

God Windows



The Stained Glass Windows at
St. Thomas More Church
Edmonton, Alberta

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Canada

How Did it Begin?

When I first came to the parish, I never had any intention of beginning a project of filling the church's windows with stained glass. In fact, when the idea was first presented to me as a possibility, I showed no interest in this idea. My greater desire was to transform the Blessed Sacrament area so that parishioners would be better able to appreciate the real presence of Christ found within. Yet, however much I wanted to have this area transformed in some other way, people consistently spoke of stained glass.



One day, a parishioner came to my office expressing a desire to give a special gift to beautify the church. Ideas were bandied about until we decided to place the first stained glass window of the church above the tabernacle. I desired to have the window be an expression of the area which it would illuminate and thus, grapes, wheat and the Lamb of God were chosen as the theme.

The next decision to be made was to choose the artisan who would be commissioned for such a project. I had seen the stained glass windows that had recently been installed in the Chapel of the Archdiocese of Edmonton and had been impressed with the craftsmanship. I was also pleased to see that these windows used a combination of cut glass and painting. This allowed for a greater sense of dimension to be instilled in the glass that was to be cut. I asked for the name of the artisan and was informed that Andrew Florczak, founder of Vision Art from Toronto Ontario, created the work.


Andrew was very kind on the phone and after discussion, he created a conceptual drawing, which was reviewed and accepted. The first stained glass window was created and installed in the church in 2006. At that time, I informed Andrew that this window was to be his calling card. I am not sure he fully understood what that meant.

After his success of this first window, Andrew was commissioned to create the window at the entrance of the church. The top part of that window was completed April 2007. The two sides of the entrance windows were completed and installed September 2007. The window of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and that of St. Gregory the Great were installed for Christmas 2007 with the window of St. Cecilia being installed in February 2008. The rest of the windows in the main body of the church were completed and installed in July 2008. The ten large windows in the Chapter Room were installed in April 2009. The ten smaller windows together with the stained glass window in the Sacristy were installed in July 2009. The last window to be installed was the window in the Reconciliation Room. It was installed in time for the dedication of the windows and the 40th anniversary of the parish in September 2009.

These windows are an expression of the generosity of the parishioners of the parish. All of the windows except for the 10 smaller windows in the Chapter Room (depicting the joyful and sorrowful mysteries) were the result of private donations by the congregation. The 10 smaller windows were paid through the generosity of the parishioners' general weekly donations.

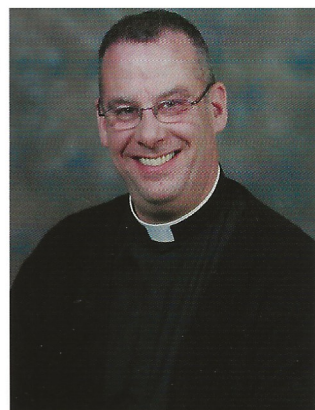
What Will be Depicted?

Before the stained glass windows were installed in the church, I saw the windows as empty canvases. I began by asking, "What is the reason for having stained glass in a church?" The answer came through reflection and reading.

