



Church Architectural Notes

Stained Glass Windows

The Willet Stained Glass Studio of Philadelphia designed and fabricated the stained glass windows in the Church.

To complement the Spanish style architecture (a simplification of certain styles brought into Spain by the Moors) the technique of faceted glass was judged most appropriate. Contemporary faceted glass has strong ties with Moorish "Claires-voies" - i.e. stucco or plaster grilles - into which colored glass was set. That grille style influenced the design of the matrices in the St. Thomas Church windows.

Narthex

Over South entry door
"My Lord and My God" scene

Either side of South entry door
Artistic symbols of the Parish's patron saint

Eight Clerestory windows - *each represents one of the eight beatitudes:*

1. *Blest are the poor in spirit; the reign of God is theirs.* The chi rho symbol for Jesus Christ is on the heavenly throne flanked by palms.
2. *Blest are those that mourn; they shall be consoled.* The hour glass with the sands run out symbolizes death. The coffin is flanked with two candles. The butterfly represents life after death for all Christians who fly up to Heaven on beautiful wings after a time in the cocoon (grave.)
3. *Blest are the meek; they shall inherit the earth.* Hands reach up to grasp the globe of the earth.
4. *Blest are they who hunger and thirst for holiness; they shall have their fill.* The cross topped staff and wallet of a pilgrim and the lantern shining its light on an open Bible symbolize the search for holiness.
5. *Blest are they who show mercy; mercy shall be theirs.* The scales of justice depend from the chi rho, monogram of Jesus Christ.
6. *Blest are the singlehearted for they shall see God.* Purity is shown by a lily and a heart. The vision of God is symbolized by a yod, the Hebrew initial for Jehovah in a triangle – the Trinity.
7. *Blest too are the peacemakers; they shall be called the sons of God.* Peace is symbolized by a dove and an olive branch.
8. *Blest are those persecuted for holiness' sake; the reign of God is theirs.* Martyrdom is shown by the sword and palm. The triumph of Heaven is the cross and crown.

The Blessed Sacrament Alcove

Jesus at the Last Supper
Communion symbolized by bread and wine

The Baptistry Alcove

Jesus baptized in the Jordan
Baptism symbolized by dove, flame and water

North wall (East + West) - Choir

Holy Family memorials:

St. Joseph
Virgin and Child

Choir-specific:

St. Cecilia (patron saint of musicians)
St. Gregory (patron saint of singers)

West Wall/East Wall of Nave

The four evangelists surround the congregation, emphasizing the Parish's commitment to gospel values.

St. Matthew
St. Mark
St. Luke
St. John

Octagonal dome over the altar

Twenty four windows - three on each side of the octagon – grace the altar dome. The color spectrum moves from gold to ruby to blue to green - with the idea being that as the sun 'hits' the windows throughout the day - the different angles mimic the four seasons. The colors playing in the sanctuary are ever changing!

Stations of the Cross

The Stations of the Cross were a labor of love - loosely modeled after those on the Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem. Created of similar material as the Church's tabernacle, altar, ambo and baptistry, they were cast over several months in stages: I - IV, V- X, and XI - XIV.

All fourteen were installed and in place just in time for Good Friday's Way of the Cross in 1989.