

Our Stained Glass Windows

We recommend following along on a mobile device while viewing the stained glass in our worship space.

The Annunciation



As one enters the church, the first large window on the left depicts the annunciation to the Virgin Mary, as related in the Gospel of Luke, that she is to become the Mother of Jesus. She looks up at an angel with face, hands and posture indicating submission to the will of God. Mary is depicted in her traditional clothing: a blue robe (with embroidery at the edge) over a white undergarment. Blue is the color of the sky and it, and the five stars in her halo (a possible reference to the five Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary) may be inspired by the attribution to her in the liturgy of the words of the Book of Revelations. The white garment nearest her body probably refers to her spiritual virtue and bodily virginity, qualities which are symbolized by lilies, three (for Faith, Hope, and Charity) in the medallion at the top of the window and in the hands of the angel. Lilies are also found in the vase at the bottom left of the picture. Some of them are buds, probably referring to the Child Jesus, who is to be born. There are also roses in the vase, another flower traditional to the Virgin, whose red color and thorns signify the suffering which she was to undergo in her role as Mother of God. Mary has been praying the Scriptures and is kneeling at a praying bench known as a “prie dieu” (French for “pray [to] God”). The artist has thoughtfully provided her with a pretty red cushion, which protrudes out from beneath her garments.

In order for there to be an annunciation there has to be an announcer and that’s the angel, Gabriel. He has three stars in his halo (symbolizing the Trinity for whom he works) and is arrayed in a lovely brown robe. To his right and slightly higher, the Holy Spirit is represented by a dove with a radiant halo, surrounded by a stylized cloud and with the rays of Divine Grace emanating from Him to the Virgin, conceiving within her the Savior. Below the picture, a medallion portrays a stylized “A” and “R” for Ave Regina (Hail! Queen of Heaven). The letters are separated by what appears to be a column, or it may be a stylized staff entwined by serpents, the one set up by Moses in the Desert to cure the Children of Israel. John’s Gospel has Jesus paralleling this lifting up of the serpent to his own lifting up on the Cross, healing us from our sins, and that may be why it is here.

The Visitation



The next window depicts the visit which Mary, expecting her child, paid to her cousin Elizabeth (Lk. 1:1-20). The medallion at the top of the window depicts an incense burner with smoke arising from it. Incense is a symbol of royalty, before whom it was burnt as a sign of respect and reverence. For that reason, it was included among the gifts the Magi brought to the Christ Child.

The main section of the window shows Mary, dressed in blue, but with embroidery different from the Annunciation window. The toe of a red shoe peeks out from the hem of the garment, duplicating the effect of the red cushion in the former window and, with the color of the sky to the upper left, again displaying the three primary colors. The moment captured is when she and her cousin first meet. She is clasping the proffered hand of Elizabeth who, dressed in a lovely black and tan robe, kneels before Mary in the attitude expressed by her words: “Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why

Our Stained Glass Windows

is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (Lk. 1:42-43) As Elizabeth is pregnant with John the Baptist, it also shows John's subordination to the Messiah whose coming he will announce. Elizabeth is clearly well-advanced in age, as is her husband Zechariah, shown just exiting the door to greet Mary, wearing a purple garment (Advent colors), his hand raised in a gesture which is at once a greeting and a blessing, fitting since he is a priest. (The story of this elderly couple's miraculous, though human, conception of John is told in Lk. 1:5-25).

The treatment of the evening sky seen behind stylized trees and buildings is especially beautiful here. The earth on which Elizabeth kneels is unusually dark, perhaps because it is supposed to be late in the day, and is broken by only a few plants. Below the main composition, is a Rose of Sharon, another flower used to symbolize the Virgin as a glory of Israel. At the center of the flower is the letter "M", the first initial of she whose "...soul magnifies the Lord..." (Lk.1:46).

The Nativity

The window depicting the birth of the Lord begins at the top with a medallion which calls to mind the words of the Prophet Isaiah: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good tidings... who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns!'" (52:7).



