

Explanation of the Stained Glass Windows

St. Bernard's Church, Blencoe

In the nave of the church are eight large windows of imported stained glass whose pictures recall to our minds various events in the life of Christ. They are as follows: *the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Finding of Christ in the Temple at the age of twelve, the Baptism of Our Lord, the Agony in the Garden, the Resurrection, the Ascension, and the Descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles.*

(See pictures pages 123, 125, 127 and 129)

In the shrine alcove, dedicated to the Patron Saint, Saint Bernard, are two windows with symbols referring to that Saint. One shows three mitres on a book, and the other an inkhorn with a pen. The mitres are a symbol of his authority as an abbot, for he was the noted abbot of Clairvaux, and the pen and inkhorn refer to him as a well-known writer and author.

The mothers' and children's room contains two windows picturing symbols of Our Blessed Mother. In one we find the lily, one of the most common of her symbols, and especially common since the 12th century, the madonna lily. In almost all pictures of the Annunciation, she is shown holding a lily, or else it is shown growing in a jar next to her. The lily is a symbol of virginity

and purity, and hence of the Virgin Birth of Our Lord. The other window depicts the rose, a common symbol of the Blessed Virgin, taken from the Litany, in which she is addressed as the "mystical rose."

The beautiful Rose Window in the choir loft is rich in symbolism and in color. It is the *Window of the Seven Sacraments*. Without any great study one can observe that, although there are eight sections in the window, each of these sections also form part of an inner and part of an outer circle.

In the top section of the inner circle is pictured the *Hand of God*, a symbol portraying God the Father from whose only begotten Son we received these Sacraments. The other sections of the inner circle contain seven doves, symbolizing the Holy Ghost who sanctifies us by means of the Sacraments. Hence the Blessed Trinity is also represented here.

In the top segment of the outer circle is the Lamb and the XP, symbol and monogram of our Lord Jesus Christ, the author of the seven Sacraments. In the other sections of the outer circle, are the symbols of these seven Sacraments as explained here below.

Baptism. The Baptismal waters which wash our souls from original sin are depicted by water flowing from the shell with its handle in the shape of a cross. The fish swimming in the water signify the faithful who by virtue of Baptism share in the life of Christ by sanctifying grace. The words "Ego te baptizo" recall the form used in administering this Sacrament and the anchor refers to Christ, a safe anchor of our salvation.



The beautiful Rose Window of the Seven Sacraments in St. Bernard's Church.