

# *The Story of Our Windows*



Immaculate  
Conception  
*Catholic Church*

The rectangular windows on either side of the round window behind the altar were designed to enhance our experience of the Eucharist.



The window on the left represents the precursors of the Word of the Flesh, Jesus. John the Baptist is represented in the upper left by a flowing river, the waters of Baptism. The blue color flows through to the windows in the side doors and represents the Jordan River. Beneath John the Baptist, the Blessed Mother of Jesus is represented with a lily, a reminder of her purity.



In the right window, we see the celebration of the first missionaries. In the upper corner, the book, sword and anchor represent Saint Paul. Paul used the sword to persecute the early Church, but after his conversion, he became an anchor of the church by spreading the message of the risen Christ. Paul's letters to the Christians, exhorting them to live out the message that Christ preached, are included in the New Testament. The lower corner of the window on the right shows us the symbols for Saint Peter. The two crossed keys represent the authority of Peter as the first Pope. As the first leader of the Church, Peter was given the keys to the kingdom to come. Jesus told Peter that he was the rock upon which His Church would be built. The rooster reminds us that Peter was weak and human in his denial of Christ, for which Jesus forgave him.

Liturgical colors of purple, green, red, and white are dominant. Blue is used in each side window to represent the Blessed Mother.

# *Our Altar Windows*



The Catholic Church is rich in symbolism, and stained glass windows have historically been used to teach stories of our faith through symbols. In the round stained glass window behind the altar at Immaculate Conception Church, the figures depict the four Evangelists, the sacred authors of the four Gospels of the New Testament. Saint Matthew is represented by the winged man, and the lion is the symbol of Saint Mark. Saint Luke is portrayed by the ox and the eagle is the symbol of Saint John. The brown in this window recalls the earth, which represents the Son of God coming to this earth to redeem us.

# Our Side Windows



## Immaculate Conception

Feast: December 8

On December 8, 1854, Pope Pius IX, in the Apostolic Constitution *Ineffabilis Deus*, pronounced and defined that the Blessed Virgin Mary “*in the first instance of her conception, by a singular privilege and grace granted by God in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the human race, was preserved exempt from all stains of original sin.*”



## Our Mother of Sorrows

Feast: September 15

The title, *Our Mother of Sorrows*, given to the Blessed Mother, focuses on her intense suffering and grief during the passion and death of our Lord. Traditionally, this suffering was not limited to the passion and death event; rather it comprised the seven dolores of Mary, which were foretold by the priest, Simeon, who proclaimed the greatness of Jesus (Luke 2:34-35).



**Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary**  
**Feast: August 15**

In 1950, in the Apostolic Constitution *Munificentissimus Deus*, Pope Pius XII proclaimed the Assumption of Mary a dogma of the Catholic Church in these words, “*The Immaculate Mother of God, the ever virgin Mary, having completed the cause of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heaven.*” The Assumption is the oldest feast day of Our Lady.



**Our Lady of Lourdes**  
**Feast: February 11**

On December 8, 1854, Pope Pius IX proclaimed the dogma of the Immaculate Conception; on February 11, 1858, the Blessed Mother spoke to Bernadette Soubirous. On March 25, 1854, when Bernadette asked the young lady her name, she responded, “*I am the Immaculate Conception.*” Over time, there were eight apparitions, and a spring of water came out of the rocks where the apparitions took place. Lourdes became a place of pilgrimage and healing, but even more importantly, of faith.



## **Our Lady of Fatima**

**Feast: May 13**

In the spring of 1916, Lucia dos Santos, age nine, and her cousins, Francisco and Jacinta Marto, ages eight and six respectively, were in a meadow with their sheep. During a rain shower, they went into a cave where they had their lunch, prayed the rosary and played a game of jacks. The rain stopped and it became a serene day. Suddenly, a strong wind blew that swayed the trees and a bright light enveloped them. The Angel of Peace appeared to them. The angel asked that they pray to the Sacred

Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

The Blessed Mother first appeared to them on May 13, 1917 and came to them five more times. Each time she asked that the children promote the praying of the rosary. With 70,000 people in attendance at Fatima on October 13, 1917, in a torrential rain storm, the sun began to spin and rays of white, yellow and blue shone forth. This was the final apparition. Many newspapers reported this happening.



## Our Lady of Guadalupe Feast: December 12

On December 9, 1531, in the Tepeyac hill country in central Mexico, Our Lady appeared to Juan Diego, a poor, humble Aztec Indian who had recently converted to the Catholic Faith. She asked him to go to the Bishop and tell him to build a church where (she said), *“I will show and offer all of my love, my compassion, my help and my protection to my people.”* Juan Diego did as she asked, but the Bishop asked for a sign that this message was really from Our Lady.