At the center of the composition is the Christ Child, with a very bright face, a cross visible in His halo, dressed in white and sitting in a wooden manger. Mary sits to His left, holding Him. It's interesting that her robe now has no embroidery: the artist is making sure that nothing distracts us from Jesus who is, quite properly, the center of attention. St. Joseph stands behind them, calm and protective, in a russet garment.

Three shepherds gaze in adoration at their King, a young boy playing a bagpipe, an old man with a beard, and a middle age man who has doffed his cap. On the floor of the stable rests a shepherd's staff (which calls to mind both the 23rd Psalm and Christ as the Good Shepherd), while a single sheep looks up at Mary and the Child.

The dark sky at the top left, with shadowy shapes and trees and a lit candle to the bottom right, indicate that it is indeed night, recalling to mind the words of the old Christmas liturgy, that while all the world lay in slumber, the Word of the Lord leapt down from heaven. Finally, two candles are shown in the medallion below the picture. These may symbolize the Old and the New Covenants, or the dual nature of Christ as God and man, or (less likely because it would seem to make them equivalent in dignity) Mary and Jesus.

Our Stained Glass Windows

Jesus in the Temple



The second window from the front of the Mary shrine illustrates “Jesus among the Doctors” or (in the language of the Fifth Joyful Mystery of the Rosary), “The Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple.”

This window illustrates the events reported in the Gospel of St. Luke 2: 41-52. Jesus, together with his parents, has gone up to the Temple at Jerusalem for their annual visit at Passover time (a pilgrimage undertaken to fulfill the requirements of Deuteronomy 16:16). It must have been quite a large family gathering, because Mary and Joseph are reported to have left the city and traveled all day before realizing that Jesus wasn’t with some other relatives and friends. They immediately hurry back to Jerusalem where, after looking all over town for three days (here Luke may be symbolizing the burial of Jesus’s body for three days in the tomb, followed by “finding” Him alive) they discover their son in the Temple, “sitting among the doctors of the law, listening to them and asking them questions.” (vs. 46)

The window depicts the scene at the moment of Mary and Joseph’s discovery of their son. Jesus is portrayed dressed in a white undergarment covered by a light blue robe. Rays in the form of the fleur-de-lis (a stylized lily symbolizing purity and, with its bud and two leaves, perhaps the Trinity) are found in his halo (which may be contrasted with the crosses found in His halos in two windows on the other side of the Church). A red sash (the color of blood, commonly signifying martyrdom) is around His waist. His left hand shows fingers extended as if He is making a point, while His right is lifted upward, pointing to heaven. One foot extends out from beneath His robe, naked to indicate His earthly poverty. His facial expression, posture and gestures all convey an air of authority.

Jesus is surrounded by the Doctors who make an interesting group. Their attention to Jesus clearly indicates they are “astounded at his intelligence and his replies.” (vs. 47) They represent all ages, from the man pictured to Jesus’ left, his face deeply lined with his years, a white band tied around his bald head, to the young scribe sitting on the floor in the lower left of the picture. The scribe is wearing a blue hat and a green tallit (the prayer shawl Jews still wear during their devotions) decorated with gold tassels. All economic classes are represented. The poverty indicated by the plain robe and bare feet of the scribe contrast with the richer attire of other figures such as the man seen just above him, wearing a red hat, sandals, and a purple and brown robe with an embroidered hem.

The artist has devoted much loving attention to the figure of the teacher in the lower right of the window. He wears a rich red robe with a gold zig-zag decoration along the hem, a green tallit embroidered with a checkered border and blue tassels, and very nice sandals. He holds a paper with some Hebrew letters on it, which he is attentively reading. He has a finely chiseled face with a noble aquiline nose and his eyes are wide open and fixed upon the page, as if he were checking a reference being made by Christ.

At the top of the picture, the ten commandments are enshrined in a place of honor within a little alcove separated from the rest of the building by a rail. This may very well be modeled on the architecture of a synagogue rather than the Second Temple whose central focus would have been a reproduction of the Ark of the Covenant, though empty since the original Ark, together with the tablets of Moses disappeared after the Babylonian Captivity. Since this is strictly an indoor

Our Stained Glass Windows

scene, it is the only window where the artist has not been able to depict one of his lovely sky scenes.

