

How Lovely is Your Dwelling Place (Psalm 84:2)

*A short history of the stained glass windows of
Emmanuel Catholic Church in Dayton, Ohio*

by Deacon Rusty Baldwin

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It seems fitting to begin this short history of the stained glass windows of Emmanuel with the words from a brochure about them published by Emmanuel Catholic Church in 1997. In that brochure is a brief account of the art of making stained glass.

It is not known when stained glass windows first appeared in churches. They probably evolved from the use of mosaics and enamel work to decorate early Christian Churches. When the Gothic style of architecture came about, stained glass became more popular. Gothic window openings needed a structure strong enough to keep out the weather, but transparent enough to admit light. As glass at that time was to be had only in small pieces, the craftsmen had to use mosaic, a combination of pieces of glass of various size[s] and colors, to make a design by placing them in juxtaposition. They had to be held together, and the best medium was lead, applied in strips. As a craft, the process of making stained glass has not changed throughout the centuries. Stained glass as a medium depends entirely on natural light. Therefore, the artist depends not only on the glass, but also the effect of the light. Since many people in medieval times could not read, the art work was necessary as a means of instruction. [1]

With that as the briefest of introductions, if you are able to come to Emmanuel to meditate and pray before each one of the sacred works of art that are our stained glass windows, I would encourage you to do so; it's well worth it. For they magnificently mark out in holy images the unfolding of Salvation History throughout the liturgical year.

But before considering how Salvation History is depicted in the windows, it will be of interest to consider how these windows came to be at Emmanuel. The windows in the sanctuary and around the church are not the original windows. Most of the original windows were simply patterns of colored glass. Five of the original windows, however, did depict Scriptural scenes. Three of them were located in the sanctuary and two were by where the two confessionals now are just outside the sanctuary. On the left as you face the front of the church, instead of the current windows in the sanctuary and by the left confessional, the original window in the sanctuary was the "Mater Dolorosa, Mary the Sorrowful Mother;" and by the confessional the window was the "Return of the Prodigal Son." On the right, instead of the current windows in the sanctuary and by the right confessional, the original window in the sanctuary was the famous portrait of Our Lord, "Ecce Homo, Behold the Man" with the "Good Shepherd" by the confessional. In the center, in the apse over the main altar was the "Holy Family" rather than the window now

there. All the remaining original windows were simply patterns of colored glass similar to the one shown in Figure 1 to the right. They were relatively inexpensive and, presumably, all Emmanuel could afford given they had just spent some \$93,000 to build the church itself, a massive sum of money in the 1870's.

Several of the original patterned windows are still in the east and west bell towers, in the two sacristies, and in the south-facing wall of the 1st and 2nd balconies. The original rose window outside on the south wall near the top of the church was replaced by the round Jubilee 2000 window shown in Figure 2, below. The 15 windows now in the church itself were purchased and installed sometime after the Dayton flood of 1913, most likely in the 1920's. Each window is 6 feet wide and 40 feet high. The original cost of the windows is unknown. A stained glass window expert who assessed the condition of the windows in 2026 said the windows and lead frames holding the pieces of glass together are in very good condition for their age and are not in need of any repairs. He was also certain that these windows were from Germany. Specifically, he recognized them as Mayer of Munich



Figure 1: An Original Emmanuel Window



Figure 2: Jubilee 2000 Window

Mayer of Munich is a world-renowned stained glass window company founded by Franz Mayer in 1847. According to Wikipedia, Mayer of Munich “was the principal provider of stained glass to the large Catholic churches that were constructed throughout the world” in the 19th and early 20th centuries. [2] The company is still in business with the sixth generation of Mayer's now heading the company. The cost to replace each Emmanuel stained glass window today is estimated to be \$200,000. That would put the total cost to replace them all at \$3,000,000.

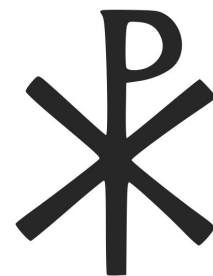




Figure 3: The Annunciation of the Birth of Jesus

Now for the windows themselves. A diagram of the location of each window can be found in Appendix 1 at the end of this document. The Annunciation window is physically located near the front of the church by the left confessional as you face the sanctuary. That window is shown in Figure 3 to the left. In the window, the Archangel Gabriel is receiving Mary's fiat, her yes to God, consenting to become the Mother of God. You can see the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove descending on Our Lady. Mary is standing before a bookstand holding the Holy Scriptures. These scriptures contain the prophecies concerning the Messiah and how they will be fulfilled through a virgin with child. The Archangel Gabriel is handing Mary a scepter signifying that as the Mother of God she is now also the Queen of Heaven. The scroll surrounding the scepter reads, "Ave gratia plena," or "Hail! Full of Grace." The medallion at the top of the window contains lilies which symbolize the purity, innocence, and virginity of Our Lady. Advent, which begins the liturgical year, is a time of preparation for the coming, the Advent, of Our Lord. It's during the fourth week of Advent we learn that Mary is that most blessed of virgins for she will be the mother of the Messiah!