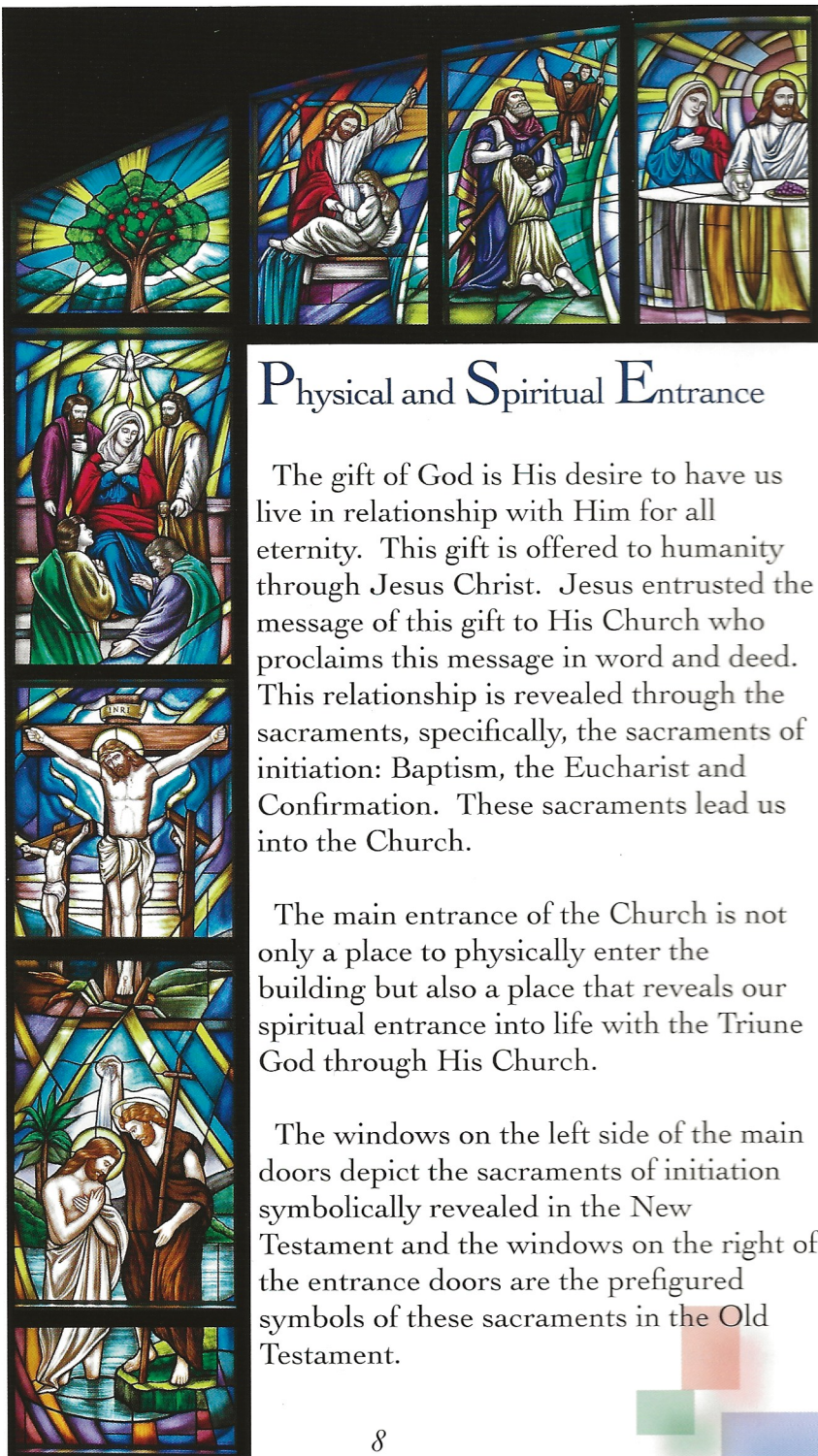


An idea that fascinated me stated that stained glass windows are transparent walls. They illustrate how opaque things (walls) can reflect the glory of God (coloured glass). In this way, they are a symbol of our lives. Through our bodies, the light of Christ is to shine so brightly that we become transparent and reveal Jesus' life dwelling within us. Traditionally stained glass was a reflection of how we (material beings) reveal Christ (the Light) to the world. "Durandus, bishop of Mende (c. 1220 – 96) wrote that 'the windows of the church which are made of transparent glass are the Sacred Scriptures which keep away the wind and the rain ... but allow passage of the true sun (which is God) into the church, that is, into the hearts of the faithful.'" [1] These thoughts directed the decision-making.

My looking at gothic cathedrals also dictated the last idea that would influence the depictions of the stained glass. Having seen the many diverse churches in Europe, I began to have a clear understanding that a good number of them were built with the express thought of creating something beautiful for God that would lift the mind of the beholder to the glory of his or her Creator. Their beauty, however, seemed to have another thought in mind, that of teaching the faith to the masses. The windows that were placed in this church have this dimension in mind. These windows would be used not only to bring glory to God and a sense of "awe" to the congregation but also to be teaching tools. They would be an aid to the congregation's faith. If this were to be the fact, they must also be explained. This booklet is the explanation of the depictions that make up the stained glass windows at the parish of St. Thomas More.



(Rev. Fr.) Sylvain J.Y. Casavant, p.s.s.
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Physical and Spiritual Entrance

The gift of God is His desire to have us live in relationship with Him for all eternity. This gift is offered to humanity through Jesus Christ. Jesus entrusted the message of this gift to His Church who proclaims this message in word and deed. This relationship is revealed through the sacraments, specifically, the sacraments of initiation: Baptism, the Eucharist and Confirmation. These sacraments lead us into the Church.

The main entrance of the Church is not only a place to physically enter the building but also a place that reveals our spiritual entrance into life with the Triune God through His Church.

The windows on the left side of the main doors depict the sacraments of initiation symbolically revealed in the New Testament and the windows on the right of the entrance doors are the prefigured symbols of these sacraments in the Old Testament.



The top windows symbolize the Eternal banquet. This is the feast that we are all invited to join. It will be fully revealed to us when we enter the heavenly kingdom. For now, this feast is offered to us through the breaking of the bread and the pouring out of wine from the chalice of eternal salvation. These elements when consecrated are Jesus Body and Blood sacrificed for our sake.

The New Testament depictions were placed on the left of the main entrance because this is the east side of our church. The east always symbolizes Jesus' resurrection because Jesus rose from the dead just as surely as the sun rises every morning in the east.

The right side of the main entrance is the west side. The Old Testament is found on this side because it is not the fulfillment of the resurrection but rather the prefigurement of the promise that Christ offers us.





