

## *Our Beautiful Church*

— A SERIES OF ARTICLES DEPICTING THE MAGNIFICENCE OF OUR CHURCH —

### PART FIVE: THE AISLE WINDOWS ON THE NORTH SIDE

*The use of stained glass in church decoration is not only for the purpose of ornament, to carry out a scheme of pleasant lighting with form or color or to give religious atmosphere to the church. First and foremost, pictorial windows are there to teach spiritual lessons. They constitute, in effect, homilies in glass, expressing religious ideals and preaching Catholic doctrines. Beginning with this part 5 of our series, we will systematically analyze each of our main windows, explaining the respective themes and describing what they represent. We will first cover the windows on the north side, to be followed by the windows on the south side.*

#### THE PRINCIPAL THEME

The principal theme of the stained glass windows in our church is that of the title of the church, *Our Lady Queen of Martyrs*. For instance, in the center rose window is the figure of Our Lady enthroned as Queen of Martyrs. The central figure in the north transept rose window is that of St. Stephen, the first martyr; in the south transept rose window, it is that of St. Agnes, virgin-martyr of the early church. On the choir window, the two large figures flanking that of the Blessed Mother are those of St. Agnes and St. Catherine, holding the wheel indicative of the manner of her martyrdom (*more about the rose windows and the choir window later in this series*).

#### THE THEMES OF THE AISLE WINDOWS

In the aisle windows on the north side of the church, the theme is that of Christ represented under five traditional aspects. On the south side, the theme is that of Our Blessed Lady, also under five traditional aspects. With the figure of Christ and of Our Lady under each aspect is the figure of a saint whose life or chief virtue is properly associated with the particular aspect portrayed.



**HAIL MARY**  
**Full of Grace**

#### THE FIRST NORTH WINDOW

On the north side of the church, the first window from the transept towards the rear pictures Christ, the Redeemer – the Risen Saviour, described in the words of the angel at the Tomb: *He is risen!* Associated with the Risen Christ is St. Peter holding the keys symbolic of the power given him by Christ: *To thee, I will give the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound also in Heaven, whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed also in Heaven.* The inscription, *GO TELL PETER*, recalls the words of the angel at the Tomb of the Risen Christ to the two Marys.



#### THE SECOND NORTH WINDOW

The second window represents Christ – the Sacred Heart, symbolic of the infinite Love of God for men, reminding us of the words of the Sacred Heart to St. Margaret Mary, *Behold this Heart which has loved men so much and is so little loved in return.* The inscription recalls the prayer, *Sacred Heart of Jesus, burning with love for us, inflame our hearts with love for Thee.* Associated with the Sacred Heart is the great Doctor of the Church, St. Augustine, whose life was characterized by his great love of God and who is traditionally represented with a heart pierced with an arrow. The inscription is the virtue of *LOVE OF GOD.*



### THE THIRD NORTH WINDOW



Photos by Pepa Tanousis

The third window represents Christ as Prophet Teacher, holding the scroll of Sacred Scripture expressive of Christ's mission as the Teacher of mankind and fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old Testament. It is a reminder of the first sermon of Christ in the synagogue of Capharnaum, when He told the congregation: *This day the Scripture is fulfilled in your ears.* Associated with Christ is the great apostle of Ireland, St. Patrick, in the robes of primate-archbishop, who taught the Faith so well that it became the outstanding Irish virtue. The inscription **FAITH** recalls the result of the apostolic teaching, as St. Paul put it: *Faith comes by hearing;* and the words of the eunuch of Queen Candace: *How can I understand unless some man show me?*

### THE FIFTH NORTH WINDOW



The fifth window represents Christ the King, with the motto from the Divine Office of the Feast: *The Lord is our King.* Fittingly associated with Christ is St. Thomas More, chancellor of England under Henry VIII, who was beheaded for "treason" because he refused to take the oath of allegiance to Henry as the spiritual head of the Church of England, which Henry had separated from communion with Rome and the Pope. St. Thomas is represented with the writer's quill, the reminder of the fact that he was a poet and scholar, the author of the classic on good government, *Utopia.* His martyrdom resulted from his higher loyalty to Christ the King rather than to his earthly king; the inscription is therefore the virtue of **LOYALTY.**



### THE FOURTH NORTH WINDOW

The fourth window represents Christ as the Eternal Priest, garbed in priestly vestments and holding the chalice of the Holy Sacrifice. The motto recalls the words of Scripture: *Thou art a priest forever, according to the order of Melchisedec.* Melchisedec, it will be recalled, was the patriarchal symbol of the sacrifice of the New Testament, who offered bread and wine as his priestly sacrifice to Almighty God. With Christ, the Eternal Priest, is associated St. Jude, apostle, one of the first priests ordained by Christ at the Last Supper, when He said: *Do this in memory of Me.* St. Jude, popularly called the *Saint of impossible cases*, is pictured with the club indicative of the manner of his martyrdom. The inscription is the virtue of **ZEAL.**