This window was donated by the Young Ladies Sodality. The Young Ladies Sodalities were various lay religious organizations within Emmanuel that encouraged the spiritual life and spiritual activities of young women. Sodality members consisted of young ladies who had reached the eighth grade. They could continue as members until they married. After marriage, they became active in the Altar Rosary Society.



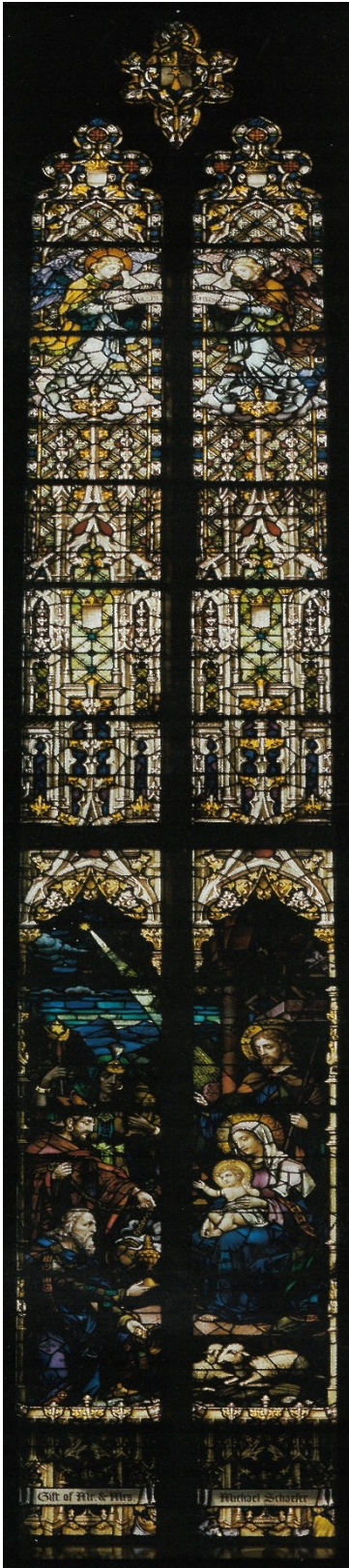


Figure 4: The Epiphany of Jesus

The next stained glass window as we move around the church from left to right is The Epiphany which is shown in Figure 4 on the left. We have now moved liturgically into the Christmas season. This window depicts Mary, Joseph, and Our Lord with the three Wise Men Melchior, Gaspar, and Balthasar who are presenting their gifts. The medallion at the top of the window depicts the Star of Bethlehem that guided the wisemen to Christ. What joy the Christ-child brings! This window was the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Michael Schaefer. Michael and his wife were very active in the parish. Mrs. Schaefer worked for many years at the St. Joseph Orphanage which was founded by the parishioners of Emmanuel.

The Holy Family of Nazareth, the next window shown in Figure 5 on the right, was the gift of the Lukaswitz family. William Lukaswitz was a dealer in leaf tobacco. In this window we see Jesus working with Joseph at the trade of carpentry as Mary, who is also working, looks on. The medallion contains the two tablets of the 10 Commandments with the 4th Commandment (IV) at the top of the second tablet. The 4th Commandment is “Honor your father and your mother.” The window also contains subtle testimony to the humanity of Our Lord in the identical facial features of Our Lord and Our Lady.

