



IHM Sisters – *On Mission*

Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

CHAPELS...

Where we grow in grace and virtue day by day

Sisters love to sing! We sing not just hymns but also about everything and anything else. One song we have passed down from year to year is a song about our former Motherhouse in West Chester, “Villa Maria.” It was to the tune of “The Whiffenpoof Song.” One stanza included these words:

*“Every room has grown quite precious where we
work and play and rest,*

But the chapel is the dearest spot of all,

*Where the God of all our lessons and the King of all our play
Gently teaches us to tread the perfect way...”*

We would like to introduce you to some of our “dearest spots.”



The Blessed Mother shrine in Immaculata University’s Chapel is a favorite prayer spot for students, faculty and sisters alike.

Immaculata University

Ground for Villa Maria Academy (the future Immaculata University) was broken on November 6, 1908 by Reverend Samuel B. Spalding. The statue of Our Lady was placed on the ground directly under the present familiar dome. Mother M. Camilla oversaw the building of the original college building and designated the “West Wing,” known as Nazareth Hall, as a fitting location for the chapel. However, Mother M. Camilla never lived to see her dream project completed and Mother Mary James, the next Mother Superior, opened the school in 1914.

The Immaculata chapel, as we know it today, was intended to be only the “temporary” chapel. Ringed by windows and large wooden framed stations, the chapel has a majestic and stately elegance. Large

pillars and lustrous wooden pews added to its beauty. On either side of the altar were shrines to Our Lady and St. Joseph. Side alcoves were originally altars to honor the Sacred Heart and Our Mother of Perpetual Help.

In the 1940’s, the possibility of a free-standing chapel was investigated. Because of major land problems, it was decided to renovate and refurbish the original chapel. Following the Second Vatican Council, the chapel was renovated again in 1970 in preparation for the 50th anniversary of Immaculata. At this time, the altar of sacrifice was moved forward with two steps leading to the raised platform. The same beautiful dark wood was used in the altar’s renovation to complement the original. The front pews turned to face the altar and the alcoves became additional seating space. Presently, the chapel is used for daily mass, special university services throughout the year and for the sister-students in the summer.



Immaculata Chapel

“My most cherished memory of the Immaculata Chapel goes back many years to the spring of my sophomore year in college. It was the last day of the Holy Week Retreat and I was kneeling beside one of the large pillars on the right. It was there and then that I knew that I wanted to be an IHM and that I wanted it to be as soon as I could break the news to my Mother and Dad.”

Sister Marie Roseanne Bonfini

EIC – Escuela Inmaculado Corazon

The chapel at EIC was formally dedicated on December 8, 1947 by the Most Reverend Raymond Lane, then Superior General of the Maryknoll Congregation. The building of the chapel was supervised by Mother Maria Pacis Dougherty. It serves as both the sisters’ chapel and the school chapel for the boys. Located between the convent and school, it leads out to Our Lady’s patio and connects the convent and the school by enclosed hallways.

The chapel is rectangular in shape with

The Chapel at EIC (Escuela Inmaculado Corazon) in Miraflores, Peru was the model used for the Chapel at Camilla Hall

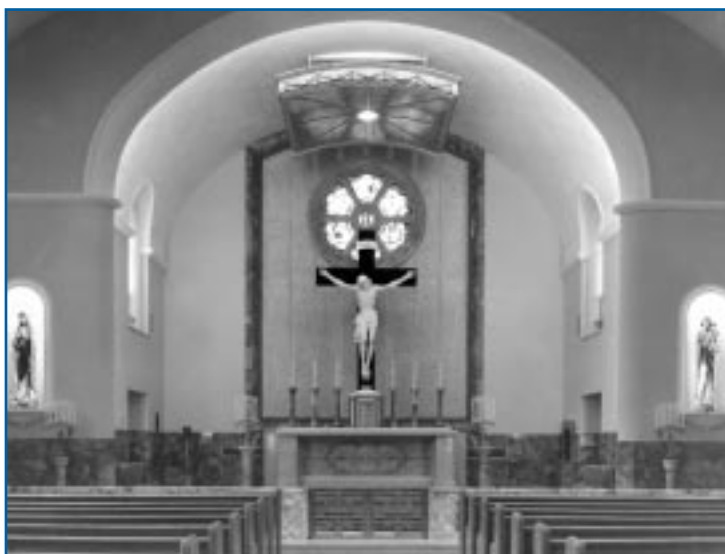


EIC Chapel

“Of all my missions in Peru, EIC’s chapel holds a special place in my heart....so many beautiful memories of the boys, the wonderful processions, First Holy Communions and Masses. But my dearest memory is my mother’s viewing and funeral mass which were held there.”

Sister Maria Carmen Quiroz

the sanctuary as the focal point. A lovely stained glass rose window overlooks the crucifix. The raised platform in the sanctuary calls attention to the altar of sacrifice. On either side of the sanctuary are niches with a shell-shaped décor which house statues of Our Lady and St. Joseph. The stained glass windows along the sides of the chapel pay tribute to Our Lady under various titles found in the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary. On either side of the sanctuary are shrines to St. Rose of Lima and St. Martin De Porres, both Peruvian saints. The chapel is the heart of the school and the convent.