Last, but hardly least, Mary and Joseph are depicted in the top left of the picture in the act of just entering the temple. She wears a blue robe over her head as if she has just been traveling. St. Joseph wears his traditional russet robe and is carrying a walking staff. They look weary, which is just what one would expect considering they've been searching for their son for three days. Parents of adolescents will recognize those looks, Mary's reprimand: "See how worried your father and I have been..."; the sharpness with which Jesus replies to her: "Why were you looking for me?... Did you not know I must be busy with my Father's affairs?"; and the resulting bafflement of His parents.

The medallion at the top of the window shows the scriptures on a lectern surmounted by the cross which, for Christians, is their fulfillment. The medallion below depicts the earth (with lines of latitude shown) topped by the cross and with rays of saving grace passing through it. Two circles, one depicting clouds, the other the winds, surround the globe.

Color is used to create several visual axes: the blue of the scribe's hat and that of the figure to the upper right; the red in the robe of the man in the lower right, Jesus' sash and the hat of the man to Christ's right; the dark green tallit of the standing figure and the blue of Mary's robe; the purple in the figures to Jesus' right and left and the tan of the robe to his right and upper left. These all have the figure of Jesus as their visual center and serve to draw our eyes to Him.

In this window there may be a word for those of us who are parents. Christ was a good son who, after this episode, left with his parents for Nazareth and "lived under their authority" (vs. 51). However, it may be something of a comfort to reflect that even the members of the Holy Family had their misunderstandings and things weren't always sweetness and light. Still, as we know, He turned out great, and we can believe that our children will, too. This might be a good window before which to pray for our "holy families."

Thanks to Rabbi Norman Golmer, Rabbi Sylvia Scholnick and Professor Devorah Weisberg for their gracious help in interpreting this window.

The Baptism of Our Lord

The window closest to the Mary Altar depicts the Baptism of Jesus.

Here the artist departs from Luke's Gospel (with its very brief treatment) and incorporates details found in Matthew 3, Mark 1 and John 1.

The medallion at the top shows the hand of God, in a gesture of blessing, with rays of grace beaming down.

John the Baptist [i.e.: the Baptizer] is clothed in the camel hair garment (the texture is well depicted) and leather belt reported in Mark and Matthew, covered with a purple robe with a violet lining (royal colors for the Romans and others, appropriate for the one whom Jesus calls the greatest of all the prophets [Matthew 11: 7-15]). John stands on a rock. His left hand holds a staff surmounted by a cross and with a scroll winding along it bearing John's words "Ecce agnus dei" ("Behold the Lamb of God... [that takes away the sins of the world.]" John 1:29), words which have become part of the liturgy. John's right hand grasps a scallop shell, the traditional

Our Stained Glass Windows



symbol of baptism, which he uses to pour water on Christ's head. This is most likely an anachronism; ancient baptisms were performed (as some modern ones are) by immersion. By having a person submerged in and then raised from the water, one's physical death and resurrection to eternal life as well as one's death to sin and rising to new life in Christ are graphically illustrated and symbolized (see Romans 6: 1-11).

Christ is robed in a beautiful white garment. There is a nice contrast between the royal crowns which appear in his halo and the lowered head, closed eyes and hands crossed over His breast, gestures demonstrating His humility and submission to both the will of His Father and the work of John. He stands ankle-deep in the water of the Jordan, and the artist has beautifully depicted His immersed feet (a striking and very unusual effect). Above Him, resting on a cloud, is the figure of the Father, with a triangular halo (symbolic of the Trinity), the traditional long white beard (an Eastern symbol of wisdom), a robe of imperial purple gathered by a gold clasp, with brilliant rays lighting Him in glory. His left hand holds the orb surmounted by the cross, symbolic of God's dominion over all the earth (and by extension, the universe), while His right is raised in a gesture of blessing of the scene below. Below the Father's head is the dove of the Holy Spirit, a halo around His head and with a sun-like orb as a background. With the figure of Christ below, the three figures illustrate the Trinity. Matthew describes the moment: "...and suddenly, the heavens opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming down on him. And a voice spoke from heaven, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; my favor rests on him.'" (3:16-17)

The sky is beautifully shaded from dark above to light blue on the horizon. Clouds scatter across the sky. A hill to the left stands behind two tall palm trees. Lush vegetation fed by the Jordan (which flows through the desert) fills the area behind Christ and John, including three cattails to the left and three water lilies to the right (Trinitarian references abound in this window). A water lily floats at Christ's side, a traditional eastern (including far-eastern) symbol of purity and serenity as it rests atop, but is not affected by, the flood. A pink and red bloom to John's side may be a reference to the deaths by martyrdom of both men.