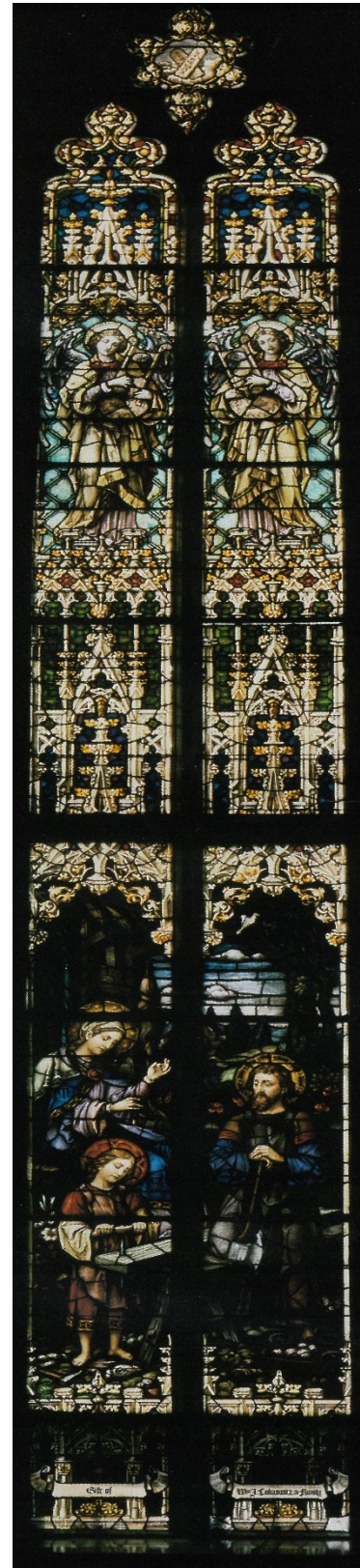


Figure 5: The Holy Family at Nazareth

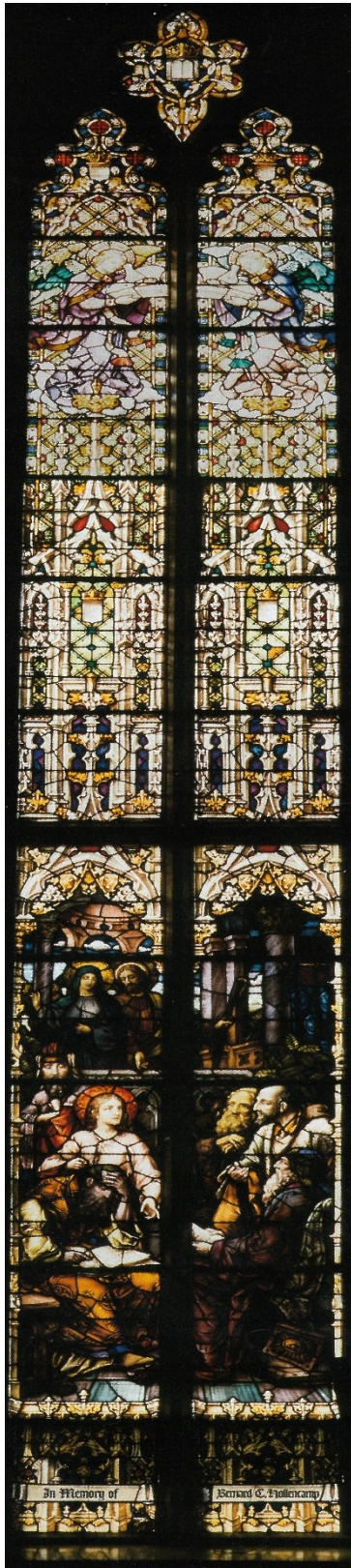


Figure 6: The Finding of Jesus in the Temple

The next window, Figure 6 on the left, depicts the finding of Jesus in the Temple. Mary and Joseph are looking at Our Lord as if they had just come upon him. Several scholars are listening to Jesus intently as another searches the Scriptures diligently. The medallion contains the Torah. This window was dedicated to the memory of Bernard Hollencamp who died at the age of 30. Bernard was the vice-president of the Hollencamp Brewing Company and was active in several Catholic fraternal organizations.

Figure 7 to the right is the Baptism of Our Lord. In it we see the Holy Spirit descending like a dove and above the cruciform staff John the Baptist is holding is a scroll with the words, “Ecce Agnus Dei” or “Behold the Lamb of God.” The medallion at the top of the window shows a baptismal font. The liturgical season of Christmas ends with the Baptism of Our Lord. This window is the gift of the Andrew Fey family. Andrew was born in Germany, came to this country at an early age, and was a machinist by trade.

