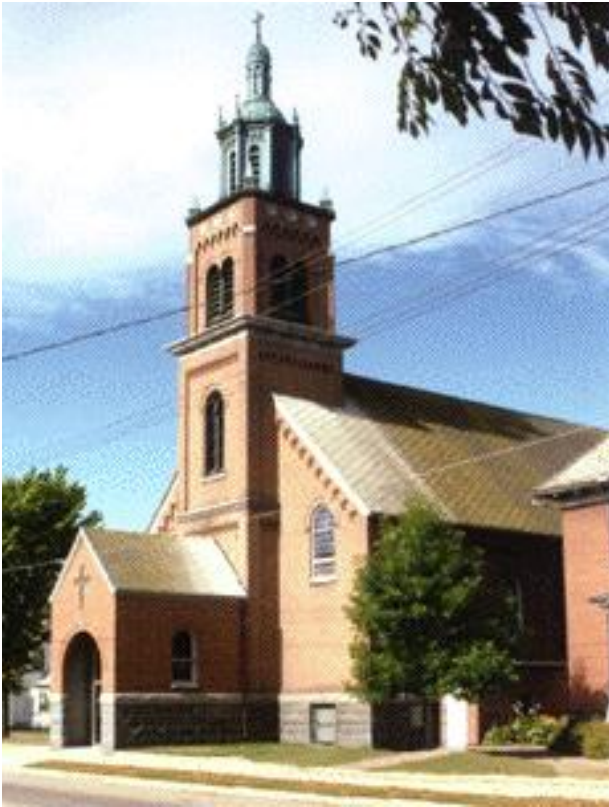


STAINED GLASS
WINDOWS AND
STATUARY OF
ST. JOHN CANTIUS
CHURCH



Introduction

Works of art and beauty have adorned the places of Christian worship from the earliest days. Already in the catacombs of first century Rome, we find Christian symbols and depictions of Christ the Good Shepherd, the Holy Spirit, Mary, and various martyrs. Paintings, stained glass, statues, and other forms of art are tied to the mystery of the Incarnation: in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, the invisible love, truth, and beauty of God are made visible to us. Art engages our imagination through the senses, and can lead us to God, Whose perfect Beauty is reflected in creation.

Saint John Cantius Church contains many treasures of Christian beauty in sign and symbol, particularly in the stained glass windows. (Note: because the Stations of the Cross are common to all churches, I do not discuss them here.)

The purpose of this small booklet is to record and describe the roots in Scripture and Catholic tradition of some of what surrounds us inside our place of worship. It is not a complete history of the artistic adornment of this church, but I would be glad to learn more about that history. Anyone with information or memories about this part of the parish's past is invited to share it for our parish archives. This description will begin in the sanctuary and go around the church clockwise.

Written by Fr. Thomas Knoblach
Pictures by Sterling & Roberta Schwieger

Sanctuary

Crucifix



Located centrally in the apse is the Crucifix, here depicting the Risen Christ, which was a custom in the early Church especially in the East. It is a reminder of the sacrifice of the Cross that is made present to us each time the Eucharist is celebrated at the altar. Christ's infinite love for us is displayed before our eyes (see Galatians 3:1), that we might recall our grounds for hope in salvation: *"God proves His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us"* (Romans 5:8); *"God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that we might not perish, but might have eternal life"* (John 3:16).

Tabernacle



To the left of the crucifix is the tabernacle, where the Body of Christ is reserved for the communion of the sick and for our adoration. In the Eucharist, Jesus remains true to His promise to be with us to the end of time (Matthew 28:20), answering the prayer of the Emmaus disciples: *“Stay with us, for it is nearly evening, and the day is almost over”* (Luke 24:29). The word “tabernacle” recalls the “tent” that the Israelites pitched over the Ark of the Covenant as they journeyed through the desert on their way to the Promised Land (see Exodus 25:8-9; chs. 36-40). As we make our pilgrim journey through life, God also dwells among us (see John 1:14: “And the Word became flesh, and made His dwelling [literally, “pitched His tent”] among us.”) The doors of the tabernacle are adorned with angels in adoration, in accord with the visions of heaven in Scripture (see for example Daniel 7:10 and Revelation 4:1-11).

Windows in the Sanctuary

East Round Window



to the left of the Crucifix: the Immaculate Heart of Mary – the heart of Mary is shown surrounded by roses (a symbol of the purity of Mary, perpetually virgin, and as one conceived free from the stain of original sin by the merits of her Son, Jesus). Mary’s Immaculate Heart is also seen here “pierced with a sword” in accord with the prophecy of Simeon (see Luke 2:22-35).

West Round Window



to the right of the Crucifix: the Sacred Heart of Jesus – the heart of Christ is depicted aflame with divine love for us, reflected in His cross and the crown of thorns surrounding His heart, as revealed to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque in 1675.

East Nave Window 1



The Lamb That Was Slain

As described in the Book of Revelation, Jesus is depicted here as the Lamb of God, victorious over suffering and death (bearing the banner of his triumph) and standing on the Book of Life with its seven seals (see Revelation 5:1-14; John 1:35, 19:36).

