

# ***Stained Glass Windows at Our Lady of Sorrows Church***

*This page provides a description of the symbols found in the windows of the nave of Our Lady of Sorrows Church. Installed in 1942 and recently restored, each is dedicated to a title of Mary from the Litany of Loreto. The crown in each window denotes Mary's Queenship. Proceeding from the right side of the sanctuary, we find the titles:*

## **1. Queen of Peace**

- CP\*: A dove, the symbol of peace alludes to the Genesis' account of the flood when it brought Noah, an olive branch when the waters receded and God restored peace. The dove is also a symbol of the Holy Spirit.
- UP: The four pointed star symbolizes the four points of the cross as well as the Star of Bethlehem.
- LP: The ship is a symbol of the Church.

## **2. Queen of the Holy Rosary**

- CP\*: The Rosary, a string of beads used to count prayers while meditating on various Gospel events. The word "rosary" comes from the Latin, *rosarium* meaning a "crown of roses."
- UP: The cross, the symbol of faith and instrument of our redemption. The chalice signifies the blood shed by Christ at his crucifixion.
- LP: The chalice and serpent is an attribute of St. John the Apostle. According to tradition, the Emperor ordered St. John to drink poisoned wine. When he took the chalice, the poison left in the form of a snake.

## **3. Queen Without Original Sin**

- CP\*: The white lily is symbol of Mary's purity. The serpent, a symbol of Satan. This refers to Genesis 3 wherein the promise of a Redeemer for fallen mankind is found. The woman in the passage prefigures Mary, whose Divine Son would crush Satan. The dogma of the Immaculate Conception affirms that Mary was preserved from all stain of sin from the first moment of her conception.
- UP: A pomegranate, a symbol of Spring and rebirth, was adopted by Christians to signify Resurrection and eternal life. The seeds bursting forth from the plant are likened to Christ bursting forth from the tomb. Its abundant seeds symbolize the Church's many members.
- LP: The fleur-de-lis symbolizes purity, i.e. Mary.

#### 4. Queen of Confessors

- CP\*: Confessors are those saints who are not martyrs. A crown is joined to a Tau style cross and a white stole (liturgical attire symbolizing authority). It is intentionally white, the color of vesture used for the feast of non-martyrs.
- UP: The rose, the symbol of beauty, is symbolic of Mary's many virtues.
- LP: The crown of thorns and three nails are emblems of Christ's passion.

#### 5. Queen of Apostles

- CP\*: Twelve flames emanating from the crown, recall Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles and Mary as "tongues of fire."
- UP: The monogram IHC are the first three letters of the name of Jesus in Greek—IHCUS. It is often rendered as IHS which is taken from the Latin words, Jesus Hominum Salvator (Jesus Savior of Mankind.)
- LP: The four pointed star recalls the Star of Bethlehem as well as the four points of the cross.

#### 6. Queen of Martyrs

- CP\*: Palms are an ancient symbol of victory and thus points to the martyrs' triumph over death. Here they pass through a crown of thorns to denote the martyr's share in the sufferings of Christ.
- UP: A censer (thurible) is the liturgical vessel in which incense is burned. Its rising, fragrant smoke symbolizes our prayer rising to God.
- LP: The rose superimposed on a cross symbolizes virtue, purity, and martyrdom.

#### 7. Queen of Angels

- CP\*: The crown symbolizes the Queenship of Mary. The angels bow in veneration.
- UP: The letter "M" stands for Mary.
- LP: The five pointed star is a symbol of the Nativity.

#### 8. Gate of Heaven

- CP\*: Mary is a "gate" since it was through her that Christ passed from heaven to earth. Moreover, her intercession helps bring souls to heaven. This is symbolized by a castle with open portals. From within the castle, is the shining light of Christ. It is flanked by the letters for Alpha and Omega, the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, denoting Christ as the "beginning and the end" (ref. Rev. 1:8)

- UP: The oak twig is a symbol for strong faith, virtue, and endurance under adversity.
- LP: The cluster of grapes symbolize the Blood of Christ received in the Eucharist.