Camilla Hall Chapel is under the patronage of Our Mother of Perpetual Help.

Camilla Hall Chapel

The chapel in Camilla Hall Infirmary is dedicated to Our Mother of Perpetual Help and was formally blessed on May 17, 1960 by Monsignor William Kane of Malvern. Mother Maria Pacis Dougherty used the EIC Chapel in Miraflores, Peru as a model for her newest building. The Camilla chapel is located in the center of the H-shaped building. The focal point of the chapel is the large crucifix behind the tabernacle on a gold glass mosaic with a design of blue and white stripes. The altar, crucifix and stations of the cross are all made from marble from Italy, Belgium and Portugal. On either side of the sanctuary are shrines to Our Lady and St. Joseph. The Infant of Prague statue stands in front of Our Lady’s shrine. Also located in the sanctuary is a wooden display containing the names of those enrolled in the IHM Spiritual Treasury.

The beautiful stained glass windows commemorate the litany

titles of Our Lady with appropriate symbols of Mary. When planning these windows, Mother Grace Madeleine, a member of the General Administration in the late 50’s and 60’s, earnestly and thoughtfully pondered over a set of Mary’s Litany holy cards to discern the most appropriate and meaningful titles to adorn Camilla’s chapel. The chapel has a seating capacity of approximately 325. (Through the generosity of a benefactor, the pews were outfitted with attached cushions last year.) Besides the main floor, the Camilla chapel has two balconies with some seating to accommodate those with limited mobility. The first mass in Camilla Hall was celebrated by Reverend John J. Martin, then pastor of SS. Philip and James Parish in Exton. Camilla Hall lies within the boundary of this parish.

Camilla Chapel

“Our chapel here at Camilla Hall, beautiful in its simplicity, is a place of both private and common worship – a place for meditation – a place for religious services. We know that God dwells here with us, that He waits for us. It is here that we discover our hearts too small and our love too paltry. So then, in our chapel, we seek His presence, His will and His peace. It is here that we truly yearn for Him! Many saints have prayed here and continue to pray here. May this chapel always promote and preserve our IHM devotion to Our Mother of Camilla Hall who has guided and protected us through the years!

Mother Marie Genevieve Lawler

Motherhouse Chapel

The chapel in the motherhouse, Villa Maria House of Studies, Immaculata, PA is dedicated to the Sacred Heart. It is a lovely cruciform place of worship. The focus of the chapel is the spacious sanctuary enshrining the altar of sacrifice and the tabernacle of bronze and gold. The background for the large marble crucifix is a Holy Spirit mosaic. Stained glass windows on either side of the mosaic are wheat shafts and clustered grapes, reminding us of the Eucharist, “the center and animating force of our lives.”

In the nave of the chapel, beautiful stained glass windows depict the Joyful and Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary. The carved marble Stations of the Cross which line the sides of the chapel trace the Sorrowful Mysteries. Two oblique windows, connecting the nave of the chapel with Our Lady’s and St. Joseph’s Chapels, depict St. Michael the Archangel and the Guardian Angel. The windows at either end of the transept represent the Immaculate Heart of Mary protecting our IHM missions in North and South America and Christ the Teacher blessing the children who are garbed in colorful ethnic dress. The windows in the walkway leading out of chapel display symbols of the apostles.

Beautiful in its simplicity and rich in beauty, the Villa Maria Chapel is used for community celebrations of profession, reception, convocation, chapters as well as for graduations and First Communions for Villa Maria Upper and Lower Academies.

Mother Maria Pacis Dougherty was responsible for much of the



The Motherhouse Chapel at Immaculata, Pennsylvania is dedicated to the Sacred Heart.

planning and the execution of the building of the motherhouse chapel. In 1965 and 1966, it was not unusual to see Mother Pacis proudly giving tours of the developing chapel to visitors interested in seeing the new Motherhouse. Villa Maria House of Studies was opened in September, 1966; however, a temporary chapel was located



Motherhouse Chapel

“How can I put into words how I feel about our beautiful chapel here at Villa Maria! Everywhere you look you are reminded of the Lord’s presence and are open to prayer. On bright sunny days, the sun shines through the stained glass windows to reflect so many colors on the objects in the sanctuary. It is with deep gratitude that I thank God for our lovely chapel and say, “Lord, how lovely is your dwelling place!”

Sister Mary Lauren Discher

on the terrace floor until the new chapel was completed. The Blessed Sacrament was first placed in the completed chapel on March 4, 1967 by Father Leo L. Adasiewicz, OFM, long-time teacher, nature lover and friend of the IHM sisters.

Every IHM convent is privileged to have a chapel, a room reserved for the Blessed Sacrament where the sisters assemble for common prayer in the morning and evening as well as for private prayer, visits or just to talk to “the God of all our lessons and the King of all our days.”