

The Stained Glass Windows of St. Ann's Catholic Church

The following information was pieced together by viewing the windows, researching cemetery information, and reviewing the Janesville history and St. Ann's Church publications.

On the east side of the church, from the altar north, are six windows. The first window was donated by Mr. and Mrs. J.C. (John Charles) Gibson and shows an archangel with the words, "regina angelorum ora pro nobis" translated as Queen of Angels, pray for us. Mr. Gibson (1833-1919) came to America from County Clare, Ireland at the age of 15. He married Catherine Cunningham, farmed near Alma City and then moved to Janesville. He enlisted in the Civil War in 1865 and served in the First Minnesota Heavy Artillery Company.

The next window symbolizes Christ as the "Lamb of God" and includes the wording "Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. Have mercy on us." This window was donated by Mrs. Emil Die[u]donne (Rosa Lampart, 1854-1934) who was active in civic, social, and church affairs and had three children, Emma (Volz), Eugene, and Regina. Her husband (Emil Dieudonne, 1852-1924) was born in Alsace-Lorraine, France and came to America at age 20. He had an implement and hardware business, served at one time as cashier at the Janesville State Bank, was a member of the Janesville School Board, and was the Janesville mayor from 1887-1889.

The third window shows a bird feeding its young symbolizing Christ nurturing us. This window was donated by Mr. Michael Larkin (1818-1908) who immigrated from County Galway, Ireland at the age of twenty-eight. He married Margaret Kelly, had eight children, and was known as a successful farmer.

The fourth window represents the Eucharist and is in memory of Michael Keeley (1826-1896) who was born in Wexford County, Ireland. He married Bridget McCabe and had four children, Mary, Anna Elizabeth (Burns), Matthew, and James.

The fifth window, representing the "Heart of Mary" pierced with a sword, was donated by the choir. On the window are the Latin words, "Mater dei nobis deprecamini", meaning Mother of God we pray.

The sixth window was donated by John Finley, Sr. (1850-1920) who started Finley Brothers general store and served as Janesville mayor from 1897-1898 and as President of the Janesville State Bank from 1908-1920. The window pictures a cross and the words, "hope, faith, charity".

On the north side of the church is a very large stained glass window in the main tower above the front entrance to the church depicting The Annunciation which is when Gabriel appeared to Mary in Nazareth requesting that she accept being the Mother of God. This window is in memory of Mr. and Mrs. John McGovern. Mr. McGovern (1828-1900) was born in Ireland and married Ellen Meehan there before coming to America. They resided in Janesville about 15 years before his death, leaving a wife, two sons and a daughter.

On each side of the main tower are two stained glass windows of similar design. Part of one window can be seen from inside the church at the back of the stairway leading to the choir loft. This window was a gift of Mary Fogel who provided flowers for the altar for many years; her brother, Louie, was the church custodian. Another window can be seen from the choir loft down into the confessor room. There is also a stained glass window of St. Ann with her daughter, Mary, directly above the front entrance door.

There are eight windows on the west side of the church. Proceeding from the main entrance to the altar, the first window was donated by F. B. (Fredrick Bernard) Volz (1874-1966) who operated a hardware store, was assistant cashier at the Janesville State Bank, and was married to Emma Dieudonne. This window pictures the "Heart of Mary" pierced with a sword.

The next window, again showing a pierced "Heart of Mary", was donated by Patrick Foley (1827-1910) who emigrated from Ireland, was married to Anne Lang, and had four children, John, Cecelia (McBride), Thomas, and Winifred (Cahill).

The third window also depicts the Eucharist and is in memory of Terrence Lilly, brother and/or grandfather of Alice Lilly. The grandfather (1808-1891), a cooper by trade (repairer of casks and barrels), was born in Ireland as well as his wife, Mary McManus. They came to America settling on the eastern border of Winnebago Indian Reservation in St. Mary Township and farmed. The brother, Terrence Patricck, died in 1906 at the age of 20.

The next window, showing a bird feeding its young, was donated by Thomas Cahill (1826-1916), who was born in Kilkenny County, Ireland. After immigrating to America he married Mary Harney and eventually came to Minnesota and began farming. He was a member of the Janesville Township Board for more than 40 years and served as its chairman. He had four children, John, Bridget (Byron), William, and Thomas. His brother, John Cahill, is referenced below.

The fifth window shows the "Crown of Glory" and is in memory of Terrence McBride (1817-1893). He was born in Ireland, married Anne McDonough and four sons, John, Matthew, James, and Terrence, and one daughter, Mary Ellen.

The sixth window depicts the monstrance which represents the divinity of "Christ in Communion" and was donated by Tim (Timothy) Sullivan (1837-1908) who was born in Ireland and was married to Mary Cahill and had two children, Julia (Keeley) and James.

The seventh window pictures a heart with a crown of thorns and represents the "Sacred Heart of Jesus". This window is in memory of John Cahill (1831-1904) who was born in Ireland and after immigrating to America established himself in farming and was married to Mary Cavanaugh. They had ten children, Mary Ann (McCarthy), Thomas, Walter, James, John, Margaret (McGannon), Ellen (Eustice), William, Agnes (Norton), and Kathryn (Jewison).

The last window on the west side depicts the Lady of Lourdes representing the Blessed Virgin Mary and was dedicated in memory of Mrs. Otto F. Arnoldt (Mary Joseph Bruce), the matriarch of the Arnoldt family that had the funeral home and furniture business in Janesville.

The three small windows on the south side behind the altar have no designated donors. These windows depict the Agony in the Garden which is the event between the Last Supper, the beginning of the Way of the Cross, and the Crucifixion.

The Chapel of Divine Mercy, which was constructed in 2006, has three stained glass windows on the south wall representing the sacraments. Baptism in memory of Herb and Eileen Eustice, the Eucharist in memory of Lowell and Hazel Johnson, and Reconciliation in memory of Leon and Margaret Adams. The stained glass inset above the entrance door depicts the Sacred Heart of Jesus and is in memory of Cyril and Belva Arnold who had the implement business in Janesville.

References

1. Church of Saint Ann, Janesville, Minnesota, 2009 [Parish Directory].
2. St. Ann's Catholic Church, Janesville, Minnesota, Parish Directory, August 1995.
3. The History of Janesville, 1856-1956, Janesville Centennial, June 24-25-26, 1956.
4. www.findagrave.com
5. www.stannjan.com [photos]

Remember: you have to come inside the church to appreciate the full beauty of the windows, and, the light from within will radiate into the darkness of the night.

Document created September 2020 by Karen (Fury) Cruz