## 9. Ark of the Covenant

- CP\*: As the Ark contained the Law of the Old Covenant, Mary carried in her womb Christ, who inaugurated the New Covenant. This is represented by the Star of David above an altar. The six points of David's star correspond to the six attributes of God: power, wisdom, majesty, love, mercy, and justice. It is also a symbol of Israel. Upon the altar is a monstrance, alluding to the Eucharist, Sacrament of the New Covenant. Angels are depicted in adoration.
- UP: The monogram IHS is taken from the Latin words, Jesus Hominum Salvator (Jesus Savior of Mankind).
- LP: The purse of coins, an emblem of the passion recalls the money Judas received for betraying Jesus.

## 10. House of Gold

- CP\*: A golden house is depicted. Just as the Temple was adorned with gold, so Mary's soul was adorned with sanctity.
- UP: The Latin Cross symbolizes salvation, the Lord's passion, and eternal life.
- LP: The flaming heart upon which is the monogram of MR (Mother of the Redeemer) recalls Mary's fervent love.

## 11. Tower of David

- CP\*: Mary's perfection is high as was David's tower herein depicted. From the imposing tower emerge two horns which may refer to the Shofar used to announce the Jubilee Year or the horns of oil used to anoint prophets and kings.
- UP: The Lily is a symbol of Mary's purity
- LP: The cross draped in linen recalls the descent of Jesus' body from the cross and his resurrection.

## 12. Mystical Rose

- CP\*: A crown and rose refer to the beauty of Mary our Queen.
- UP: A Latin cross is the symbol of faith and salvation.
- LP: A crown and rose here denote Mary's Queenship and her virtues and beauty.

### 13. ? Mother of the Savior

- CP\*: Mary's sharing in her Son's Passion is cited here by the linen burial cloth of Christ, bearing a red cross. The pierced heart refers to Simeon's prophesy that a sword of sorrow would pierce her heart.(Lk 2:22-40)
- UP: The Latin cross is a symbol of faith, salvation, and the Lord's passion.
- LP: The shell, used to pour water is a symbol of the sacrament of Baptism.

### 14. ? Mirror of Justice

- CP\*: Scales, the symbol of justice and equality, here also denotes the perfect state of Mary's soul. She, like a mirror, reflects this throughout her life.
- UP: Christians adopted the pomegranate, symbol of Spring and rebirth, to signify Resurrection and eternal life. The seeds bursting forth from the plant are likened to Christ bursting forth from the tomb. Its abundant seeds symbolize the Church's many members.
- LP: The first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, Alpha and Omega, refer to Christ the Beginning and the End.

### 15. ? Mother of our Creator

- CP\*: Mary is honored as Mother of Jesus, God, who is co-eternal with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Here the hand of the Father is depicted surrounded by elements of creation: stars, sun, and moon.
- UP: The tower symbolizes of God as our refuge. The tower's three window are an allusion of the Trinity. The crosier symbolizes the authority and jurisdiction of a bishop, as well as firmness, mercy, and correction of vices.
- LP: The flaming heart with its monogram I H S signify the merciful love of the heart of Christ.

### 16. ? Our Lady of Good Counsel

- CP\*: A keen observer will note here a spelling error-"council," an advisory body should be "counsel " meaning advice or guidance. Mary's counsels the servers at the wedding in Cana to "Do whatever he tells you," the goal of the spiritual life. The scepter denotes Mary's regal authority. The monogram M R stands for Mater Redemptoris (Mother of the Redeemer)
- UP: The letter M stands for Mary.
- LP: The pilgrim's staff and hanging purse with the letters S J is a symbol of St. James the Greater.

\* CP = Central Panel

UP = Upper Panel

LP = Lower Panel