The Eternal Banquet

At the top of the main doors are found the stained glass windows depicting the Eternal Banquet. Jesus is seated in the center of these top panels presenting a meal to us. He is the center that bridges the Old and the New Testament together. John the Baptist is the first seated to the right of the image of Jesus. This is a peculiar placement as the right (or west) is supposed to represent the Old Testament and the left (or east) the New Testament.

John is placed on the right because he is understood as the last prophet of the Old Testament that immediately points towards Jesus' coming into the world. Mary is seated on the left of the image of Jesus because she is the beginning of the New Covenant.

The rest of the figures on the right are Old Testament figures that point toward Jesus, and the depictions on the left are New Testament scenes that reveal Jesus' redeeming power in our lives.

Reviewing the figures on the right we find John the Baptist who is seated beside Jesus, Abraham and his wife Sarah, and then Jacob and his wife Rachel who is seated on a camel. Abraham is known as the Father of Faith. As the Father of Faith he points towards the author of our faith, which is Jesus. Jesus speaks of God as the God of our forefathers, namely, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and thus, two of the forefathers are represented here.



King David is seen with a sword at his side. He is put in this depiction because the Messiah was to be a descendent of King David. Christ (the Messiah) was the fulfillment of the prophecy concerning the seed of David (2 Samuel 7:14-16). Jesus was the promised Messiah, which meant He was of the seed of David.

The first chapter of Matthew gives the genealogical proof that Jesus, in His humanity, was a direct descendant of Abraham and David through Joseph, Jesus' legal father.

Finally the prophet Elijah is in the distant background. In the Book of Malachi, Malachi, who was the last of the Hebrew prophets, states that Elijah would reappear just before the coming of the Messianic Age (Malachi 3:1). Jesus states in Matthew 11:13-14; "The prophets and the law prophesied until John the Baptist and if you will receive it, this is Elijah who was to come."

The depictions to the left of the image of Jesus represent the New Testament. The first is the story of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32) and the second is the story of the raising of the daughter of Jairus (Luke 8: 40-42, 49-56). These two depictions reveal the theology of salvation history. It is through the forgiveness of our sins (the prodigal son) that we are able to rise from the dead (the raising of the daughter of Jairus) and enjoy the fullness of the eternal banquet.



The Side Panels of the Entrance Windows

The Tree of Eternal Life

In the middle of the Garden of Eden, there were 2 trees: the tree of the Knowledge of Good & Evil from which Adam and Eve ate and the tree of Eternal Life. We are allowed to eat of the fruit of the tree of Eternal Life only when Jesus has forgiven our sins. In this way, when we eat this fruit, we will live eternally in union with God. If we had eaten of this fruit while we were still separated from God through sin, we would live eternally separated from God. The CROSS is the Tree of Eternal Life and JESUS is that fruit that saves us.

The Pentecost Event

Where God multiplied the languages at Babel, now he unites us with the Holy Spirit who revealed Himself like tongues of fire giving us one language again ... the language of God's Love.

The Crucifixion

On the cross, Jesus gives of Himself without counting the cost. He is not afraid to give up His body for us. Thus, the cross reveals the Eucharist ... Communion.

Baptism of Jesus

This is the 1st Sacrament of initiation. Jesus expresses solidarity with us in His baptism in the Jordan and shows us how to be freed from sin and enter Eternal Life.

The Side Panels of the Entrance Windows

The Tower of Babel

This is the antithesis of the Pentecost event. In the recounting of the tower of Babel, the people all had a common language and they desired to make a name for themselves. They wanted to show God that they could reach Him on their own terms. God divides their tongues (language) to show them that without Him, they have no power.

Abraham Sacrifices Isaac

God calls Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. Isaac carries the wood for the sacrifice up Mount Zion. Abraham (the Father) is willing to give his only son to God. What Abraham is called to do, God the Father will do with His only Son Jesus.

Moses Separates the Red Sea

The Israelite people were enslaved by the Egyptians and walked through the Red Sea and into the Promised Land. The Egyptians who had enslaved them were drowned in the water. In baptism, we are freed from sin which enslaves us and we are given Heaven our promised land.

The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

This tree is put at the bottom of the Old Testament depictions to signify that redemption is God's response to our sin. Even though we said "no" to him by the eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, God has not said "no" to us. He will call us through the Old Testament toward Him and will give us the ability to come to him in the person of Jesus.



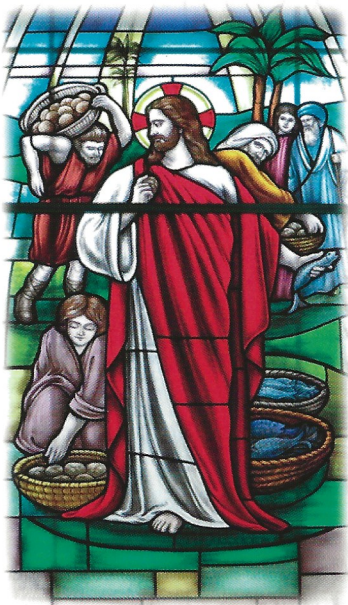
The Large Windows in the Nave of the Church

We used the same idea for the windows in the main body of the Church (the Nave) as the windows at the entrance of the Church (the Narthex). The west side of the nave has three large depictions of Old Testament themes while the east side of the nave has New Testament themes that relate to the Old Testament ideas. From the front of the church to the entrance of the church you will see the following themes.

