no history there. It does indicate unmistakably the altar within a baldachin as the most satisfying architectural accent.

Mr. Renwick was too familiar with the history and the genius of Gothic architecture to be unaware of the implication of these principles as he addressed himself to so grave a problem as the main altar. It becomes necessary, therefore, to seek the reason which compelled him towards a choice so singular. With fair probability this is found to be related to a sudden defection of his original plan from an apsidal termination of his chancel to a square end as the result of a decision by the Archbishop that such a change became necessary so as to make adequate room for an episcopal residence fronting Madison Avenue. The polygonal apse was abandoned and a flat wall actually constructed which was not removed until 1900, when the Lady Chapel, after plans of Charles T. Matthews, was built in a relationship which demanded the completion of the east ambulatory as the original architect had planned it.

It may fairly be accepted that the design of the altar was determined by the presence of this end wall whose impermanence Renwick clearly could not predict. Had it remained, the architectural validity of the altar on architectural grounds would have been unquestionable. The architect’s sketch-design for a canopied altar, to be seen at the Cathedral College Library, is significant that he had seriously considered the propriety of such a type even within the limitations of his own plan and had abandoned it together with his hopes for the apsidal chancel.

The new altar and its accessories, after the design of Maginnis and Walsh, have been planned to satisfy not only the architectural implications of the Cathedral but the requirements of strict liturgical habit. The baldachin which covers the table and emphasizes it as the focus of interest becomes itself an object of architectural consequence. Until recently the baldachin or canopy has been seldom employed in American churches. It is to be observed that its wider employment in recent years has corresponded with the developing concern over a correct liturgy. With the sanction of remote antiquity, this feature has been in continuous favor throughout Italy from the early days of the Christian basilica to the times of the Renaissance without any acknowledgment that it was pertinent only to a particular order of architecture. Pugin states that even in the English mediaeval churches, besides Peterborough Cathedral, there were canopies of wood, painted and gilt as in the Lady Chapel of Durham but, owing to the universal destruction of sacred objects in the reign of Edward VI, few examples are left. Gothic precedent in the Churches of the Continent, furnishes many examples, including Ratisbon, St. Mauritius, St. Pierre d’Angus, St. Gratien of Tours and Notre Dame at Rouen. Of the abstract merits of this concept, the familiar Gothic authority, A. Welby Pugin, has said—"A ciborium or canopy is beyond doubt the most correct manner of covering an altar and at the same time the most beautiful. It is much to be wished that the type were more generally revived in all large churches instead of altars built against walls and high screens which last are, after all, of comparatively modern introduction". Even more pertinently to our considerations he adds—"In a great

Church terminating in a Lady Chapel and eastern aisles it seems preposterous to erect a wall the whole breadth of the choir nearly equal in elevation to the vaulting, cutting off half the proportion of the building and solely for the purpose of rearing an altar three feet high by ten feet long to which it does not even form a canopy"

The spacious existing predella, elevated by five steps above the sanctuary pavement, serves at once to comprehend both altar and baldachin. Of a Tavernelle Italian marble, the altar, which is without gradines, is fashioned simply. It is free standing, 12 feet long, 4 feet wide and 3 feet 3/4 inches high, having a three-inch candle bench. Columns support the angles of the heavy mensa, the face of which bears the carved inscription in letters of incised outline. The broad frontal is articulated by a small sculptural panel, representing the Church in terms of the ship under the guidance of St. Peter. In accordance with correct canonical usage, no fixed tabernacle is provided at the high altar, the Blessed Sacrament being reserved at the altar of the Sacred Heart in the South transept.

The original altar of the Cathedral has been transferred to Fordham University where it is reseated in the principal altar of the Collegiate Chapel. It was the gift of Cardinal McCloskey, who in 1842 was the first President of St. John’s College, as the University was then named.

The great baldachin, which now takes the place of the reredos, as the arresting architectural detail of the Cathedral, is entirely of bronze of neutral tone rendered with the delicacy of detail demanded by the material. The canopy is supported by four piers in a rectangular disposition, giving a pronounced spacing at the front and rear. Their outside width is 17 feet 8 inches by 12 feet 6 inches. (The piers at the rear stand adjacent to the position of the former reredos.) These pier openings, 38 feet high, are crowned with pointed arches richly cusped, which support a gabled roof out of which rises a slender fleche that reaches to a height of 57 feet above the chancel pavement. The front and rear elevations of the design have equal architectural emphasis.