The medallion at the bottom shows a baptismal font, with the dove of the Holy Spirit perched on its edge. This is a reminder to us that at our baptism we were baptized, not in water alone but, through Christ, "with the Holy Spirit and fire," (Matthew 3:11). As Christ's baptism inaugurated His mission to the world, so we are called upon to let the Holy Spirit fan the flames (pneuma in Greek means both "wind" and "spirit") of God's love in our hearts so that, aflame with that love, we may fulfill our mission to bring His love to the world by our words and our deeds in the service of our brothers and sisters.

St. Vincent de Paul

The first window on the right near the side door depicts the patron saint of our parish and the Diocese of Richmond, St. Vincent de Paul (1581-1660). The third of six children of a peasant family, he must have showed some talent because he entered the priesthood and obtained a B.A. in theology. Vincent lived during and in the aftermath of the civil war between Catholics and Protestants in France. Religious violence breeds cynicism and indifference, and the Church was in a bad way. Vincent began by reflecting this atmosphere; for the first eight years after his ordination, he spent his time exploiting his position for his own benefit. Then he underwent a

Our Stained Glass Windows



seven-year spiritual crisis from which he emerged completely transformed into a devoted seeker of God. His particular vocation: to serve the physical and spiritual needs of the poor.

Assigned as chaplain to the eminent Gondis family, he immediately extended his ministry to the many peasants on their vast estates. After 1619 he became chaplain of the galley fleet where he worked to alleviate the lot of the galley slaves. After 1625, the Vincentian Fathers (Congregation of the Mission) were organized to minister to the rural poor and to operate seminaries. About this time Vincent began to attack the heresy known as Jansenism, a kind of Catholic puritanism which holds that God only really wants to save some, and not all, of us and which denies the intrinsic goodness of God's natural creation including our bodies. Vincent's efforts were a prime cause of its defeat (though some of its bad effects continue to linger in some corners of the Church).

Vincent found his greatest collaborator in St. Louise de Marillac (1591-1660). Widowed in 1625, she became a supporter of Vincent's work and in 1633, they founded the Daughters of Charity whose "convent is the sick-room, their chapel the parish church, their convent the city streets." Intelligent and diligent, though not physically strong, her tireless labors resulted in over 40 houses being established in France where the poor and sick were tended, abandoned and orphaned children were cared for, and hundreds of women were provided

shelter.

Louise's death in 1660 deeply saddened Vincent and he passed away later that same year. By that time, members of the foundations which they had established could be found not only all over France but spread from Poland to Madagascar. Today, they are found throughout the world.

Our window shows St. Vincent dressed as the ordinary priest that he was, tenderly holding an abandoned baby while he presents an older orphan to Louise. She opens her arms to receive him while he extends his to embrace her. The architecture and the setting suggest rural France. The color of the leaves on the tree, the barren ground and the bare bush between Vincent and Louise indicate that it is autumn (The season of harvest. The artist could have been thinking of Christ's words: "The harvest is rich but the laborers are few, so ask the Lord of the harvest to send laborers to his harvest." [Luke 10: 2]). As usual, the color of the sky is beautifully depicted and a few clouds drift by.

The medallion at the top shows a scoop and a shepherd's staff, the first indicating Vincent's care for people's earthly needs, the second the care of their souls. This is not only a good indicator of the kind of ministry which we conduct in our parish, but is a welcome corrective to those who think religion should restrict itself to serving the soul only and not the body (Jansenism again). This view is as unsacramental as it is unlike Christ who fed the hungry crowds and healed the sick. And the scoop comes first. It is difficult to preach the Gospel to those who are hungry; the growling of their stomachs tends to drown out the preacher's voice.