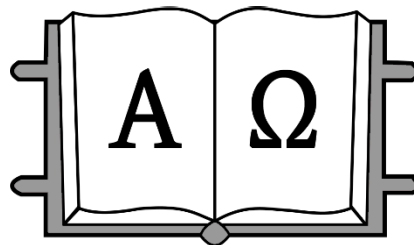


Figure 7: The Baptism of Jesus



Figure 8: The Prodigal Son

The next four windows depict events during the 3 years of Our Lord's active ministry; liturgically these events occur during the season of Ordinary Time. The first of these events, the Parable of the Prodigal Son is shown in Figure 8 on the left; this window is partially obscured by the 1st balcony. The dove of peace graces the top of this window. This window is dedicated to Frances Bradmiller, the wife of Frederick Bradmiller. Mrs. Bradmiller was active in the St. Clara Altar Society and the Tabernacle Society of Emmanuel.

Moving to the east wall near the baptistry, Figure 9 is the window of the Penitent Woman, also partially obscured by the 1st balcony. The woman washes Jesus' feet with her tears and anoints him with ointment from an alabaster flask as the Pharisees disapprovingly look on. The crown and the cross in the medallion signifies the victory of the cross over sin. This window is in memory of Joseph Schaefer. Joseph came to America at the age of 17 and learned the trade of cigar making. He died in 1914 at the age of 58. His obituary noted, among other things, that he was the largest man in Dayton standing 6 foot 6 inches tall and weighing in at 313 pounds.



Figure 9: The Penitent Woman



Figure 10: Jesus Saves Peter from the Water

The next window, Figure 10 on the left, is Our Lord walking on the water while saving Peter as the terrified disciples in the boat look on. The Eucharistic Host and chalice adorns the medallion of this window signifying how we are never to take our eyes of faith off of Our Lord. This window is in memory of Nicholas and Anna Clemens and John and Anna Warner. Mr. and Mrs. Clemens were natives of Germany. They had 7 children and Mr. Clemens was a tavern keeper by trade. John Warner hauled heavy goods to support his wife and three children. These heavy goods would have included barrels of beer. Many of Emmanuel's parishioners of this period seem to have been in the liquor, tobacco, and cigar business! Mrs. Warner was very active in the St. Clara Altar Society.

The window in Figure 11 to the right shows Jesus admonishing his disciples to let the children come to him. The medallion appears to contain daisies which represent the innocence and modesty of children. This window was a gift from the School Children of 1917. Emmanuel grade school children raised the money for this window via penny collections which were taken up during Mass along with five cent raffle tickets sold to pay for the cost of this window.

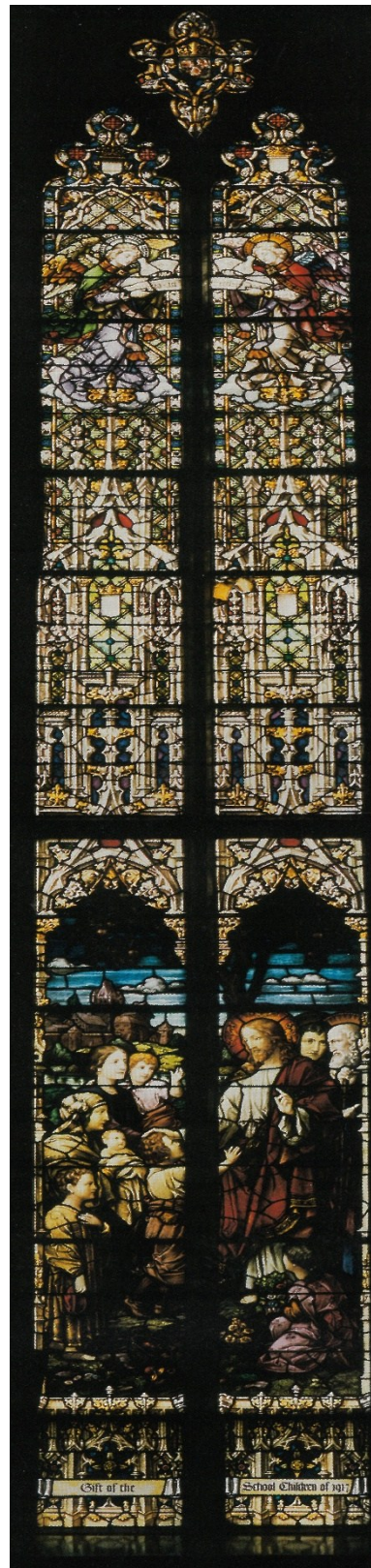


Figure 11: Jesus Blesses Little Children



Figure 12: The Agony of Jesus in the Garden

The four windows in Figures 8-11 show the sacred attributes of Our Lord in action during his life. These include his divine power, but also his humility, love, mercy, wisdom, tenderness, and affection for the poor and lowly. These sacred attributes are ones that we, as his disciples, are to earnestly seek and emulate by relying on His grace.