East Nave Window 2

Crown of Thorns, INRI

As the Gospels attest (e.g., Matthew 27:29), this crown woven from thorns was part of the Passion of Jesus, mocking His kingship (perhaps a reference to His preaching about the Kingdom of God). Additionally, the letters “INRI” shown here are an abbreviation for the inscription Pontius Pilate had placed on the cross: ***Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum*** (Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews); classical Latin did not have the letter “J” but used a capital “I.” According to John’s Gospel, this inscription was in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek; see John 19:19-20.

East Nave Window 3



Censer, Cross, and Crosier

The censer is used to hold coals and burn incense, a symbol of our prayers rising up to God and the mysterious holiness of God Who cannot be seen; see for instance Revelation 5:8; Exodus 30:8; Psalm 141). The cross is of course the symbol of our salvation through the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary. The crozier is a symbol of bishops, patterned after the shepherd's crook, since the bishops are successors of the Apostles appointed by Christ, the Good Shepherd, to shepherd His flock (see for instance Psalm 23; John 10:11-16; Hebrews 13:20; I Peter 5:2-4). All of these symbols taken together symbolize the priestly office – to pray, offer sacrifice, shepherd, and serve God and His people.

East Nave Window 4



The Anchor

The anchor is a symbol for the infused virtue of hope. Like an anchor, the assurance of salvation in Christ keeps us stable in the storms of life and the crosscurrents of history. It derives from the words of the Letter to the Hebrews: “ ... hold fast to the hope that lies before us. This we have as an anchor of the soul, sure and firm” (Hebrews 6:18-19).

East Nave Window 5



The Miter

The miter is the traditional head-dress worn by a bishop in the Roman Catholic Church. It is derived from that worn by Aaron the high priest in the Old Testament (see Exodus 28:4, 39) and shows both the continuity of the covenant faithfulness of God and the newness of the Priesthood of Christ, which the bishop has in its fullness as a successor to the Apostles of Christ.

East Nave Window 6



The Ten Commandments

This window depicts the two stone tablets written by the hand of God and given to Moses on Mount Sinai, containing the Ten Commandments (also known as the “Decalogue” or “Ten Words”; see especially Exodus 20:1-17; 32:1-19; 34:1-4). This is the Law given by God, the conditions on the part of God’s people to keep the covenant God had made with them in setting them free from slavery in Egypt. Because Jesus is the Word made flesh and established the new and everlasting covenant with us through His cross, John says that “while the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ” (John 1:17).

(this picture was difficult to get as it is covered on the inside of church by the choir loft)

East Rear Window



The Instruments of the Passion

In accord with what is known about how the Romans practiced crucifixion, and with what the Gospels tell us about the death of Christ, various items used in the Passion of Jesus are depicted. Shown here are:

- the ***lance*** that pierced the side of Christ after His death (John 19:33-37; see Zechariah 12:10, Numbers 20:11; Revelation 1:7); the water and blood that flowed from His wounded side are symbols of the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist

- the ***reed and sponge*** that were offered to Jesus after He spoke from the cross: "I thirst" (see John 19:28-29; Matthew 15:48; Mark 15:36; Luke 23:36). John calls this reed "hyssop," a small plant that would not have been strong enough to hold a sponge, but the term is probably used as a reference to the hyssop used to mark the homes of the Hebrews with the blood of the Passover lamb (see Exodus 12:22); John wants to point to Jesus as the true Lamb of God

- the ***hammer, tongs, and nails*** would have been used as Jesus was nailed to the cross, probably through His wrists and His feet

West Nave Window 1



The Pelican

One of the more striking symbols of Christ, Whose blood was shed on the Cross is and is still given to the faithful in the Eucharist to nourish us. As a Christian symbol, it derives from the legendary belief that the mother pelican would nourish her growing offspring by piercing her own breast and feeding them with her blood. This image is also recorded in the Latin Eucharistic hymn of St. Thomas Aquinas, *Adoro Te Devote*, where Jesus is called “pie pellicane, Iesu Domine” (O holy Pelican, Lord Jesus).

West Nave Window 2



The Chalice and the Host

The Eucharist is portrayed with the Sacred Host, the Bread of Life, suspended above the chalice containing the Blood of Christ. This can also be taken as a symbol of the infused virtue of Faith.

West Nave Window 3



The Chalice with Wheat and Grapes

The chalice containing the Blood of Christ, symbolic of the Eucharist, is shown flanked by grapes and sheaves of wheat, both reminding us that we, though many, are made one in sharing the Body and Blood of our Lord, just as many grains of wheat and many grapes come together to make the one Loaf and the one Cup (see I Corinthians 10:16-17).

West Nave Window 4



The Name of Mary

The letters MARIA are highly stylized here, depicting the name of Mary, the Mother of Jesus. They are placed beneath the Cross, where Mary stood in faithful love and compassion to watch her Son die for the salvation of the world (see John 19:25-27).

