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**SELF GUIDED ART AND ARCHITECTURE TOUR OF THE**

**INSIDE OF ST. SEBASTIAN PARISH CHURCH**

**B**egin your tour in at the end closest to the sanctuary of the middle aisle and face the mosaic.

**THE MOSAIC**

**W**e begin our tour facing the sanctuary which is dominated by the large and impressive mosaic that takes up much of the sanctuary wall. Far from distracting from the original altar of sacrifice it is designed to draw attention to it. It achieves this by depicting the Last Supper and incorporating the high altar into the scene. Jesus is surrounded by His disciples celebrating the Last Supper and the altar serves as the table around which they gathered. Jesus holds the chalice of His Blood while the Bread of Life sits before them, in truth, on the “table” in the tabernacle. The table also breaks through time into our space and day around which we too gather at the table celebrating the same Supper of the Lamb.

Surrounding Jesus are symbols revealing His identity:

IC XC: **T**hese letters on either side of Jesus are a monogram for Jesus Christ. **DEEP DIVE:** Sometimes the letter C is used for the S in English versions of Greek words. You may be more familiar with IHS which is another monogram for Jesus. Spelled out completely it would be IHSUS or IHCUC. Hence IC, the first and last letter of the name Jesus and in the same way XC stands for Christ become His monogram.

ALPHA & OMEGA: **F**urther out and higher than the above letters are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet – alpha and omega – interposed with the cross. This is a self revelation of Jesus from Revelation 1:8, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end sayeth the Lord.”

STAFF: **F**urther out still to the left, a stylized staff shows Jesus to be the Good Shepherd.

CROWN: **C**orrespondingly to the right is crown depicting Jesus as Christ the Kings.

WHEAT AND GRAPES: **I**n the upper left and right hand corners are symbols of the Eucharist. To the left is a staff of wheat and a loaf of bread. **DEEP DIVE:** The prayer over the bread before the consecration reads, “Blessed are you Lord God of all creation for through Your goodness we have received the bread we offer You, fruit of the earth and work of human hands, it will become for us the Bread of Life.”

To the far right is a flagon of wine and a single bunch of grapes, also symbols of the Eucharist. **DEEP DIVE:** The prayer over the wine reads, “Blessed are you Lord God of all creation, for through Your goodness we have received this wine we offer you. Fruit of the vine and word of human hands, it will become our spiritual drink.”

HAND AND DOVE: **A**t center above Jesus’ head is a depiction of the Holy Spirit (the dove) and the Father (the hand) both showing their sanction of the action of the Son as the Mass is an action uniting us with the Father through the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit.

**DEEP DIVE:** The mosaic was chosen from several proposed by the DePrato Company of Chicago. It was crafted in Venice, taking a year to create, being sent to Saint Sebastian in 966 panels, taking six weeks to reassemble and adhere it to the sanctuary wall. It is made up of 175,000 pieces of Venetian glass.

HIGH ALTAR

LAMB ON THE BOOK WITH SEVEN SEALS: **T**his bronze depiction on the front of the altar shows a lamb sitting on a book and holding a banner. **DEEP DIVE:** The Lamb is one of the most popular depiction of Jesus in Christian art and is used frequently in Scripture such as in John 1:29, “The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Behold the Lamb of God Who takes away the sins of the world!”

The nimbus or halo around the head of this Lamb shows us clearly that this is a depiction of Jesus. Notice the three rays contained within the nimbus. This type of halo is reserved solely for members of the Holy Trinity in Christian symbolism.

The banner that He holds is a symbol of victory over death. This banner is only depicted with the Risen Christ so the Lamb shown here from the Book of Revelation that is the “Lamb once slain Who shall never die again!” If it were in color the banner would be white with a red cross. This symbol comes to us from the story of Emperor Constantine who saw this sign in the heavens and heard God’s voice say, “In this sign, you shall conquer!” Whereupon he converted to Christianity and had this symbol prominently displayed as he went victoriously into battle. It is now seen as a symbol of victory over death.

