



The Stained Glass Windows
in the Church of
St. John the Baptist,
Hillsdale, NJ





Part II: The Old Testament,
Disciples from Earliest to Recent
Times,
The Sacraments



Our Place in the Story

In Part I of the story, we meet the 12 sons of Jacob--the foundation for the 12 Tribes of Israel, recognize five significant events from Jesus' ministry, and are introduced to the 12 Apostles. In Part II, we meet many others from our Hebrew legacy, and those who, because they (like us) belong to the family through sacramental participation, lived their lives as Jesus taught, bringing light to the world and setting examples for those who follow. The presentation ends with the Seven Sacraments: the outward signs of our belonging.

Mary Elbert

Parishioner, St. John the Baptist Church



Noah, Abraham, Isaac

The ark and the animals tell the story of the flood that destroyed all except Noah, his sons and their families, and two of each animal.

The sacrificial lamb symbolizes Abraham's loyalty in his willingness to give up everything, even his son Isaac to God. As he prepared to offer his son in sacrifice, an angel held him back. He freed his son and discovered a ram nearby which he and Isaac sacrificed to God. The Lord said to Abraham, " I will bless you abundantly and make your descendants as countless as the stars in the sky and sands on the seashore; your descendants shall take possession of the gates of their enemies, and in your descendants all the nations of the earth shall find blessing--all this because you obeyed my command" (22:17-18).



Moses and Aaron

The serpent, the staff, the fire and cloud recall the story of Moses and the Exodus from slavery in Egypt.

At the bottom is the pomegranate, Moses' brother Aaron's symbol. In Exodus, chapter 28, the Lord gives direction for the vestments his priests will wear: "All around the hem at the bottom you shall make pomegranates woven of violet, purple, and scarlet yarn, and fine linen twined with gold bells between them and . . . Aaron shall wear it when ministering. . ." (Ex. 28:33, 35).



Joshua and Ruth

The crossed swords at the top represent Joshua, who led the Israelites to the city of Jericho. The tumbling pillars illustrate the falling walls of the city. The story is found in Joshua, chapters 5 and 6.

The lower half of the window shows a crown, a veil, and stones. The Book of Ruth is about faith and fidelity; Ruth's fidelity to her mother-in-law, Naomi, and both Naomi's and Ruth's faith in Naomi's God.



Saul and David

In the first book of Samuel, the Israelites request a king like the other peoples of the region. God grants the request and Samuel anoints Saul, a Benjaminite, as the first king of Israel. Saul's armor appears above the harp and the scroll of King David, whose story begins in the second book of Samuel.

David was a young shepherd and musician chosen by God as the second king. He is remembered for killing Goliath. About half of the Psalms are attributed to him.



Solomon, Tobia and Sarah

The third king, Solomon, was known for his justice and wisdom, represented by the scales of justice. The fortress-like walls are Solomon's temple, which was destroyed by the Babylonians. The Western Wall, in modern day Israel, is a remaining section of the expansion by Herod the Great of Solomon's rebuilt temple.

The Book of Tobit tells an interesting story about his son Tobia and Sarah, a woman afflicted by a demon. Sarah had married seven times but each time "the wicked demon Asmodeus killed them off before they could have intercourse with her" (3:7, 8). Tobit is afflicted with blindness. Both pray to the Lord for death. The Lord sent the Archangel Raphael to heal Tobit of his blindness and Sarah of her possession so that she might marry Tobit's son Tobia. The ossuary contains the liver, gall, and heart of a large fish. Sarah uses the gall and heart to rid herself of the demon and Tobia uses the liver to rub on his father's eyes to cure his blindness.



Judith and Esther

The Book of Judith shows God working his will through women. The Hebrews resist the siege by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar, but, at the point of surrender, Judith intervenes, goes to the tent of Holofernes, the commander-in-chief of the armies, and beheads him as he sleeps in a drunken stupor. The Assyrians panic and the Hebrews rout and slaughter them. The sheafs of barley represent the harvest time during which Judith's husband, Manasseh, died.

The six-branched menorah, trumpets, and bells symbolize the joyful celebration of the Jews' deliverance from Xerxes by Queen Esther. The memory of her reversal of Xerxes' order to destroy all the Jews in the Persian Empire is perpetuated by the annual feast of Purim.

The six branched menorah is only used in the temple. The eight branch menorah is used in homes during the Hanukkah festival, recalling the miracle of the oil told in Maccabees.



Job and Isaiah

The book of Job is a poem that dramatizes the problem of the suffering of the innocent and of retribution. The tallis, oil bottle, and lamp symbolize trust in God's patience.