Throughout, the elements of the decoration have symbolic meaning and represent a profound iconographic theme: the Redemption of mankind. In the main this is expressed by articulation of the vertical piers in the terms of statuary, stained glass, statues, set in niches in both elevations contribute thoughtfully to the significance of the crowning figures which occupy the central panels in the upper gables.

A second order of symbolism is recorded by a series of shields rendered in polychromed enamel that are introduced in the cusping of the arches. This develops into the interior of the baldachin, whose inner vault has a color decoration with simple ornamentation along the architectural members. (See description and chart of Iconography)

The silk dossal is of green and gold in a folder draping filling the rear opening of the baldachin to the height of the arch spring, over which the presence of the Lady Chapel is perceived and a sense of the complete length of the Cathedral. This particular effect is assisted by the revelation laterally of two arches of the east ambulatory which have hitherto been concealed.
THE ICONOGRAPHY OF THE BALDACCHIN

A description and explanation including the new stained glass window above the altar, the St. Patrick Statue and other liturgical appointments.

The first diagram “Rear Elevation” to be associated with the following:

The main theme of the decorative elements on the iconography of the Baldachin is based on the doctrine of Redemption. In the Old Testament God promised the Redeemer. This fact is expressed by the statues of prophets, saints and designs on shields on the rear elevation of the baldachin. In the Liturgy, it is the time of Advent that they symbolize.

Numbers given to the following descriptions of all decorative elements correspond with the numbers on the diagram marking the position of the statues and shields.

Above the great arches of the baldachin are nine angels, a number equal to the divisions of the Choirs of Heaven.

1—ST. MICHAEL ARCHANGEL, stands on the very top of the structure. He faces the congregation from a pedestal set upon a floral finial. Traditionally he is the champion and protector of the Church. In the statue, which is four feet high, he wears the dress of a celestial warrior. His staff terminates in a cross.

2—HERALD ANGELS—These statues are like that of St. Michael, free standing on pedestals that grow out of the floral cresting on the gables of the arches. There are four of them; two on the front and two on the rear, each blowing a trumpet while they face the north and the south.

3—ADORING ANGELS—Located also on the cresting like the Herald Angels, these four are in a position slightly below the central niches over each arch wherein are the statues of Our Lord. As the Teacher on the rear elevation, and as Christ King on the front, they are, with hands clasped, in the act of adoring Him.

4—THE MESSIAS as the Gentle Teacher appears here as the Supreme Teacher of the Human Race. He is attired in a simple flowing tunic characteristic of the time when He taught the multitudes.

5—In the spandrels, each side of the statues of Our Lord, are two kneeling angels. They hold incensers to acknowledge the worship due to Our Redeemer. Sixteen statuettes are located below in niches which are an integral part of the four piers of the baldachin.

The eight on the rear elevation beginning at the top at the south or epistle side are—Melchisedech, Abraham, Moses and David.

6—MELCHISEDÉCH—whose sacrifice foreshadowed the institution of the Holy Mass, is a type of the Messias, Jesus Christ, Universal High priest.

7—ABRAHAM—Patriarch who received from God the promise that in his seed all peoples should be blessed. His willingness to sacrifice Isaac, his only son, prefigured the supreme sacrifice of Our Redeemer.
8—Moses—Lawgiver who set up in the desert a brazen serpent to heal his people. The Son of Man was lifted up on the Cross of Calvary and redeemed mankind.

9—David—King of Israel, who prophesied the coming of The Messias and His work of Redemption.

The four statues on the north or Gospel pier are—Isaias, Holy Simeon, St. John the Baptist and Saint Peter.

10—Isaias, the greatest of the four major prophets, especially foretold the Incarnation of Our Saviour.

11—Holy Simeon, inspired by the Holy Spirit, sang his canticle of salvation with the Infant Jesus in his arms when His mother presented Him in the Temple.

12—Saint John the Baptist, forerunner who baptised Our Lord, is the last of the prophets of the Old Testament. His salutation to the Messias was "Behold the Lamb of God".

13—Saint Peter, made Chief of the Apostles, Vicar of Christ on earth and Guardian of Revealed Truth.

The shields on the Rear Elevation—The six polychromed shields on the rear arch of the baldachin complement in the symbolism of their designs the significance of the eight statuettes. Reading clockwise they are:

14—A gold trumpet and a red sword on a purple shield are emblematic of the defense of the spiritual heritage of the Chosen people in Egypt and under Jogue.

15—A floral design of green oak leaves, gold acorns and an ivy leaf on a white shield is significant of strength and tenacity shown to the Promise of the Redeemer.