*A priest like Melchizedek of Old
(west side of the church closest to the altar)*

"After Abram returned from the defeat of Chedorlaomer ... Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was priest of God Most High. And he blessed him and said, 'Blessed be Abram by God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!' And Abram gave him a tenth of everything." (Gen 14: 17a, 18-20) "Every high priest is selected from among men and is appointed to represent them in matters related to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. ... No one takes this honor upon himself; he must be called by God, just as Aaron was. So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, 'You are my Son; today I have become your Father,' And he says in another place, 'You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.'" (Heb 5:1, 4-6)





*Multiplication of the Loaves
(east side of the church closest to the altar)*

“Jesus said to the apostles, ‘You give them something to eat.’ And they said to Him, ‘Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread, and give it to them to eat? And He said to them, ‘How many loaves have you? Go and see.’ And when they had found out, they said, ‘Five, and two fish.’ ... And taking the five loaves and the two fish He looked up to heaven, and blessed, and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples to set before the people; and he divided the two fish among them all. ... And those who ate the loaves were five thousand

men.” (Mk 6: 38, 41, 44) Jesus is the true high priest who offers his body and blood for the salvation of humanity.

Noah's Ark

(west side of the church middle of the nave)

“Then the Lord said to Noah, ‘Go into the ark, you and all your household for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation’. ... The flood continued forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. The waters prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark floated on the face of the waters.” (Genesis 7:1, 17, 18)

“According to another image dear to the Church Fathers, the Church is prefigured by Noah's ark, which alone saves from the flood.” (CCC #845) Noah's ark is a symbol of the Church that saves us from the storms of death and destruction.





*Jesus stills the waters
(east side of the church middle of nave)*

“Jesus got into the boat and His disciples followed Him. And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but He was asleep. And they went and woke Him, saying, ‘Save us, Lord; we are perishing.’ And Jesus said to them, ‘Why are you afraid, O men of little faith?’ Then He rose and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.” (Mat 8: 23-26) Jesus is the true navigator of the boat that is His Church. He steers Her through the difficulties of daily living to the joy of Eternal Life.

*The Sacrifice of Abel
(west side of the church closest to the baptismal font)*

“Now Adam knew Eve his wife and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, ‘I have gotten a man with the help of the Lord.’ And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a tiller of the ground. In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, and Abel brought the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions.” (Gen. 4: 1-4a) Cain killed Abel. Abel is the first person killed in the Bible.





*The Stoning of St. Stephen
(east side of the church closest to the baptismal
font)*

“Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; and he said, ‘Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God’ ... They cast him out of the city and stoned him; and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. ... And Stephen cried with a loud voice, ‘Lord, do not hold this sin against them.’” (Acts 7:55-56, 58, 60) And

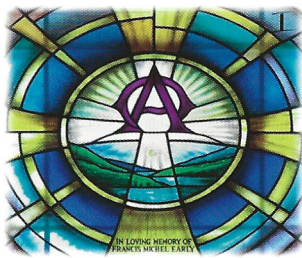
Stephen died. Stephen is the first martyr – someone killed for the sake of the faith – in the Church.

The Small Windows in the Nave of the Church

The Ten Commandments

Trying to keep to the idea of having Old Testament themes on the west side of the Church and their fulfillment in the New Testament on the east side of the Church, the challenge of 10 small windows (5 on the west wall and 5 on the east) became almost impossible to figure out. It was finally decided to insert symbols of the Ten Commandments in these windows. These commandments cover both the Old and the New Testament as Jesus stated, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:17-19)

1. I am the LORD your God: you shall not have strange Gods before me!



The Alpha and the Omega are the first and last letters in the Greek alphabet and thus symbolize that God is the beginning and the end of all things. These letters are displayed in the center of the window with the land, sun and water that was created by God directly below the letters. The book of Revelation states, "I am the Alpha and the

Omega' says the Lord God, who is, who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." (Rev. 1: 8)

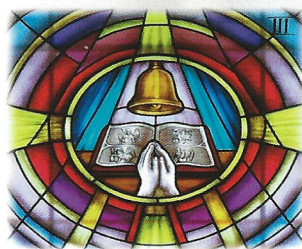
2. You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain!



The three intertwined circles is a symbol of the Trinity. The blue circle represents the Father, the yellow circle represents the Son, and the red circle represents the Holy Spirit. These colours are the primary colours from which all other colours are created.

Together, they create white or light. Behind these circles is a cacophony of lines which represents graffiti. In this depiction, graffiti would be a symbol of using the Lord's name in vain.