The wings of the seraphim represent the greatest of the prophets, Isaiah. In Chapter 6, the prophet receives his call and his lips are cleansed of wickedness by the seraphim holding a burning ember. Isaiah hears the Lord say, "Whom shall I send?" and he replies, "Here I am, Lord, send me."



Jeremiah and Ezekiel

Chapter 8 of Ezekiel's prophecies, tells that the bones of kings, princes of Judah, and citizens of Jerusalem will be emptied out of their graves and "lie like dung upon the ground." Why is the land ravaged, asks Jeremiah. The Lord answers, "because they have abandoned my law, and have not followed it or listened to my voice."

Israel is in exile in Babylon when the word comes to Ezekiel. He reminds the Hebrews of their sins and predicts further retribution. His message changes to one of hope: the vision of the future when Israel rises to new life from the graveyard of Babylon. Chapter 19 presents the allegory of the vine branch, and in later chapters, the restoration of the temple. "Then he brought me back to the entrance of the temple and I saw water flowing out from beneath the threshold. . . ." (Ezekiel 47:1).



Daniel and Osee (Hosea)

The Book of Daniel tells of the trials and tribulations of Daniel, a young Jew in Babylon, and his three companions. Their message is that people of faith can resist temptation and conquer adversity. The fiery furnace story is found in chapter 3. Daniel in the lion's den is told in chapter 6.

The teachings of Osee (Hosea) center on a faithless Israel. This prophet begins the tradition of describing the relationship between Yahweh and Israel in terms of marriage. The broken ark represents this infidelity; the veil and rings-the marriage, the altar-the symbol of the church.



Joel and Amos

Joel, faced with a devastating invasion of locusts, visualizes it as an apocalyptic symbol. He summons the people to repent, to turn to the Lord with weeping and fasting.

The cornucopia is a sign of Amos's message that revelation is not only destructive, but is filled with the loving design of a merciful and faithful (generous) God.



Jonah and Micah

Jonah's story is a humorous, but sublime lesson. Jonah is bitter because Yahweh leads the people of Nineveh to repentance and does not carry out the destruction of the city. His attitude reflects an intolerance that limits God's mercy to one nation. This is preparation for the Gospel message that redemption is for all.

The broken scales and tied hands are symbolic of Micah's attacks on the rich exploiters of the poor: the fraudulent merchants, the venal judges, and the corrupt priests and prophets. His book ends on a positive note, with the prophecy that a prince of the House of David will rule over a reunited Israel.

Saints from Earliest Times

The lower windows of the east wing represent the saints who, from earliest days to the most recent days, have lived in the Light of God and have attained His everlasting rewards.

<http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/prayers-and-devotions/saints>

<https://www.catholic.org/saints/stindex.php>



St. Luke and St. Mark

Luke: The bull and wings

Death: first century. Feast: October 18

Patron of physicians and surgeons

Something Extra: He traveled with Paul, and it is believed that he authored the Acts of the Apostles.

Mark: The lion

Death: first century. Feast: April 25

Patron of notaries, Venice

Something Extra: He traveled with Paul and Barnabas. Peter, according to tradition, sent Mark to Alexandria where he founded the church there and became its first bishop. In his gospel, Mark tells Jesus' story in light of Easter.



St. Paul and St. Cecilia

Paul: Sword and burst of light

Death: first century. Feast: June 29

Patron of missions, theologians, gentiles

Something Extra: He previously persecuted Christians; later he traveled the known world, wrote many letters teaching and encouraging the Christian communities.

Cecilia: The harp

Death: third century. Feast: November 22

Patron of music and musicians

Something extra: She was arrested for burying her brother and her husband after they were martyred by being beheaded. She was beheaded in a botched job and suffered for three days before finally dying.



St. Lucy and St. George

Lucy: Three crowns

Death: early fourth century. Feast: December 13

Patron of those with eye trouble, blindness

Something extra: She prayed at the grave of St. Agatha for her mother's healing; her mother then agreed to give Lucy's dowry to the poor and allow Lucy to devote her life to God.

George: Dragon

Death: early fourth century. Feast: April 23

Patron of England, Catalonia

Something extra: He killed a dragon (alligator or crocodile) that was threatening a village. The villagers had offered it animals and then maidens without success, and were converted to Christianity when George killed it in the Sign of the Cross.



St. Helena and St. Monica

Helena: The cross and the church

Death: 330. Feast: August 18

Patron of new discoveries

Something extra: Emperor Constantine gave Helena, his mother, the job of searching for Christian relics, restoring and protecting them.