In the window of Figure 12 on the left, we see the culmination of the season of Lent, the Passion of Our Lord as he is in agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. Notice the angel offering Our Lord the cup of bitter suffering from which, in accord with the Father's will, He is soon to drink. In the lower right portion of the window we see Peter holding his sword along with James and John – all of them sleeping. The medallion on the top of the window shows a cross depicting the means of Our Lord's death; a death he will soon undergo! We read an account of this on Palm Sunday, the final Sunday of Lent and the beginning of Passiontide. This window is in memory of John and Rosina Kreidler and Adolph and Caroline Bauman. John Kreidler worked at many professions, but during the Civil War, he was a captain in the Ohio Infantry. Taken prisoner in 1862, his sword was demanded in surrender, but in an act of defiance, he broke it in three pieces flinging it to the ground in front of the Confederate officer who had demanded it. Mrs. Kreidler was born in Dayton in 1836. As a child she lived in the only house then standing on Franklin Street. Adolph Bauman received his early education at Emmanuel School and later they ran a very successful bakery.

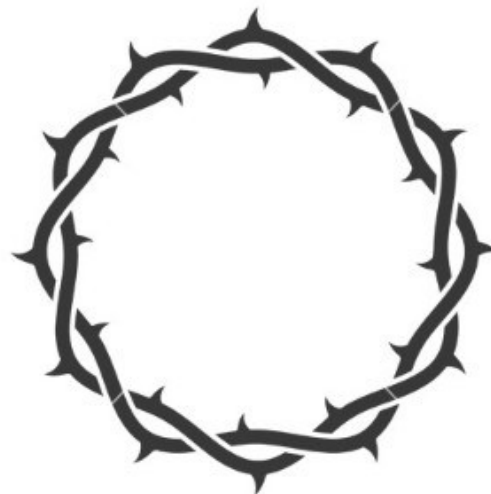




Figure 13: The Crucifixion of Jesus

The Crucifixion of Our Lord which we commemorate during the Paschal Triduum is shown next in Figure 13. The Crucifixion shows the depth of our Father's love for us – that he would send his only Son into the world to save sinners like us; to save even those who hated him. Our Lady, John, and the other Mary stand at the foot of the Cross with Our Lord. Notice the gift of the Magi, the jar of myrrh in the lower left portion of the window as well as the skull which represents Adam. Adam's skull signifies the connection between the fall of humanity through Original Sin and our subsequent redemption through Jesus' sacrifice. In contrast to the iconic Latin cross in the medallion of Figure 12, the cross in the medallion of this window is made of wood indicating the harsh reality of the crucifixion and the great suffering Our Lord underwent. This window is dedicated to the memory of Frank and Mary Fritch. Frank was a teacher at Emmanuel School and later entered the wholesale grocery and liquor business. Frank and Mary had eight children. Frank was the treasurer of Emmanuel Church and president of the St. Joseph Orphans Society and the Gesellen Society. The Gesellen Society supported young journeymen, apprentices, and workers. It focused on their religious, moral, and professional improvement and also provided lodging, education, and community for transient workers. After Frank's death, Mary Fritch, with great success, continued running their business.



The splendor of the Son of God in His Easter glory is revealed in the next stained glass window shown in Figure 14 to the right. Our Lord emerges triumphant from the tomb after conquering sin and death! Two soldiers are overcome with fear at the sight of an angel and Our Lord. In the medallion of this window we see the legendary phoenix rising from the flames. This symbolizes the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead and the promise of eternal life. Early Church Fathers like St. Clement of Rome used this legend to explain the theology of the death and resurrection of Our Lord. This window is in memory of Erhardt and Mary Bauman who were born in Germany. Mr. Bauman was a baker and when he came to the United States he established Bauman Bakery, one of the largest and most well-known bakeries in Dayton then located at 433 West Third Street.