Mary granted his request. On December 12, she showed Juan where the most beautiful Castilian roses were and told him to gather them. It was a miracle that the roses were there and in bloom because there was frost on the ground, and the ground was an infertile place where only cactus and thistles grew. After he gathered them, she helped arrange

them in his tilma, or poncho, and told him to show them to the Bishop.

When he brought the roses to the Bishop, the Bishop was amazed at the beautiful flowers, but was even more amazed at what began to happen to the tilma. Right before their very eyes, the image of Our Lady began to form on the cloth...an image of the pregnant virgin. Recognizing that this was truly a miracle, the Bishop had the church built as the Blessed Mother had requested.

To this day the tilma is intact; the colors have not faded and the cloth has not deteriorated. It is on display in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe — the church that was built at Our Lady’s request.



**Nativity of Our Lord**  
**Feast: December 25**

Christmas is the annual festival commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ, observed most commonly as a religious and cultural celebration among billions of people around the world. A feast central to the Christian liturgical year, it is prepared for by the season of Advent.

While Mary was still engaged to Joseph, she miraculously became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit, as foretold to her by the angel Gabriel. When Mary told Joseph she was pregnant, he had every right to feel disgraced. He knew the child was not his own, and Mary's apparent unfaithfulness carried a grave social stigma. Joseph not only had the right to divorce Mary, but under Jewish law she could be put to death by stoning.

Joseph had a dream in which all was revealed to him, and he willingly obeyed God and took Mary home to be his wife, in spite of the public humiliation he would face.

At the birth of Jesus, it was proclaimed — *the tender Child is the Savior of the world!*



### **The Wedding Feast of Cana** **John 2:1-12**

Recorded as the first public miracle of Jesus, this story shows a consideration of great honor. In those days, family honor was of great importance. Weddings usually lasted seven days, during which time food and wine supplied by the bride's and groom's families flowed freely. To run out of either implied a thoughtless or impoverished host. The fact that Jesus' mother, Mary, is concerned with the lack of wine suggests that she was involved in the planning of the wedding or that she is a family member. Such a connection would explain Jesus' presence at the wedding, but not His decision to perform His first miracle there. Mary's words, "*Do whatever he tells you,*" indicates her understanding of the power of Jesus and the need to be obedient to His word.



### **Healing of the Paralytic** **Mark 2:1-12**

The paralytic was lowered through the roof on a mat. This was highly distracting as the man ended up right in front of Jesus by the love and concern of his friends. This miracle is significant for five reasons. First, it shows that Jesus' authority extends even to the forgiveness of sins. Second, the entire affair is witnessed by the Jewish leaders, the Pharisees and the Scribes. They make an instant theological assessment and recognize that Jesus is making unique claims — claims that are blasphemous if they are not true. Third, this is the first time God vindicates Jesus' claims during his ministry. Later, Judaism would teach that God does not help sinners or liars, so if Jesus is not who he claims to be, then this man should not walk away healed. Fourth, the miracle displays what Jesus can do for people. Finally, this Gospel message shows the importance and trust in the power of Jesus.



### **The Miracle of the Fish** **Luke 5:1-11**

It is here that Jesus calls his first disciples. After fishing all night, Jesus asked Simon to put out into the deep water and to lower the nets again. They do, and receive such an abundant catch that other boats must help them to make it to shore. Simon Peter, when he saw it, fell to his knees before Jesus. Jesus assures him that he has nothing to fear, *“for from now on you will be fishing for souls of men and women.”*



### **Samaritan Woman at the Well** **John 4:4-46**

We do not know her name or age. But, her conversation with the Lord is his longest “one-on-one” recorded in the scriptures. This is Jesus speaking the Truth in Love. The story teaches us that God loves us in spite of the sinfulness of our lives. God values us enough to actively seek us, to welcome us to intimacy, and to rejoice in our worship.

The woman hears from Jesus that her life needs to change in the light of truth. She makes a decision to listen and to change. Understanding that this life-giving water of Baptism will lead her to eternal life, she then goes to others in the village to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ.



**Jesus – Divine Mercy**  
**Feast: First Sunday after Easter**

St. Maria Faustina Kowalska received extraordinary revelations, or messages, from our Lord Jesus. The message of The Divine Mercy is simple. It is that God loves us — all of us. And, He wants us to recognize that His mercy is greater than our sins, so that we will call upon Him with trust, receive His mercy, and let it flow through us to others. Thus, all will come to share His joy. Ask for His mercy, be merciful and completely trust in Jesus.

*Brochure design: Kathy Williams, Photography: Pat Pfister*



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