Monica: Dagger, pierced heart, crown of thorns

Death: 387. Feast: August 27

Patron of wives and abuse victims

Something extra: She was married to a Roman patrician with whom she had three children, including Augustine. She prayed persistently for her family's conversion and lived to see Augustine converted and ordained.



St. Ambrose and St. Patrick

Ambrose, Doctor of the Church: Bishop's mitre, book

Death: 397. Feast: December 7

Patron of beekeepers, beggars, learners, Milan

Something extra: He was baptized by St Augustine, ordained and made bishop of Milan all at the same time. He was devoted to St. Monica for her dedication to saving the soul of her son, Augustine.

Patrick: Shamrock, bishop's staff

Death: 493. Feast: March 17

Patron of Ireland

Something extra: He was captured and enslaved in Ireland for twenty years. Later, he returned as a priest/bishop and converted much of Ireland. He used the shamrock to explain the Trinity.



St. Jerome and St. Augustine of Hippo

Jerome, Doctor of the Church: Trumpets and scroll

Death: 420. Feast: September 30

Patron of archeologists, Biblical scholars, librarians

Something extra: Highly educated, he spent years translating the Bible from Hebrew and Old Latin.

Augustine, Doctor of the Church: Walled city, bishop's glove and ring

Death: 430. Feast: August 28

Patron of brewers

Something extra: Son of St. Monica, he lived a dissolute life until he was converted and became a priest, bishop, and Catholic writer. On the wall in his room in large letters, he wrote: "Here we do not speak evil of anyone."



St. Leo the Great and St. Benedict of Nursia

Leo, Doctor of the Church: Pope's crown, cross

Death: 461. Feast: November 10

Patron of (none listed)

Something extra: Leo came from an aristocratic Roman family; he was known for his ability to settle disputes--civil, religious, others. He settled the dispute about Jesus' nature--human and divine.

Benedict: Unction jar, wine jar, coins, water jar

Death: 547. Feast: July 11

Patron of students, Europe

Something extra: He founded the Benedictine order; his Rule became the root of the Church's monastic life. His twin sister Scholastica founded the Benedictines for women.



St. Gregory I (Great) and St. Elizabeth of Hungary

Gregory, Doctor of the Church: Harp

Death: 604. Feast: September 3

Patron of musicians, singers, students, and teachers

Something extra: Pope Gregory was a prolific writer, and he is credited with placing the Our Father into the place it still holds in the Mass. Gregorian Chant, melodious, monophonic music associated with medieval monasteries, is often attributed to him, but some historians argue it rightly belongs to Gregory II.

Elizabeth: Crown, fruit, bread, money

Death: 1231. Feast: November 17

Patron of bakers, beggars, homeless people, charities, hospitals

Something extra: She joined the Third Order of St. Francis, founded a hospital in which she herself cared for the ill, and generously gave away whatever she had to feed and clothe the poor.



St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Catherine of Siena

Thomas, Doctor of the Church: Dove on book

Death: 1274. Feast: January 28

Patron of students, all universities

Something extra: He was kidnapped by his family and held prisoner in their castle so that he could not enter the Dominicans. Eventually his mother arranged for his escape and he became a Dominican. *Summa Theologiae* is his most famous work.

Catherine, Doctor of the Church: Cross, ring, box

Death: 1380. Feast: April 29

Patron of Fire Prevention

Something extra: She joined the Third Order of St. Dominic and lived a life of caring for the poor, involving herself in politics, and writing letters. She wrote over 400 letters, considered some of the most brilliant writings in the Catholic Church.



St. Joan of Arc and St. Charles Borromeo

Joan: Burning logs, staff, cross of Lorraine

Death: 1431. Feast: May 30

Patron of soldiers, France

Something extra: She had visions of St. Michael, St. Margaret, and St. Catherine directing her to the military adventures that are attributed to her. Although illiterate, she answered the Inquisition's questions with wisdom. She was burned to death.

Charles: Mitre and altar

Death: 1584. Feast: November 4

Patron of bishops, catechists, cardinals, seminarians, spiritual leaders

Something extra: He was a reformer: he ended the selling of indulgences, led the fight against the Protestant Reformation, and provided education for the clergy, many of whom he considered ignorant.



St. Aloysius (Gonzaga) and St. Rose of Lima

Aloysius: Lily and crown

Feast: June 21

Death: 1591. Patron of teens and young people

Something extra: He received his First Communion from St. Charles Borromeo; he joined the Jesuits at age 18, worked in a hospital during one of the plague outbreaks, and died from it at age 23.