There are some common elements in almost every one of these stained glass windows. First, almost every window has angels looking down on the scene reminding us that we are part of the Communion of the Saints. All the angels and saints in the Church Triumphant care about us and are praying for the Church Militant! Second, every stained glass window that depicts a scene outside incorporates clouds, usually dark clouds – even in the joyous scenes like the Epiphany. This seems to symbolize the fact that trials and tribulations are never far off in this life and we shouldn't expect that they would be. Finally, the bottom part of every window looks like an altar rail, very much like the Emmanuel altar rail. The middle portion of the window that depicts the main scene seems to be set in arches much like the statues we see in our altar. If that is indeed the case, then all that is happening in the scene is happening within a sanctuary and is placed on an altar in sacrifice, if you will. That is, what is being depicted has been sanctified by grace and is being offered to God. Doesn't this also then hold true for you and me? Can't the events of our lives, however mundane, painful, or joyful be brought to God as an offering, as something to be sanctified and given to Him? Noticing this about these windows can serve as a constant reminder that sanctity, holiness, and sacrifice extends to every part of our lives.

These beautiful windows are direct visible manifestations of Emmanuel, God with us. But it was over 2,000 years ago that Our Lord walked among us. How then is God with us

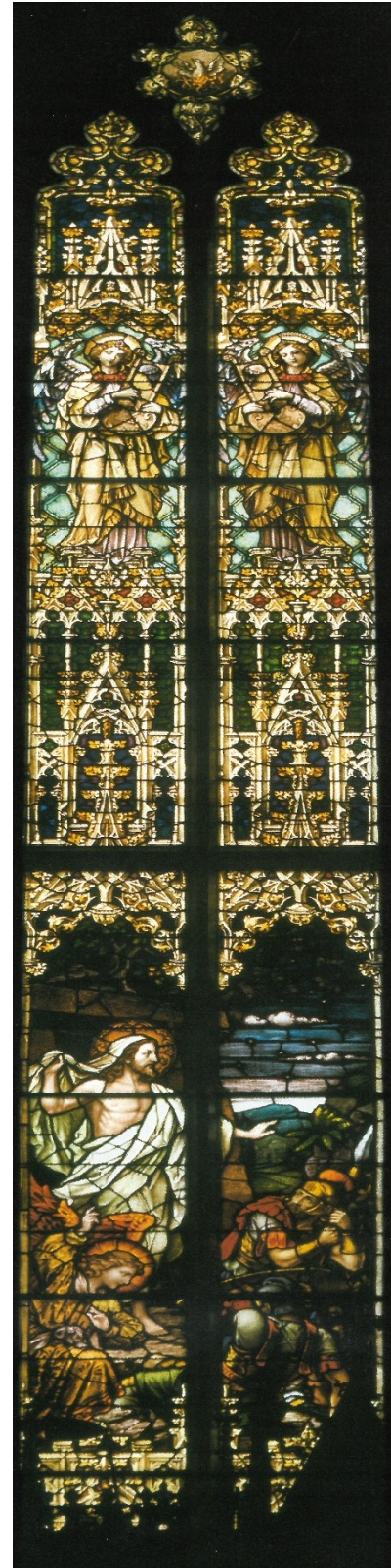


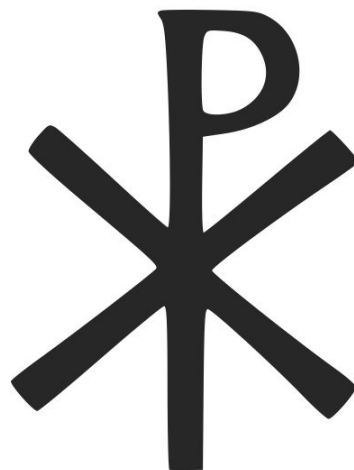
Figure 14: The Resurrection of Jesus



Figure 15: Melchizedek Offers Bread and Wine

since his Resurrection? For he is no longer visible or present to us in the same way he was when he walked on the Earth. True, we as his disciples are to be Christ for the world – but Our Lord himself said just before his Ascension into heaven, “I am with you always, even until the end of the world.” (Matthew 28:20)

This is where the wisdom and brilliance of the architects and artists who built Emmanuel Catholic Church manifests itself in beauty and majesty. For in the sanctuary, hidden from view unless you are sitting right in front, are two stained glass windows that haven’t been mentioned yet. The window in the left of the sanctuary, Figure 15, depicts Melchizedek, king and priest of God Most High. Melchizedek is blessing Abram the patriarch and our Father in Faith who is giving him tithes and offerings. The medallion contains a sheaf of wheat signifying this offering. On the altar rail in the window are the words, “A tribute to the Blessed Sacrament,” and in the scroll near the bottom of the window we find, “Holy holy holy Lord.” Melchizedek is the first priest mentioned in the Bible. As a priest, Melchizedek offered sacrifices of bread and wine to God. The Levitical priesthood of Israel was still 500 years or so in the future. Melchizedek was and remains a mystery, like the Eucharist. The New Testament book of Hebrews, Chapter 7 tells us that Jesus is a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek. Clearly, the ancient offering of bread and wine prefigures the Eucharist instituted at the Last Supper. The Gospel Evangelists Matthew and Mark look down upon the scene.