The window presents an interesting problem of dating. It is dedicated to the Pastor of St. Vincent, Fr. D. F. Coleman who died in 1932. Louise was canonized in 1934, but she has no halo in our picture. Therefore, the window had to be created between those two dates.

Our Stained Glass Windows

After reading about the prodigious labors of St. Vincent it comes as something of a shock to learn that he was a man of quite ordinary intelligence and quite ordinary talents. But by opening himself to the abundant graces which God offers to us all (and which we often tap into too little) he extracted the most extraordinary results from quite ordinary abilities. The motivating force of this amazing man's life is summed up in the quote from St. Paul which appears in Latin on the scroll in the medallion at the bottom of the window: "Caritas Christi urget nos"—"The love of Christ impels us." (2 Cor. 5:14)

St. Margaret Mary Alacoque



If St. Vincent is an exemplar of the *via activa* (achieving sanctity by a life of action), St. Margaret Mary (and St. Theresa of Lisieux, the subject of our next window) exemplify the *via contemplativa* (the life of contemplation and prayer).

Margaret Mary was a contemporary (1647-1690) of St. Vincent De Paul, but not directly associated with his work. After a sickly and unhappy youth, she joined the Visitation order. Pledged "not to be extraordinary except by being ordinary", she was an exemplary nun, humble, simple, frank, kind and patient, if somewhat slow, clumsy and a bit humorless. Between 1675 and 1677, she experienced apparitions of Christ who exhorted her to spread devotion to His sacred heart, "which has so loved humanity that it has spared nothing." The thrust of the revelations was that God loves all of His people, not only some (once again we see the battle against Jansenism) and called them to repentance.

Margaret Mary's revelations were first greeted with much skepticism and she suffered not a little from the disapproval of other members of her community. But her burning ardor for God and her simple virtues eventually won over those antagonistic to her. Made mistress of novices, even veteran nuns attended her instructional conferences.

The top medallion of our window shows the traditional representation of the Sacred Heart, surmounted by a cross rising from flames of love. The heart is bound by a crown of thorns and issues forth a drop of blood. Rays of glory beam forth indicating that Christ's glory, as well as that of those who follow Him, lies in His cross and His suffering.

Margaret Mary's convent is depicted as a Romanesque building (an architecture especially suited to contemplation). The purple curtain hanging from a brass rod probably symbolizes the cloistered nature of her life. She is dressed in the habit of the Visitation order, the folds of cloth expertly depicted, her arms open in a gesture of acceptance, with beautifully rendered hands and a lovely face with alert, wide-open eyes gazing at an apparition of Christ.

Above and behind Jesus, rays of glory pour forth from clouds. As usual, and unique to Him, his halo contains a cross (with Trinitarian trefoils in the arms). He gazes at Margaret Mary with the half-lidded eyes and mild expression of face and hands so favored by 19th century pious representations but now considered lacking in vitality. Jesus' left hand, showing a nail print, indicates His glowing sacred heart (duplicating that in the top medallion) while his right hand blesses Margaret Mary. He wears a lovely embroidered red robe with violet lining and a gold-embroidered white undergarment. His feet, with a nail print obvious in the right one, rest on a

Our Stained Glass Windows

cloud. His figure floats above an open copy of the Scriptures as the one Christians see as spoken of by the prophets and the evangelists. The bush behind Margaret Mary, and the low wood and stone wall behind Christ provide a lovely garden setting for the scene. Finally, the medallion below depicts the three nails of the crucifixion surrounded by the crown of thorns woven into a Star of David, recalling Jesus' title of "Son of David."

The symbols of Christ's passion throughout are to illustrate the utter extravagance with which God loves us all and how He has spared nothing so that we might be happy. Seeing that, what can we do other than join in the deathbed prayer of Margaret Mary: "I need nothing but God and to lose myself in the heart of Jesus."

