

THE ST. CATHERINE PARLOR
(opposite the large mirror)
(touring the room counter clockwise)

Just inside the entrance to the right is a large corner cupboard also called a highboy. This cupboard has a rounded front in two sections. The upper section consists of two doors enclosing four shelves; the lower section has one full width drawer over two doors enclosing one interior shelf. The door panels of both sections have carved plaques of classical designs. It may be of walnut which has been treated with a mahogany stain and varnish. The period is about 1850-60. For many years this cupboard served in the large dining room (now Admissions area) for storage of dining room dishes, silver and linens.

The large sofa to the right has a medallion type back with an opening above the seat, open arms with carved knuckles and leaf carved crests on the medallion shaped back. Its serpentine apron is adorned with carved shell and leaf designs. The sofa is supported by four carved front legs on brass castors. The upholstery has multi-colored figures on black tapestry.

Beside it is a lamp table with a light blue ceramic lamp. It is a small table with scalloped edge, has a vase-turned shaft and tripod base. The tripod base is painted black with gilt scrolls. The table top is decorated with gilt scrolls and multi-colored floral designs with mother of pearl details. (Some mother-of-pearl pieces are missing)

Above the sofa hangs a picture of the Annunciation. It is a reproduction of a work of an unknown early German painter of the Upper Rhine School.

The large gilt framed picture on the north wall is an original painting called The Rehearsal by Jimenez Aranda of the 19th century. It depicts a group of singers with orchestra and director rehearsing their program for a prelate and his attendants. The work is noteworthy for its creation of space, the details

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of the room, its high windows, also remarkable is the texture of rugs, tiles, the silk of members of group rehearsing, their facial expressions and other details. It was the gift of Elsi Fors Hill from the collection of James J. Hill.

From the same donor came the set of six chairs, upholstered in black horse-hair which are in the room. Two of them are arm chairs and four are side chairs.

Beneath the picture of The Rehearsal is a federal style sofa with dipped back, scrolled arms resting on inverted vase-shaped legs. The upholstery is in crimson satin with a button tufted loose seat cushion.

Among the chairs surrounding it is an arm chair with oval back over which is ornate flower-carved crest. It has open padded arms, carved arm supports, serpentine apron with flower-carved designs, with scrolled legs. It is upholstered in crimson brocaded satin. Walnut wood, about 1850. Lamp tables on either side of the sofa are noteworthy -- one is an oval table with four angle set legs and a central finial. It is of walnut, dated about 1860. The other is a round mahogany table apron with a brass ring drawer -- sheraton type spread legs with claw feet.

A side chair with fruit carved crest, open back, sabre legs, slip seat upholstered in rose and beige stripe.

A pair of side chairs, grape-carved crests, open backs, sabre legs, slip seats upholstered in hand-made needlepoint of floral design on black background. These chairs came from the Brady family estate.

Side chair, finger carved, open back, small side arms, serpentine apron, scrolled legs, upholstered in hand-made needlepoint of multi-colored floral design on brick color ground.

In a nook or recess on the northwest corner of the room stands an outstanding French cabinet. It was the gift in 1956 of Mr. Eugene McCahill, who had given several choice pieces for these parlors. A heavy molded ledge supports a pink and beige mottled marble top. There are two front doors with bevelled glass and end panels of concave-glass, also bevelled. The lower door panels are painted in subdued tones with scenes of couples at play in the style of the French artist Lancret. Throughout the decoration of the cabinet one finds plaques and trimming details of ormolu which add greatly to its richness. The cabinet rests on fine scrolled legs. The interior is lined with velvet of a rich rose color, and has glass shelves, on which are choice china and glass objects.

Between the windows on the west side of the room is a mahogany console table with a flip over top. Because of the lyre design supporting the table top and the carved legs and lion's paws it is similar to the work of Duncan Phyfe, the most famous American cabinet maker who operated a shop in New York from the 1790's until he retired in 1847.

On this table rests a beautiful cross of dark ebony inlaid with red tortoise shell on which is a delicately carved ivory corpus of Christ. The origin of both table and crucifix is unknown.

The large oil painting of St. Catherine gives the name to this parlor. It shows a stately, womanly St. Catherine in an architectural setting with the three symbols of her martyrdom -- the crown of martyrs, the palm of victory, and the spiked wheel, the instrument of her torture. On the back, the canvas is signed "CSC 1906", painted by Sister Berissima Boog. This painting is taken from an original St. Catherine by Raphael in the National Gallery in London. For many years before 1928 this picture hung in the west entrance where the large mirror is now.

Beneath the St. Catherine picture are three pieces of furniture upholstered in a material which harmonizes with the gilt frame of the picture. The sofa has a fruit carved crest of walnut with flat front arms, serpentine apron. The seat rests on flat front legs with carved details. The other two pieces are a gentleman's chair and a lady's chair to match. They both have a carved face and scrolls in crest over an oval back, rounded seat on scrolled legs with wood button lifts. They are of walnut with burl walnut applied panels.

The beauty of this room is greatly enhanced by the oriental carpet. Its rose-red field of heavy nap brightens the room. A close inspection reveals fine detailed figures of birds, flowers, trees, and scrolls in rose, blue and beige -- enclosed in an eight striped border. It is a Sarouk rug from old Arak district of Persia.

This Persian Sarouk carpet was the gift of Mr. Michael P. Coffey of Minneapolis, whose three daughters, Mary, Ann, and Molly graduated from St. Catherines.

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Wilton"
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The St. Catherine Parlour (Cont')

The beauty of this room is greatly enhanced by the oriental carpet. its rose-red field of heavy map brightens the room. A close inspection reveals fine detailed figures of birds, flowers, trees, and scrolls in rose, blue and beige-enclosed in an eight striped border. It is a Sarouk rug from the Hrah district of Persia.

This Persian Sarouk carpet was the gift of Mr. Michael P. Coffey of Minneapolis, whose three daughters, Mary, Ann, and Molly graduated from St. Catherine's. Two of the, Mary and Ann, became Sister of St. Joseph. Sister Mary Coffey, now deceased, taught in the Classics Department and served in administration work in Auxiliary Services. Sister Ann Coffey is residing at the Provincial House.