West Nave Window 5



The Tiara and Keys

Since the 8th century, and developing into its present form by the 15th century, the tiara is the head-dress worn as the symbol of the office of the papacy. Pope John Paul II was the first Pope in centuries who did not use this triple crown, wanting to reflect more his closeness in service to the people of the Church rather than his authority. In earliest forms, the tiara had a single coronet (crown) to reflect the Pope serving as the vicar on earth of Christ, the King. Later, a second coronet was added to symbolize that the Pope held both temporal and spiritual power in the Church. Even later, a third coronet was added, perhaps to show that the authority of the Church was greater than any earthly power.

The keys symbolize the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and refer to the power entrusted to Saint Peter and his successors, the Popes, by Jesus (see Matthew 16:19).

While recent Popes have not used the actual tiara, it remains central to every papal coat of arms as a symbol of this office.

West Nave Window 6



The Holy Bible

The Bible or Sacred Scriptures contain God’s revealed Word to humanity, and record the history of salvation from the time of creation through the revelation of the Word made flesh in Jesus Christ, and the end of time when Christ will return to judge the living and the dead. The Scriptures are “holy” because they are the very Word of God, the source of all holiness. The word “Bible” comes from the Greek word “biblios” meaning Book. The Holy Bible is the Book for it is God’s own proclamation. The Scriptures are not just a record of past words, but they are “living and effective, sharper than a two-edged sword” (see Hebrews 4:12).

West Rear Window



IHS

The first three letters of the name of Jesus, according to the capitals in the Greek alphabet (IESEUS). They are stylized and interwoven to depict the cross.

Statuary and other Art

Side entrance to church



Saint John Cantius

– Polish priest, theologian, and professor. Born on June 23, 1390 at Kanty, a small town near Oswiecim, in the diocese of Krakow, Poland. John earned a doctorate in theology and was soon after also ordained to the priesthood. He served as a professor of Sacred Scripture at the Krakow Academy until his death. He was renowned throughout his life for his humility, good humor, simplicity and poverty of life, generosity, and orthodox teaching. He died on Christmas Eve day, 1473 and was canonized in 1767. Feast day: December 23.

in front of church



Saint Joseph – foster father of Jesus, husband of Mary, Protector of the universal Church, patron of workers, patron of a happy death

in front of church



Saint Mary – the Blessed Virgin, wife of Joseph, Mother of Christ, Mother of God, Mother of the Church

in front of church



Processional Cross: They are made of oak and walnut – two woods with their own unique beauty, complementing one another with lighter and darker shades. This may stand for the two natures of Christ, divine and human; for the stages of our journey in life, with their own bright spots and shadows; for the two Testaments, Old and New, in the Scriptures; or for the beautiful harmony God creates out of our individual differences.

Each cross consists of 42 pieces of wood, just as the unity of the Church comes into being through the Holy Spirit making the many members of the Body of Christ into one.

The design is loosely patterned on a modified Jerusalem Cross. Each arm of the cross reveals three layers of wood, a reminder of the Trinity.

The straight lines and squared-off corners contrast with the complex shape of the Body of the Lord, just as the certainties and revealed truths of our Faith provide the background for our complex human journey through life, and death, and new life in Christ. But beyond the details, the Cross is ultimately the core mystery of our faith – for Jesus Christ, the Word of God made flesh, truly suffered and died on the wood of the Cross in the sacrificial love that we celebrate and truly experience in the Eucharist every time Jesus gives Himself to us at Mass, and truly rose into new life, the glorious Victor over the power of sin and death. The Cross is more than just a symbol, it is the record of a historical event, the central event in all of human history ... that the Son of God died and rose, that we might live forever.

In Parish Hall



The last Supper: This famous scene, patterned after the Last Supper by Leonardo da Vinci, captures the Institution of the Eucharist and the command of Jesus: "Do this in memory of Me." Jesus remains faithful to His promise to remain with us until the end of time, and gives Himself to us in love."

This depiction of the last Supper was originally part of the altar of the church. During the changes brought about by Vatican II the original Altar was dismantled and the Last Supper was framed in wood and moved down to the Parish Hall.

Parish Hall



Saint Theres of Lisieux (1873-1897) - French Carmelite Sister. Also known as Saint Theres of the Child Jesus or the "Little Flower." Theres Martin entered the Carmelite convent at age fifteen and died only nine years later. Her child-like simplicity and trust, and her desire to do all things - even the smallest things - with great love became known as her "Little Way." She is often depicted holding roses because of her promise that, once she attained the life of heaven, she would send forth a shower of roses to those in need. Feast day: October 1.

This Statue was upstairs in the Sanctuary before the changes brought by Vatican II

Parish Hall



Saint Anthony of Padua () - Portuguese Franciscan priest, Doctor of the Church. Patron of the poor, invoked for help in finding lost objects, eloquent preacher and teacher. Anthony had a reputation for working wonders in the service of conversions to the Faith. He is pictured with the lilies of purity and also holding the Scriptures on which stands the Child Jesus, for so he was observed one night by the owner of a house in which Anthony was staying - speaking in affectionate prayer with Jesus, the Word made flesh. Feast day: June 13.

This Statue was upstairs in the Sanctuary before the changes brought by Vatican II

Coat of Arms



Coat of Arms above the main entrance:

Main entrance