St. Theresa of Lisieux



Born in 1873 into a deeply religious family (she and four of her sisters became nuns), Theresa was a bright child if one with a tendency to be overly sensitive and scrupulous. But on Christmas Day in 1886 she underwent an instant change. As one of her sisters remarked in amazement, "...her soul could be seen to grow in zeal and charity." Theresa began to feel her particular vocation to be to serve God and His people and to suffer.

By persistent petitioning (she even broke the protocol of a general papal audience by asking the Pope to intervene!) she received a special dispensation which allowed her to enter a Carmelite convent at age 15. Her delicate health forbade extraordinary sacrifices, and so she devoted herself to doing ordinary things in an extraordinary way and everything for the love of God. She described this "little way" (as she called it) as "the way of spiritual childhood, the way of trust and absolute self-surrender." To the daily round of prayer and work common to all those in religious life (and the burden of an uncommonly difficult superior), she added the struggle against a tendency to obstinacy and moodiness and a discipline of little penances: not brushing off a fly (St. Ignatius of Loyola did the same); not scratching an itch; going without blankets in winter, all designed to atone for sins and to rise to virtue. Made acting mistress of novices in 1883, she began to teach them the "little way." Her hope to serve as a missionary in Indo-china fell through when she contracted tuberculosis. She died in 1897 at age 24 amidst much suffering, her last words: "My God, I love you!"

Two years before her death she was asked to write a memoir of her childhood years. She did, adding an account of her later life as a means of teaching others her "little way." One of her sisters heavily edited this text and it was published under the title of *The Story of A Soul*. Though the late Romantic style of its language is now much out of fashion, it was an instant success at the time. Widely translated, it caused veneration for her to spread rapidly. From far and wide reports poured in of miracles attributed to her intercession. In the face of this "hurricane of glory" as Pope Pius XI called it, Rome waived the normal 50-year waiting period. Beatified in 1923 she was declared a saint in 1925, one of the fastest canonization processes in history! A large basilica was built at Lisieux to accommodate the flood of pilgrims that came to honor her. By the 1920s, Theresa Martin, the "Little Flower," had become the most popular saint of modern times.

Our Stained Glass Windows

The medallion at the top of her window depicts a bellwether sheep (with its customary bell) which leads the flock, a symbol of Christ as the Lamb of God who leads us. On the right of the window, the Virgin Mary is depicted as Queen of Heaven, wearing a golden crown with stars in her halo. She lovingly holds the child Jesus on her lap, trefoils in His halo, His face so bright that it seems to illuminate the entire composition. Three cherubs (with red and green wings!) surround Mary and Jesus in a cloud of glory. Theresa is shown kneeling in prayer, dressed in the robe of the Carmelite order. Unlike St. Margaret Mary's experience, this is not an apparition, and so Theresa is not shown looking at the heavenly figures. The Christ Child looks down at Theresa, His right hand raised in blessing, His lap filled with roses which He showers down on her, recalling words she spoke in her last months of life: "After my death I will let fall a shower of roses." She has caught one in her left hand while others fall about her. The motif is continued in the lower medallion with its blossoms colored in symbolic hues of red (suffering), white (purity) and pink (joy). A stylized representation of the basilica at Lisieux appears at the lower right. The sky around the Church is shaded beautifully from light blue to red; rising behind Theresa up to the top of the picture, it changes from violet to dark blue while the saint seems to kneel on one of the clouds that floats across the sky.

Pius XI said that Theresa had fulfilled her vocation and achieved sanctity, "without going beyond the common order of things." By her life, she showed that sainthood is achievable by anyone, no matter how humble, no matter how ordinary, by simply performing the everyday duties of one's life out of love for God. She, St. Vincent and St. Margaret Mary are all examples of St. Paul's statement that "...those whom the world thinks common and contemptible are the ones that God has chose—those who are nothing at all to show up those who are everything" (I Corinthians: 27-28). These three figures speak to us all as we go about our daily rounds in our offices, in our factories and farms, in our classrooms, in our nurseries, among our tools, our computers, or our pots and pans. In and through these ordinary tasks we can help to build the Kingdom of God by blessing our brothers and sisters, doing all the good we can whenever we can, and by doing so, enter into our inheritance of eternal life.