3. Remember to keep holy the LORD'S Day!



The church bell calls the community to mass and prayer. The Bible is depicted with 4 winged figures on the pages. The four figures represent the four gospels. The winged man represents Matthew because his Gospel begins with Jesus' human genealogy. The winged lion represents Mark because his gospel begins with, "the voice of one crying

in the wilderness," (Mark 1:3) and this suggests the roar of a lion. A winged ox represents the gospel of Luke since Luke stresses the atoning sacrifice of Jesus and an ox was used for sacrifice. Finally an Eagle represents John because in his gospel, John rises to the loftiest heights in dealing with Jesus.

4. *Honor your father and your mother!*



IHS are the first three letters (iota, eta, sigma) of the Greek spelling of Jesus. Thus, the upper part of this window shows Jesus with rays resting on the rose and lily. This represents Jesus taking care of his parents. The letter M and the Rose with five pointed petals are the symbols of Mary. The Lily and the Carpenter Square are the symbols of

Joseph.

5. *You shall not kill!*

The Dove with the olive branch in his beak is a symbol of peace. The palm branch below is a symbol of victory over death.



6. *You shall not commit adultery!*



The two rings are a symbol of marriage and the cross behind the rings is a symbol of Christian marriage. The dog symbolizes fidelity. The staff on which the dog is sitting is the staff of Joseph. The story is told that when it was time for Mary to be betrothed, all eligible men from the House of David were to leave their staffs in the Temple

overnight. The next morning, the staff of St. Joseph had miraculously sprouted a lily blossom which was an indication that he was to be Mary's betrothed. The lily also symbolizes chastity.

7. *You shall not steal!*

The snake is a symbol of Satan. In this depiction, the snake has broken the window and is going through it to steal. Behind him, however, is found a flaming sword, which is a symbol of right judgment and justice.



8. *You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor!*



The scale is a symbol of judgment. The rooster is the symbol of St. Peter's denial that he was a disciple of Jesus. The Lamb symbolizes Jesus Christ who has forgiven Peter and thus tipped the balance on Peter's behalf. Jesus is the Divine mercy for all sinners.

9. *You shall not covet your neighbor's wife!*



The two rings again symbolize marriage but note that these rings seem to be separated and almost cracked. This weakening of the rings comes from the continual pecking of the blackbird that symbolizes temptation, sin and the devil.

10. *You shall not covet your neighbor's goods!*



"When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another, 'Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it.' This was to fulfill what the scripture says, 'They divided my clothes among themselves, and

for my clothing they cast lots.'" (John 19: 23,24)

The Windows by the Choir

The official documents of the Church speak of the importance of music in the church. The General Instruction of the Roman Missal, from where we receive our instructions on how to celebrate mass states: "The Christian faithful who gather together as one to await the Lord's coming are instructed by the Apostle Paul to sing together psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (cf. Col 3:16). Singing is the sign of the heart's joy (cf. Acts 2:46). Thus St. Augustine says rightly, 'Singing is for one who loves.' There is also the ancient proverb: 'One who sings well prays twice.' Great importance should therefore be attached to the use of singing in the celebration of the Mass, with due consideration for the culture of the people and abilities of each liturgical assembly." (General Instruction of the Roman Missal, 39 and 40) Keeping this in mind and recognizing the place that our choir is situated in the Church, two windows are dedicated to the recognition of music.

Window of St. Gregory the Great



He was the first monk to be named pope. His election in 590 A.D. would see him bringing order back to the city of Rome and Italy as a whole. Through his initiative, St. Augustine of Canterbury was sent to convert the Angles of Britain. His zeal and love for the poor was revealed through his many actions to relieve their difficulties. His love for the liturgy prompted him to promote sacred music and to this day the plainsong that comes down to us from this era is known as "Gregorian Chant." It is for this reason that this window is found in its position at St. Thomas More Parish.



St. Cecilia is the patron saint of musicians, composers, instrument makers and poets. She was born either in the 2nd or 3rd century A. D. She was a Christian who had vowed to live her life as a virgin for the sake of her love for Christ. However, she was betrothed to marriage through a promise made by her father - as was the custom at the time. On the day of her wedding, she is said to have heard heavenly music inside her heart even as she was being forced to marry. This profound moment of grace of her willingness to accept even this moment of death to self was the inspiration for her being named patron saint of musicians. Just above her is King David who is said to have written and sung the Psalms on his harp. The angel at the top heralds Jesus coming to the shepherds. "An angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them ... 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy ... to you is born this day ... the Messiah, the Lord.' ... Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven' (Lk. 2: 9-14)

The Windows in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel

The Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world



This window found directly above the tabernacle was the first window to be ordered and placed in the church. The concept of the window was a simple one: to express the elements used during the mass and show how these elements are truly the presence of Christ. Thus, grapes express our use of wine that becomes the Blood of Christ and wheat that becomes His Body. These substances of wine and bread change into the true living presence of Jesus, the Lamb of God who has triumphed over sin and death. The triumph of Christ is expressed through the flag that is found behind The Lamb.

