World's Smallest Church
To Hold Annual Mass

In Rome stands the world's largest church, St. Peter's Basilica; in Louisiana stands the world's smallest church, the Chapel of the Madonna.

The 64 square-feet edifice is located just above Bayou Goula in Iberville Parish. The tiny wooden structure is 76 years old. The Madonna Chapel is large enough to accommodate a priest and a congregation of two. It has an altar above which is a glass-enclosed statue of the Virgin Mary.

Mass is celebrated there once a year on the Catholic feast of the Assumption of Mary, Aug. 15. This tradition dates from the founding of the church.

An Indian woman built the chapel, the only size she could afford, as fulfillment of a promise made while her daughter was gravely ill. When her daughter recovered, the mother constructed the church in gratitude.

The chapel is kept locked, but a key is left in an offering box visible on the outside wall for the convenience of those who might want to visit.

Rev. George Barbier, pastor of Our Lady of Prompt Succor Parish of White Castle, is scheduled to be the celebrant of the annual Mass this month.