The Windows of the Triduum

High on the walls of the nave of the church are the three lovely circular windows which depict the central drama of our Catholic faith: the suffering, death and resurrection of Our Lord, Jesus Christ. For these scenes, the artist has taken references from all four Gospels.

The Agony in the Garden



The first window to the left illustrates Christ's agony in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night of his arrest. Heavenly light pours from a cloud onto His troubled face as, dressed in a robe of deep red over a white undergarment, He kneels in prayer on rocky ground. Christ gazes up at an angel with stars in his robe. The angel offers Him the cup of suffering (it resembles an old-fashioned chalice) which Christ has asked His Father to spare Him but which He accepts in accordance with the will of the Father and for all our sakes.

To the left, a thorn bush is seen, foretelling the crown of thorns the Roman soldiers, in cruel mockery of His kingship, would place upon His head. The greenery about the bush may indicate the life that would yet come from this painful death. Cypresses (whose long life makes them a symbol of eternity) and other plants complete the garden scene. Above distant hills, the nighttime

Our Stained Glass Windows

sky, shaded from light to very dark blue (which contrasts beautifully with the light from above) is spangled with multi-colored points of light indicating the stars, and perhaps, the other planets.

The Crucifixion

Appropriately in the center we see Christ crucified, God's supreme act of love, the consequence



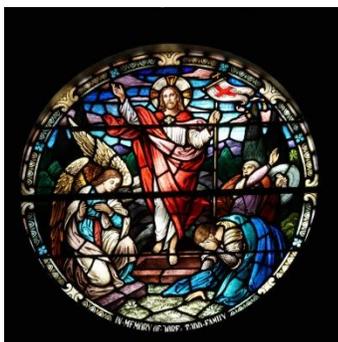
of our sins, of our failure to love, and the means by which God reconciles us to Himself and to each other. The body hangs from the cross in the traditional posture, arms extended, head sunken, nails in the hands and feet, a white loincloth about His waist, with the lance wound in His side. At the top is the traditional abbreviation of the sign Pilate ordered affixed: INRI (Iesus Naxirenos Rex Iudeorum—Jesus the Nazarene; King of the Jews). A stake anchors the cross in the earth while heavenly rays come down on Jesus. The cross, then, becomes our bridge from this world to the next.

His mother, in her traditional blue robe, stands grief stricken to His right while Mary of Magdala kneels at His feet bringing a white cloth around the cross (either preparatory to bringing down His body or to catch His precious blood). St. John in a red robe (with Mary and Jesus we again have the primary colors) is at His left, the only one looking at Him, perhaps reflecting on His commission to care for His mother (John 19:26).

Behind the scene we see Jerusalem and distant hills, the sky shaded from tan to purple to a deep red as darkness covers the whole land (Luke attributes it to a solar eclipse 23:44). A deeply reddened sun appears below Christ's right hand and a darkened moon (with a crescent visible) below His left. (This depiction of the sun and moon is traditional. See the painted backdrop to our large crucifix to the right of the Joseph altar.) Facing this window, look up at the apse ceiling and you will see, directly in line with the center window, God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. Thus, with the figure of the crucified Christ, we have another representation of the Trinity similar to that in the window of Christ's baptism.

The Resurrection

To the right we see the Resurrection, and with it, Christ's victory—which is our victory—over



sin and death. He rises triumphant from an open tomb which lies before a cave-like opening behind it (the tomb is very stylized). Dressed in a red robe over a white garment (Not strictly scriptural. Matthew 28:3 has Him in white.), His right hand is raised to heaven while his left holds the traditional Christian banner signifying the victory of the cross and resurrection. To the left an angel kneels in adoration atop the cast-away stone cover. To the right, one guard has fallen to the ground covering his face (note the drape of his blue cape around his right arm) while another sentry holding a shield falls back in awe and terror at the sight (The scene generally follows Matthew).

Above the hills, the sky is light blue shading to a smaller area of darker hue, indicating that it is morning. This is the only window which depicts the ground covered with vegetation which seems only fitting as all creation springs forth in the fullness of new life in the risen Lord.

Research and text by Dr. Mario "Mazz" Mazarella