The Sacred Heart of Jesus

This window reminds us that we are to be in union with Jesus our savior. In the gospel of John we read: "The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me" (Jn 17: 22-23). If we are to be one with Jesus, we must accept His love and be willing to continue in His mission. Jesus' mission is one of reparation for sins against His Heavenly Father and one of revelation of the Father's divine love for all He has created. Our life is to be lived in the same way as Jesus'! The image of the Sacred Heart reminds us of Jesus' redemptive action. "The purpose of the merciful Jesus, when He showed His Heart to us bearing about it the symbols of the passion [the crown of thorns around His heart] and displaying the flames of love [above His heart] ... [is] that from the one we might know the infinite malice of sin, and in the other we might admire the infinite charity of Our Redeemer, and so might have a more vehement hatred of sin, and make a more ardent return of love for His love." (Miserentissimus Redemptor, #11)



Window in the Reconciliation Room (Confessional)

In the Catechism of the Catholic Church one reads: "Just as the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist form a unity called "the sacraments of Christian initiation," so too it can be said that Penance, the Anointing of the Sick and the Eucharist as viaticum constitute at the end of Christian life 'the sacraments that prepare for our heavenly homeland' or the sacraments that complete the earthly pilgrimage." (CCC, #1525) With this in mind, we used this window to portray these sacraments for the end of the journey. The two keys symbolize the sacrament of reconciliation: "Jesus said: 'I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.'" (Mt. 16:19) The wheat and grapes represent the Eucharist. The central depiction is of Jesus healing the paralytic (Mk. 2: 1-12). In this account Jesus not only heals the man physically through no possible action of the paralytic's own but more important, he heals the man's relationship with God by forgiving the man's sins. Our sins paralyze us and Jesus cures.



The Window in the Sacristy

Mary and Martha

The window depicts the time that Jesus went to visit Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38-42). The reason for this depiction here is due to the two distinctive personalities of the hosts.

Martha is portrayed as the host that prepares the meal for Jesus. She is the one that, out of love, works to have everything ready for the important guest who is also her friend. In the account of this encounter we note that Martha forgets that the most important part of being a good host is to be present to the one who has been invited. In her activity and frustration, she temporarily forgets this

point until Jesus gently reminds her that it is not about the meal but about His presence that is important. Mary, on the other hand, has been able to keep this in proper perspective.

This window is placed in the sacristy, as this is the place where immediate preparation for the mass takes place. There is the danger that in the hustle and bustle of preparing for mass, one may forget that this is also a time to prepare oneself to receive Christ within one's heart. The twofold response of action (revealed in Martha's personality) and contemplation (Mary's personality) must always exist simultaneously in one's preparation to encounter the Lord as His guest during the Mass: His Eternal Banquet offered to us now.



The Chapter Room Windows: The Rosary in Light

The Joyful Mysteries

The Annunciation (Lk. 1: 26 – 33, 38)



"The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' ... 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' ... Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.'"

The Visitation (Luke 1: 39 – 46)

"Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.' And Mary said, 'My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant.'"



The Nativity (Luke 2: 1 – 7)

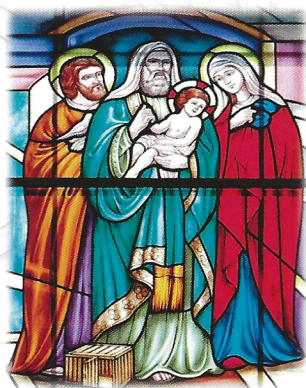


"In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was

expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger."

The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2: 22-35)

"When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ... and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves.' Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; ... It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, 'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.' ... 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed – and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'"



The Finding of the Christ Child in the Temple (Lk 2: 41-52)



"Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they

returned to Jerusalem to search for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, 'Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety.' He said to them, 'Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?' But they did not understand what he said to them. Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart."

The Luminous Mysteries

The Baptism of the Lord (Matthew 3: 13 – 16)

"Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. ... And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him."



The Wedding at Cana (John 2: 1 – 11)

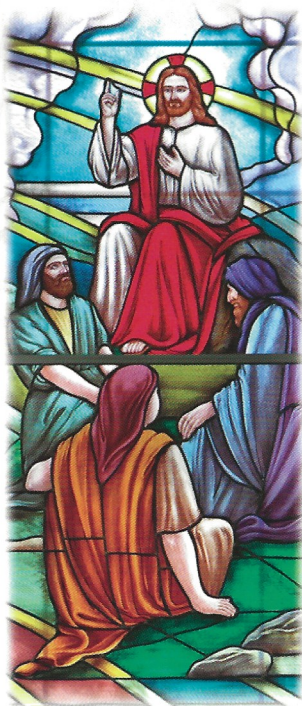


"On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' And Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' Now standing there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, 'Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.' So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the

steward called the bridegroom and said to him, 'Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.' Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him."