The stained glass window to the right in the sanctuary is shown in Figure 16, Our Lord breaking bread with the two disciples he met on the Road to Emmaus after his Resurrection. The scroll in the window contains the words, “Take and Eat.” As with the window where Jesus saves Peter from the Water (Figure 10), the medallion here contains the Eucharistic Host and Chalice. Here, though, a crown is above the Host and Chalice signifying Christ the King who through the sacrifice of his body and the shedding of his blood, reigns over all. This window is dedicated to Fr. Charles Hahne and Fr. John Hahne, brothers and the 3rd and 4th pastors of Emmanuel, respectively. The window is also dedicated to Fr. James McKay, the 10th pastor of Emmanuel. Fr. McKay was a Marianist and his pastorate immediately preceded Fr. Lee Sciarrotta’s. This window shows two of the disciples recognizing Our Lord in the breaking of the bread; that is, in the Eucharist. One of the disciples is named Cleopas and according to one tradition, the other is either the Apostle Peter or the Evangelist Luke. Another tradition, not depicted in this Emmaus window, is that the other disciple was Cleopas’ wife whose name was Mary. In any case, it was in the breaking of the bread that these disciples recognized Our Risen Lord. The Evangelists Luke and John are looking down on the scene in the upper portion of this window.

The Eucharist, then, which Our Lord himself instituted on Holy Thursday when he instituted the Mass itself is the fulfillment of the offering of Melchizedek. The four evangelists in the windows of Figure 15 and 16 symbolize how the Gospels attest to and point to the Eucharist. They testify to Jesus’ Real Presence; his body, blood, soul, and divinity.

Now, it is not known whether this was deliberate; perhaps it was, but it seems more than a coincidence that these two stained glass windows themselves are “hidden” as it were. You can’t see them from afar, you must draw close to see the truth contained therein. Is this not how Our Lord is in the Eucharist? Truly present, but hidden under the appearance of bread and wine. Is this not how He manifests himself today? Yes, it is! The Eucharist is indeed the most precious gift we have been given, the most visible presence of Our Lord.

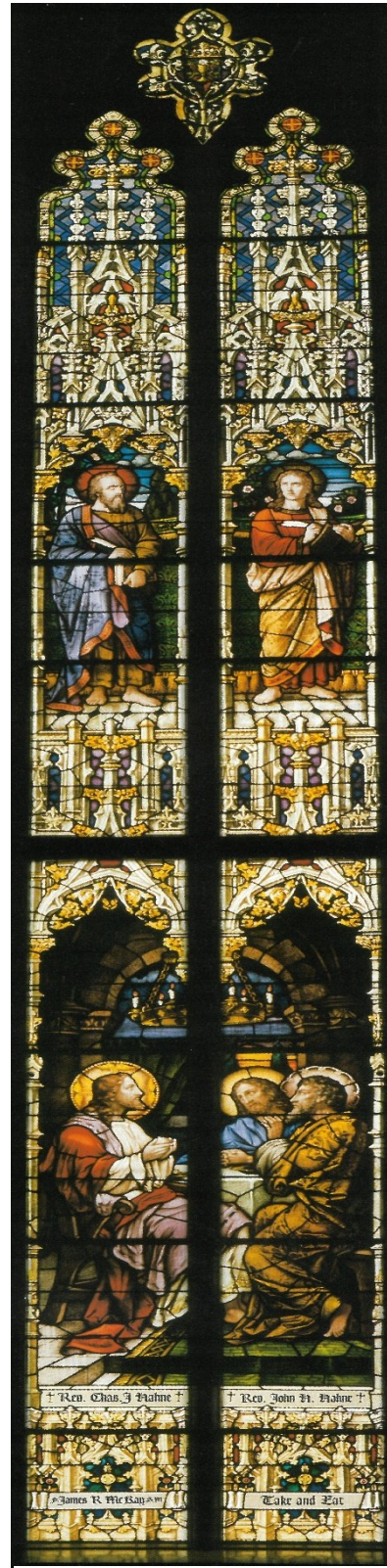


Figure 16: Jesus Breaks Bread at Emmaus

The last stained glass window in the sanctuary, Figure 17, is the Emmanuel window, which plainly and magnificently shows us this most precious of gifts. The window is placed in the high center portion of the apse of the sanctuary to signify the central importance of the Eucharist in the life of the Catholic Church in general and in the life of Emmanuel Catholic Church in particular. The monstrance containing Our Lord in the Eucharist is surrounded by adoring cherubim with two mighty angels holding thuribles and incensing Him. Emmanuel, God with Us, was visible to us during his life, but is no longer so in the same way after his Ascension. Yet he is truly present with us in the Eucharist; truly present in us when we receive him in Communion; and truly present through us that He might be made visible to the world.

