

A GUIDE TO THE NAVE WINDOWS
OF
ST. ALBAN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
Marshfield, Wisconsin



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The windows were all designed and executed in the studios of Gabriel Loire, Chartres; France. By a rather new technique, inch thick glass is chipped on the inside surface and set in epoxy or concrete. This gives much richer colors than are possible with old fashioned leaded stained glass. Even on a dark day, these windows glow like jewels.

Your attention is directed first to the baptistery window in the west wall of the Church. This window is in honor of God the Holy Ghost. The swirling blues suggest the wind of Pentecost and the waters of Creation and Baptism. "In the beginning... the Spirit of God hovered over the face of the waters" (Genesis 1:2). The seven flames of fire represent the Seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost conferred in Confirmation, in which the Holy Spirit enters the souls of the faithful.

The eleven windows in the nave represent the saints, members of the Church Triumphant in heaven, whose prayers and examples assist us in the Church on earth. Worshippers in St. Alban's are thus surrounded by reminders of their heavenly friends and patrons.

“Lo, what a crowd of witnesses
Encompass us around;
Men once like us with suffering tried
But now with glory crowned!”

Eleven appropriate saints have been chosen for these window. They may be listed in several categories, displaying the rich variety of holiness in the Family of God. Ten are men, one is a woman. Six are New Testament saints, five are from later periods of Church history. Five are Jews, one is Greek, two are British Celts, one is Italian, one English, and one French: four are Apostles, one is a Bishop, one a Priest and five are laymen. Six are Martyrs. Four were married. Two were Kings, and also husbands and fathers.

As you face the Altar, on your left near the North door, where a Roman brick from St. Alban’s Cathedral is embedded in the wall, you will find the window of St. Alban the Martyr, patron saint of this Parish. Above the blood stained palm of martyrdom rises the blue stream of the holy well which sprang up where St. Alban was beheaded, at St. Albans in England, about 303 A.D.

Also you will see a wood carving of St. Alban which was created by Charles Owen.

The next window is the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Queen of Saints. A burst of golden radiance surmounts the letter M, her

initial.

The window of St. Paul the Apostle is next. The Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God (Ephesians 6:17) is the symbol.

Next is the window of St. John, Apostle and Evangelist with a golden chalice.

The window of St. Luke the Evangelist shows the Gospel book and a portrait of St. Mary the Virgin, whose vocation is so beautifully depicted in St. Luke's Gospel. St Luke, the beloved physician, patron of doctors and nurses is a natural choice for a window in Marshfield, a medical center.

The last window on the Gospel side of the Church is that of St. James the Great Apostle. The cockleshells are badges of pilgrimage of St. James's shrine at Compostella in Spain.

Crossing to the Epistle side of the nave, we see St. Patrick's window nearest the Altar. The saint's crozier overcomes the serpent of sin and the bonfires of paganism. This is the only window in which Gabriel Loire has made extensive use of green and orange.

The next window is of St. Thomas Aquinas. Above the book of the saint's theological writings is seen a Eucharistic Host, glowing with the light of the Real Presence. St. Thomas is the

author of many of our hymns of Eucharistic adoration, such as “O Saving Victim”.

The next window is that of St. Peter the Apostle. A fisherman’s boat is seen, together with the Keys of the Kingdom, which Our Lord entrusted to St. Peter.

The next window is dedicated to King Charles the Martyr. The palm of martyrdom is seen with the Royal Crown, become a Martyr’s crown. Charles I of England was beheaded on January 30, 1649. He had been offered his life if only he would abandon the Episcopal Church.

The last window is of St. Louis, King of France, symbolized by the royal scepter, the fleur-de-lis, and numerous crusaders’ crosses. Louis IX, a Crusader, a friend of St. Thomas Aquinas, and an exemplary and attractive ruler and man, died in 1270 A.D. It seems that Gabriel Loire has put all his skill into this charming window, honoring a saint dear to France and to Chartres.

We hope your visit to St. Alban’s will inspire you to increased love of Our Lord and His Holy Church.