Preaching of the Coming of the Kingdom of God (Mark 1: 14 – 15)

"After John the Baptist was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'"



The Transfiguration (Matthew 17: 1 – 8)

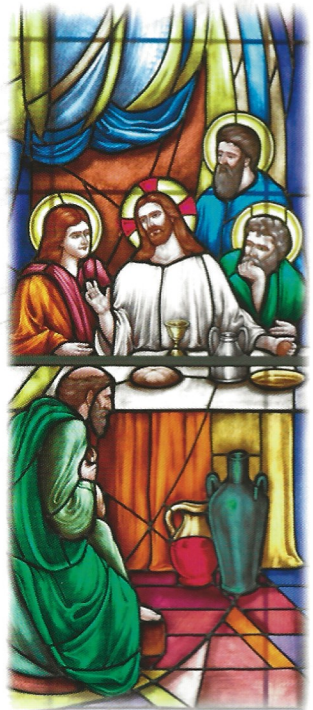


"Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. Then Peter said to Jesus, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three dwellings here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!' When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, 'Get up and do not be afraid.' And when they looked up, they saw"

no one except Jesus himself alone.

The Institution of the Holy Eucharist (Matthew 26: 26 – 29)

"While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.'"



The Sorrowful Mysteries

The Agony in the Garden (Matthew 26: 36 – 56)

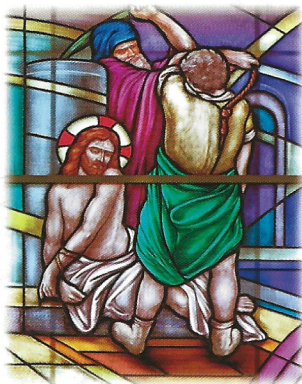


"Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, 'Sit here while I go over there and pray.' He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. Then he said to them, 'I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me.' And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but

what you want. ... My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done.'"

The Scouring at the Pillar (Matthew 27:24b – 26)

"Pilate took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, 'I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves.' Then the people as a whole answered, 'Jesus' blood be on us and on our children!' So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified."



The Crowning with Thorns (Matthew 27: 27 – 31)



"The soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and ... stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head."



Jesus Carries the Cross (John 19: 16-18)

"Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them."

The Crucifixion (John 19: 25 – 50)

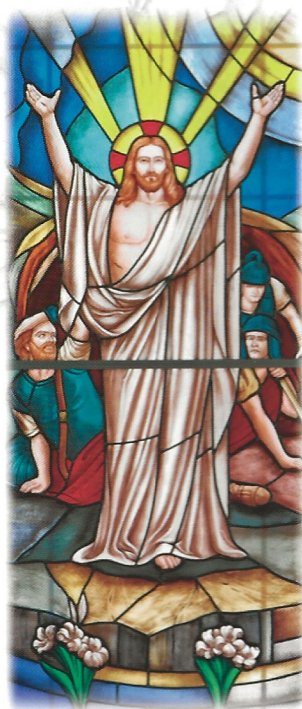
"Standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, ... When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home. After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said ..., 'I am thirsty.' ... When Jesus had received the wine, he said, 'It is finished.' Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit."



The Glorious Mysteries

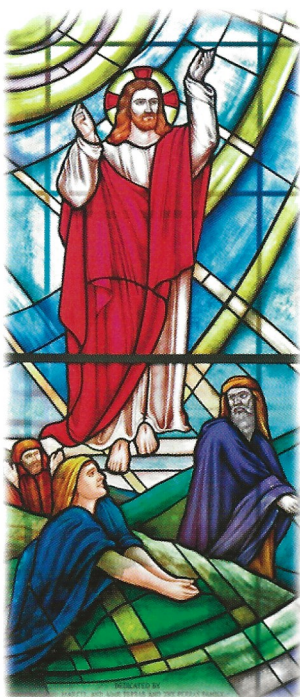
The Resurrection (Matthew 28: 1 – 7a)

"After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. ... The angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised ...'"



The Ascension of Our Lord into Heaven

(Luke 24: 50 – 55)



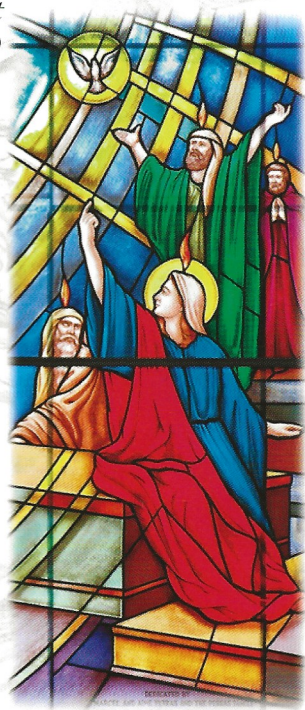
"Then Jesus led the disciples out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God."