Rose: Crown of thorns over veil

Death: 1617. Feast: August 23

Patron of Latin America, Philippines, gardeners, florists, and those who suffer ridicule for their piety

Something extra: Rose was her nickname; she was born Isabel Flores de Olivia. She joined the Third Order of St. Dominic, lived a life of prayer and penance, and often wore a silver crown with thorns that pierced her head.



St. Martin De Porres and St. John Vianney

Martin: Plant, pick and shovel, the burro

Death: 1639. Feast: November 3

Patron of mixed races, barbers, public health workers, innkeepers

Something extra: Because he was mixed race, he endured torment. He joined the Dominicans and even there he was not free of it. He was a friend of St. Rose of Lima.

John: Stole, cross, chalice, host entwining roots

Death: 1859. Feast: August 4

Patron of parish priests

Something extra: During the French Revolution, priests were forced into hiding. He considered them heroes and became a priest known for his preaching and for working eleven to twelve hours a day reconciling people to God.

The Windows of the Lower Clerestory

The saints represented in the windows behind the center section of pews in the church include persons from North America such as St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, who was “blessed” when the church was built and has since been canonized, Kateri Tekakwitha, a native American convert whose shrine is located near Cooperstown, NY, and Mother Cabrini, who ministered in New York City.

A favorite of many, St. Francis of Assisi, known for his love of all God’s creation--including birds and animals and the environment, is the namesake of our current pope, Francis I.

St. Theresa and St. Bernadette



Therese, Doctor of the Church.
Flowers and cross
Death: 1897. Feast: October 1
Patron of missions
Something extra: Theresa is
Patron of missions not because
she went anywhere, but because
she loved and prayed for
missions and missionaries.

Bernadette: The grotto
Death: 1879. Feast: April 16
Patron of those ridiculed for
piety
Something extra: The site of the
apparitions of Mary at Lourdes
has become one of the most
visited Catholic sites in the world.



St. Elizabeth Seton and St. Frances Cabrini



Elizabeth: Pelican feeding young
Death: 1821. Feast: January 4
Patron of those with in-law problems, widows
Something extra: She is the first native born American to be canonized a saint. She established the first free Catholic school in America.

Frances: Star, arrow, heart
Death: 1917. Feast: November 13
Patron of immigrants, hospital administrators
Something extra: Her shrine is located in West Park, NY.



St. Kateri Tekakwitha and St. Isaac Jogues



Kateri: Teepee and cross
Death: 1680. Feast: July 14
Patron of the environment and ecology, Native Americans
Something extra: Devout but sickly, she died at the age of 24. Her shrine is near Cooperstown, NY.

Isaac: Tomahawk
Death: 1646. Feast: October 19
Patron of Canada, Americas
Something extra: A French Jesuit missionary, he was captured by the Iroquois and tortured mercilessly.



St. Rene Goupil and St. Francis of Assisi



Rene: Arrows

Death: 1642. Feast: October 19

Patron of anesthetists,
anesthesiologists

Something extra: Assistant to Isaac Jogues, he was captured and tortured by the Iroquois.

Francis: Birds

Death: 1226. Feast: October 3

Patron of animals, merchants, and
ecology

Something extra: During the fifth Crusade, Francis approached the Sultan, a Muslim, who was charmed by him and said he would convert, but then both he and Francis would be killed.



St. Anthony of Padua and St. Ignatius of Loyola



Anthony: Fishes

Death: 1231. Feast: June 13

Patron of lost and stolen articles, shipwrecks, barrenness, and many others

Something extra: A Franciscan priest, gifted preacher and miracle-worker, his image is everywhere.

Ignatius: Sword and book

Death: 1556. Feast: July 31

Patron of Society of Jesus, education and educators

Something extra: With Peter Faber and Francis Xavier, he founded the Society of Jesus, the Jesuits.



St. Dominic and St. Francis Xavier



Dominic: Book on fire
Death: 1221. Feast: August 8
Patron of astronomers, astronomy,
falsely accused people, Dominican
Republic
Something extra: A Franciscan, the
pope gave him permission to start a
new order to combat heresy.

Francis Xavier: Ship and cross
Death: 1552. Feast: December 3
Patron of missionaries, Goa, China
Something extra: He founded the
Jesuits with Ignatius Loyola and
Peter Faber. He traveled to India,
Japan and China and brought many
converts to the Church.