16—On a blue field an open star interlaced in the Celtic manner of design bears within it a letter M (Mary) and recalls the Promise given in Genesis Chap. 3. Below the star is a rainbow in allusion to Noe.

17—Two white tablets of the Mosaic Law repose on a green shield. The Ten Commandments are denoted by red Roman numerals.

18—Symbolic of peace and triumph in view of the approach of the Redeemer—a palm and olive leaves are composed on a white shield.

19—The last shield, of a red field, symbolizes Redemption by means here of a gold cross from which is suspended by green cords a silver yoke with balances.
Second diagram "Front Elevation" to be associated with the following:

The Front Elevation of the Baldachin—The arrangement of the iconography follows on this elevation the same as that described on the rear elevation. The theme of symbolism is the extension of the fruits of Redemption by means of Christ's Church.

20—Our Lord as Christ King and Eternal High Priest is vested in priestly and regal vestments, and His hands which show the wounds of His Crucifixion are in the position of one receiving acts of worship.

The eight statuettes in the pier niches are:
21—SAINT ATHANASIUS, Bishop and Patriarch of Alexandria. He is the greatest doctor of the Eastern Church and here is portrayed as the Theologian.
22—SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, Bishop and Doctor is visualized as the Great Preacher.
23—SAINT AMBROSE, Bishop of Milan, is sculptured as the Perfect Bishop.
24—SAINT AUGUSTINE, the greatest Doctor of the Catholic World, is dressed as the great thinker and lover of His Redeemer.
25—SAINT BENEDICT, Patriarch of the Monks of the West by his rule of life influenced the entire civilization of Europe.
26—SAINT DOMINIC, founder of the Order of Preachers called the Dominicans, by his learning and missionary spirit helped preserve the Church's doctrine.
27—SAINT FRANCIS, the Poor Man of Assisi, by his charity and apostolic fervor was a powerful factor in re-christianizing mediaeval society.
28—SAINT IGNATIUS LÓYOLA, by his great genius of organizing, by his educational system and the apostolic missionary spirit of his followers, worked in behalf of the Vicar of Christ.
   St. Isaac Jogues, son of Ignatius and Jesuit priest in October 1643 visited Manhattan on his way to Europe. He was martyred near Auriesville, N. Y. in 1646.

The Shields on the Front Elevation.
29—The white dolphin on a red shield is symbolic of Our Saviour and, to the early Christians, the Holy Eucharist.
30—A blue shield bears a Passion flower emblematic of Our Lord's Sacrifice.
31—To symbolize the ultimate fruits of Redemption, peace and union with God, a gold crown with cross and silver jewels is shown on a green shield.
32—On a blue field is gold trefoil symbol of Celtic origin to recall the Blessed Trinity as the central doctrine of the Christian religion.
33—The white and gold Rose on a red shield recalls that redemption was a work of divine love and mercy.

34—The final shield is green with a gold cross and two silver keys. These indicate that the Sacrifice of the Cross was the means of opening Heaven to all who die in the love and friendship of God.

The Shields on the inside Arches of the Baldachin—These twelve shields in white have gold designs which symbolize the events of Holy Week.
34A—A lamb's head and a scroll (Agnus Dei—Lamb of God)—signifying that Christ in the Blessed Sacrament is our true Paschal Lamb.
33A—The bread and the wine of grapes were the consecrated elements of the Last Supper.
32A—In the chalice is recalled the institution of the Holy Eucharist on the First Holy Thursday.
31A—The lantern is reminiscent of events in the Garden of Gethsemani.
30A—In Pilate's Court the kingship of Our Redeemer was mocked as the reed and scourge remind us.
29A—The rooster is symbolic of repentance and vigilance and events in the outer court of Pilate.

The next six shields are directly over the altar, and their designs represent the concluding events of Redemption. They, like the previous six, are called instruments of the Passion and Resurrection. (See the diagram of the rear Elevation).

19A—The sacred nails, hammer and pincers.
18A—The spear, the sponge on a reed, and the inscription placed on the Cross.
17A—The cross surrounded by a crown of thorns with the Greek letters for the word "Christ" on it.
16A—The pelican, a traditional symbol of Our Redeemer.
15A—The jar of ointment and the shroud used in the burial of Our Lord.
14A—The last shield carries the banner of the Resurrection.

The polychromed shields on the Side Elevations of the Baldachin—These eight, four on each side, symbolize the four ends or purposes of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Those on the South or Epistle side render the theme in one manner of design, those on the Gospel side express the same ideas in different designs.

35—(Epistle Side) white shield—gold crown, silver sceptre and sword and a flame—We adore God because of His Supreme perfection and our dependence on Him.