

Summer 2007 - Creation Windows

The following text describes the Creation Windows designed by Peter Reuker of the Conrad Schmitt Studios in Milwaukee, Wisconsin for the chapel in Our Lady of Arlington Novitiate (currently the Province Center), 1212 E. Euclid Ave. Arlington Heights, IL, c. 1954.

East Window

The Bible unfolds the creation of the visible world in its first Chapter - the Book of Genesis - and it is from this source that the designing of these two three-lancet windows was taken.



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Window 1. In the beginning God created heaven and earth. And the earth was void and empty, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the spirit of God moved over the waters. And God said; Be light made; and light was made. And God saw the light it was good; and he divided the light from the darkness. And he called the light Day, and the darkness Night.

"LUX." In the first lancet - from the Hand of God, in the upper right corner, rays of creation descend upon the universe - light is separated from darkness - and Creation has begun. The rainbow at the bottom of the lancet is the essence of light itself, since it contains all of the colors of the spectrum. It, too, is a symbol of Hope, and of the Last Judgment - the Beginning and the End.

Window 2. And God said: Let there be a firmament made amidst the waters; and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made a firmament, and divided the waters that were under the firmament, from those that were above the firmament, and it was so. And God called the firmament, Heaven.

" FIRMAMENTUM." Under the active firmament, placid waters are separating from swirling waves, as in the planned turmoil of creation they are ordered to do.

Window 3. God also said: Let the waters that are under heaven be gathered into one place; and let the dry land appear. And so it was done. And God called the dry land, Earth; and the gathering together of the waters he called Seas. And he said: Let the earth bring forth the green herb, and such as may seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after its kind, which may have seed in itself upon the earth; And so it was done. And the earth brought forth the green herb, and such as yieldeth seed according; to its kind, and the tree that beareth fruit, having seed each one according to its kind.

"HERBAE." The fertility of the earth is here brought to mind. The three flowers at the bottom of the lancet recall the beauty of the World now in creation, and by their number remind us of the Trinity. The wheat and grapes symbolize the Bounty of God - and the Eucharist.

West Window



Window 4. And God said; Let there be lights made in the firmament of heaven, to divide the day and the night and let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years. To shine in the firmament of heaven, and to give light upon the earth. And so it was done. And God made two great lights; a greater light to rule the day; and a lesser light to rule the night; and the stars. And he set them in the firmament of heaven to shine upon the earth. And to rule the day and the night, and to divide the light from the darkness.

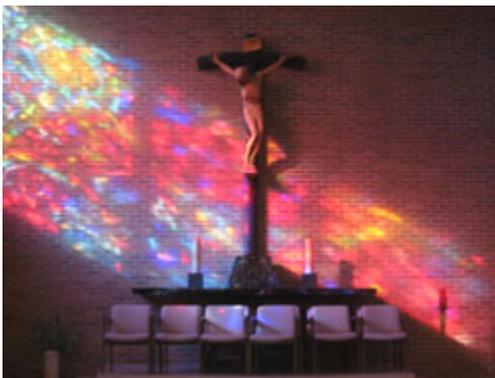
"CAELI." The first lancet of this second window contains the sun and the moon, the stars and the planets.

Window 5. God also said: Let the waters bring forth the creeping creature having life, and the fowl that may fly over the earth and under the firmament of heaven. And God created the great whales, and every living and moving creature which the waters brought forth, according to their kinds, and every winged fowl according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And he blessed them, saying: Increase and multiply, and fill the waters of the sea, and let the birds be multiplied upon the face of the earth.

"AVES" and "PISCES" - Birds and fish - fly and swim - filling the air and the waters. The dove, in the center at the top - wearing the tri-radiant nimbus is, symbolically - the Holy Spirit.

Window 6. And God said: Let the earth bring forth the living creature of its kind, cattle and creeping things, and beasts of the earth, according to their kinds. And it was so done. And God made the beasts of the earth, according to their kinds, and cattle, and everything that creepeth on the earth after its kind. And God saw that it was good. And he said: Let us make man to our image and likeness, and let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and the beasts, and the whole earth, and every creeping creature that moveth upon the earth.

"HOMO." Above the waters, vegetation and animals (here symbolized by a lamb) there is the head of Christ - both God and Man- the climax of God's creation - and the perfection towards which all mankind should strive. God's own Beloved Son, who too, was made in the image and likeness of God.



"God saw all he had made and indeed it was very good." Genesis 1:31

Next time you visit the chapel at the Province Center look closely at the symbolism in these stained glass windows. The story of creation represented here is truly beautiful!