Mary Magdalene and St. Agnes



Mary: Box of ointment

Death: first century. Feast: July 22

Patron of penitent sinners, converts, women

Something extra: She is an example of how no person is beyond the saving grace of God.

Agnes: Lamb on a book

Death: fourth century. Feast: January 21

Patron of young girls, chastity, rape survivors, children of Mary

Something extra: Agnes was martyred at the age of 12 or 13 for refusing to submit to any of the suitors who wanted to marry her. She promised herself to God.



St. Joseph of Arimathea and St. Dismas



Joseph: Horned cross
Death: first century. Feast: August 31 (originally March 17)
Patron of funeral directors
Something extra: Besides asking Pilate for the body of Jesus for burial, Joseph is connected to stories of the Holy Grail

Dismas: Tau cross of the good thief, half circle and flames
Feast: March 25
Something extra: Legend has it that he protected the Holy Family from harm on their way to Egypt by buying off another thief. The infant predicted that he would be crucified with the two thieves.



St. Thomas Becket and St. Veronica



Thomas: Hatchet

Death: 1170. Feast: December 29

Patron of clergy, Oxford, England

Something extra: Thomas is considered a saint of both the Catholic and the Anglican Churches.

Veronica: Veil

Feast: July 12

Patron of laundry workers and photographers

Something extra: The Vatican's relic is displayed each year on the 5th Sunday of Lent. Over the centuries, a number of copies have appeared and been offered as genuine.



St. Vincent De Paul and St. Zacharias



Vincent: Moneybag, bread
Death: 1660. Feast: September 27
Patron of all charitable societies
Something extra: He founded several hospitals, collected relief funds for victims of war, and ransomed galley slaves.

Zacharias: Phrygian bonnet
Death 752. Feast: March 22
Something extra: He strengthened the Papacy and obtained a twenty year truce with the Lombards. The Phrygian bonnet eventually became a symbol of freedom.



The Seven Sacraments

As we are catechized into our faith, we learn that sacraments are “outward signs” allowing us to personally encounter Jesus. Those signs are available to us throughout our lives-especially at those times when we need and seek guidance.

Our initiation into the Church begins when our parents request Baptism for us. Our religious education begins at home, then more formally, just like our secular learning. We receive our First Communion around the age of seven or eight. As teens, we complete our initiation with Confirmation-we take on personal responsibility for our faith.

Next slide: Symbols for Baptism: (two windows): water, candle, white garment, for Eucharist: bread and chalice (wine), and for Confirmation: Holy Spirit, fire. The windows of the Sacraments can be found in Our Lady’s Chapel, across from the Sunday Sacristy.

Initiation: Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation





Service: Matrimony and Holy Orders

The sacraments of Matrimony and Holy Orders are called service sacraments because they serve not only the individuals but also the community. In the community, married couples find loyal and loving support; they in turn build up the community through the birth of children. As Jesus completed his priestly ministry through his death and resurrection, the ordained priest joins in Jesus' priesthood, continuing the sacrifice of the Cross in the Mass, and mediating between the community and God.

Symbols: Matrimony-entwined rings, Holy Orders-stole, book, flames always signify the Holy Spirit.



Healing: Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick

Jesus came to save sinners. Penance/Reconciliation offer us the opportunity to repent and to be reconciled into the community of faith. The Catechism of the Catholic Church assures us that we are forgiven by the infinite mercy of God. Many examples of Jesus forgiving sins exist in the Gospels. In John 20:23, Jesus gives the apostles the power to forgive sins.

Anointing often comes at times of serious illness. The Sacrament brings spiritual and even physical strength, especially near the time of death.

Symbols: thorns, spikes (suffering)-Penance/Reconciliation, Priest's stole, holy oils, ointment jar, cross-Anointing

The End--Beginning

The slides in these two presentations are only the beginning. In order to really understand our place in the story, we must review the history, the traditions, and the rites of the Roman Church. The Bible is the basis--here is a continuous chronicle of God's covenant with His people. Reading the complete stories of Abraham, Jacob and his sons, Moses, Aaron, and Joshua, Ruth, Saul, David, and Solomon, up through the prophets teaches us the richness of our Hebrew heritage. The Gospels deepen our understanding of Jesus' ministry and sacrifice, and the Acts and Letters teach us the powerful spread of our faith by passionate men and women who traveled the known world preaching the Word. A good biography is entertaining and instructional and the stories of the saints do not disappoint.

The stained glass windows in the church of St. John the Baptist are a constant reminder of the amazing extended family story to which we are privileged to belong.

Mary Elbert