It seems fitting to conclude this short history of the windows of Emmanuel with the words of Mrs. Marie Fay who was a major contributor to the book documenting the Sesquicentennial History of Emmanuel. In there she wrote:

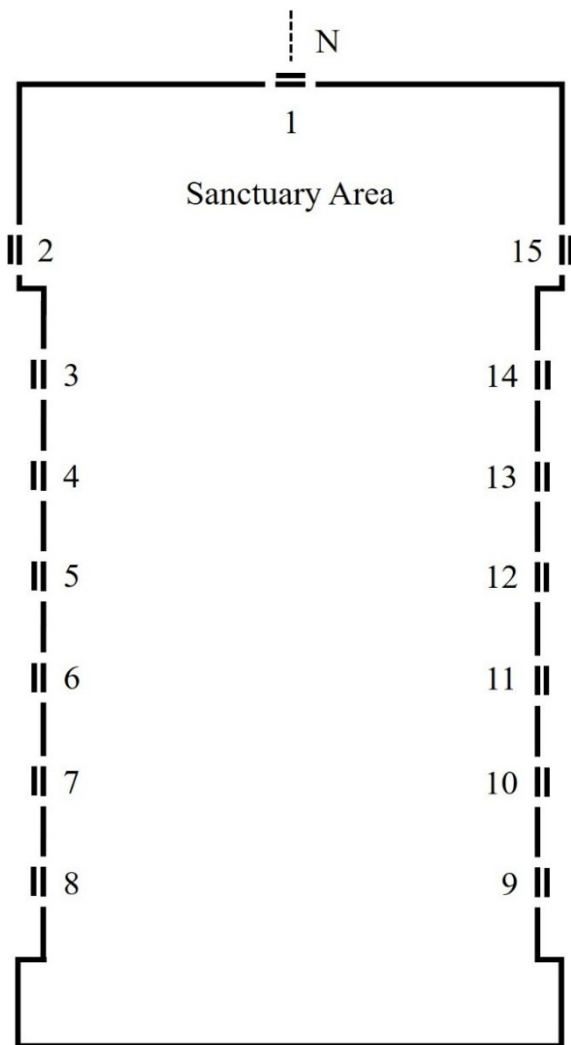
In many ways, the history of Emmanuel Church resembles the history of a family. Our story began with a few hard working people joined together in their worship of God. Their numbers grew through the decades and centuries. Fittingly, Emmanuel is a mother church. All of Dayton and Montgomery County's Catholic churches, as well as those in Greene, Clark, Champaign, Madison, Logan, Hardin, and Marion Counties trace their roots to the towering parent on Franklin Street. Indeed, the church itself is a namesake, bearing the name of our founding pastor, Emanuel Thienpont. Like the best of families, Emmanuel has seen good times and bad. Like the strongest of families, Emmanuel has survived both. ... Emmanuel is [taken] from the Hebrew word for 'God is with us.' May this continue to be our prayer. [3]



Figure 17: The Emmanuel Window

- [1] Emmanuel Catholic Church, “The Windows of Emmanuel Catholic Church Dayton, Ohio,” 1997.
- [2] Retrieved from, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franz_Mayer_of_Munich, on 4/22/2026.
- [3] Fr. James McKay, S.M., editor, “Emmanuel Catholic Church, Dayton, Ohio: Sesquicentennial History, 1837-1987,” 1988.

Appendix 1: Location of Windows



1. The Emmanuel Window
2. Melchizedek Offers Bread and Wine
3. The Annunciation of the Birth of Jesus
4. The Epiphany of Jesus
5. The Holy Family at Nazareth
6. The Finding of Jesus in the Temple
7. The Baptism of Jesus
8. The Prodigal Son
9. The Penitent Woman
10. Jesus Saves Peter from the Water
11. Jesus Blesses Little Children
12. The Agony of Jesus in the Garden
13. The Crucifixion of Jesus
14. The Resurrection of Jesus
15. Jesus Breaks Bread at Emmaus