The Pentecost Event

(Acts 2: 1 – 4, 14, 17 – 21)

"When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it

filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. ... Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice ... 'In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist. The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day. Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'"



The Assumption of Mary into Heaven (Rev. 12:1; John 14:3; Psalm 132: 7-8)

The belief in the Assumption of Mary flows immediately from the belief that Mary was never touched by original sin. This belief is called the Immaculate Conception. If Mary was preserved from sin by the free gift of God, she would not be bound to experience the consequences of sin--death--in the same way we do. Rather she experienced the immediate union of her whole being with her Son Jesus Christ. Thus, the Blessed Virgin Mary, at the end of her earthly life, was assumed both body and soul into heavenly glory.

"A great portent appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars." (Rev. 12:1)

"Jesus said: 'And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also.'" (Jn. 14:3)

"Let us go to his dwelling-place; let us worship at his footstool.' Rise up, O Lord, and go to your resting-place, you and the ark of your might." (Ps. 132: 7-8)
[We understand Mary to be the ark that held Jesus physically, mentally and spiritually within her very being.]



The Coronation of Mary (Luke 1: 46-48; Judith 15: 18 -20; Rev. 12:1)

"Mary said, 'My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me

blessed.'" (Luke 1: 46-48)

"O daughter, you are blessed by the Most High God above all other women on earth; and blessed be the Lord God, who created the heavens and the earth, who has guided you to cut off the head of the leader of our enemies. Your praise will never depart from the hearts of those who remember the power of God. May God grant this to be a perpetual honour to you, and may he reward you with blessings, because you risked your own life when our nation was brought low, and you averted our ruin, walking in the straight path before our God.' And all the people said, 'Amen. Amen.'" (Judith 15: 18 -20)

"A great portent appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars." (Rev. 12:1)



The Artistic Decision Process

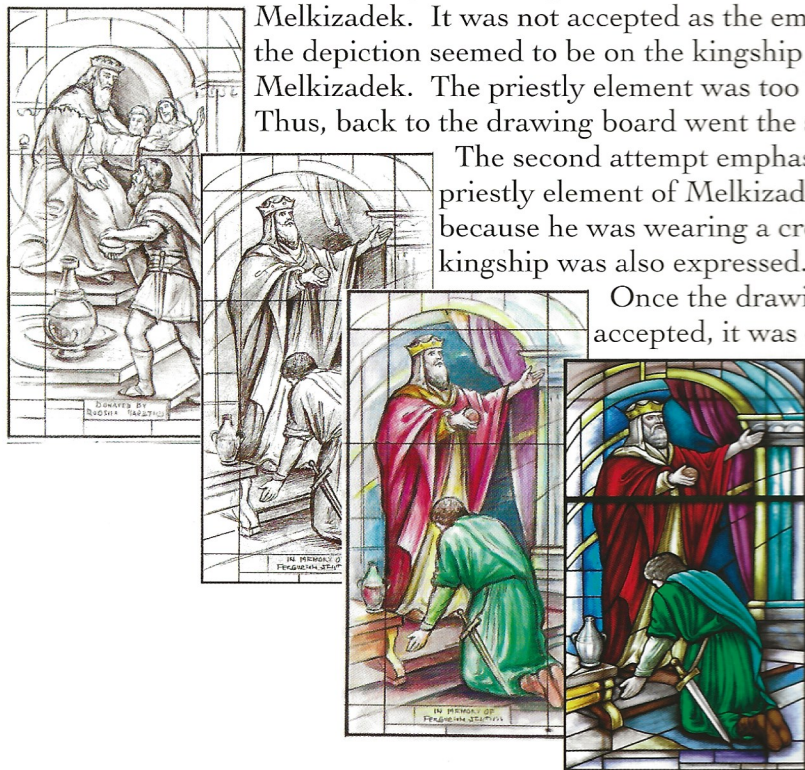
There are a few steps that had to be taken from the moment the initial idea for a window to the final execution of the window. Here is the process that took place:

1. An idea was first brought forward. Once the idea was accepted by St. Thomas More Church, the artist, Andrew Florczak of Vision Art in Toronto Ontario, was informed. It was up to Andrew to create an artistic rendering of the idea.
2. The artist developed the idea and presented it in a simple line drawing for approval. Once the line drawing was reviewed and accepted by St. Thomas More Church, a colour rendition was created.
3. Upon the review and acceptance of the coloured drawing, the window was commissioned and a down payment given.
4. Upon receipt of the window, the rest of the payment was made.

This pencil sketch was the original concept for the window depicting Melkizadek. It was not accepted as the emphasis of the depiction seemed to be on the kingship of Melkizadek. The priestly element was too vague. Thus, back to the drawing board went the sketch.

The second attempt emphasized the priestly element of Melkizadek, and because he was wearing a crown, his kingship was also expressed.

Once the drawing was accepted, it was coloured.



After the coloured version was approved, Vision Art was contacted and the final version was created and shipped to St. Thomas More Church.



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