The story about the Book with Seven Seals begins in Revelation chapter 4. John cries because nobody is found worthy to open the seals. But the Lamb Who was slain (Jesus) is able to do so.

INRI: **T**he banner on the top of the golden crucifix above the tabernacle in engraved with the letters “INRI.” Like English depictions of Greek words, different English letters may be used to represent Latin letters. Thus “J”s and “I”s may be used interchangeably at times. The phrase being depicted is “*Jesus Nazarenus Rex Judaeorum*” or “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” According to John 19:19 this was the phrase written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin that Pilate affixed to Jesus’ cross.

TESTER: **L**ooking directly up and over the tabernacle you will see what is called a tester. A tester can be a sort of canopy over where Mass is celebrated and/or where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved. **DEEP DIVE:** It is an ancient custom in the Church to cover that which is sacred (hence why you see such things as chalice veils.) If the tester had legs it would be called a baldachino. The most famous baldachino would be over the altar in St. Peter Basilica. The main part of the tester is a painting. “IHS is a monogram for Jesus in Greek, “IHSUS,” and flowing from it are four wavy objects that almost look almost like white bed sheets. There are three birds drinking from pools of water and some branches with leaves on them. The sources for this painting largely come from the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel and the Book of Revelation.

From Revelation 22:1,2: “Then the angel showed me a river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb, [down](http://biblehub.com/greek/1722.htm) [the middle](http://biblehub.com/greek/3319.htm) [of the](http://biblehub.com/greek/3588.htm) [main street](http://biblehub.com/greek/4113.htm) [of the city.](http://biblehub.com/greek/846.htm) [On either side](http://biblehub.com/greek/1782.htm) [of the](http://biblehub.com/greek/3588.htm) [river](http://biblehub.com/greek/4215.htm) [stood a tree](http://biblehub.com/greek/3586.htm) [of life,](http://biblehub.com/greek/2222.htm) [producing](http://biblehub.com/greek/4160.htm) [twelve](http://biblehub.com/greek/1427.htm) [kinds of fruit](http://biblehub.com/greek/2590.htm) [and yielding](http://biblehub.com/greek/591.htm) [a fresh](http://biblehub.com/greek/846.htm) [crop](http://biblehub.com/greek/2590.htm) [for](http://biblehub.com/greek/2596.htm) [each](http://biblehub.com/greek/1538.htm) [month.](http://biblehub.com/greek/3376.htm) [And](http://biblehub.com/greek/2532.htm) [the](http://biblehub.com/greek/3588.htm) [leaves](http://biblehub.com/greek/5444.htm) [of the](http://biblehub.com/greek/3588.htm) [tree](http://biblehub.com/greek/3586.htm) [are for](http://biblehub.com/greek/1519.htm) [the healing](http://biblehub.com/greek/2322.htm) [of the](http://biblehub.com/greek/3588.htm) nations. No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be within the city, and His servants will worship Him.…”

A similar scene is portrayed in Ezekiel 47:12: “By the river on its bank, on one side and on the other, will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither and their fruit will not fail. They will bear every month because their water flows from the sanctuary, and their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing.”

The reference to the river being “as clear as crystal” gives reason to why the artist painted the four flowing streams as white. The leaves for the healing of the nations are the green leaves that appear in the painting.

In Ezekiel (39:17): "Tell all of the birds and wild beasts, "Come! Gather together and participate in the sacrifice that I'm going to make for you. This great sacrifice will take place on the mountains of Israel, where you'll be eating flesh and drinking blood.”

This excerpt from Ezekiel tells about the birds (us) are called to gather and participate in the sacrifice; to eat flesh and drink blood. In the Christian era we clearly see this as a Eucharistic reference. Jesus has become the Temple in the Holy City (John 2:19-21) “Jesus answered, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again.’ ‘This [temple took](http://biblehub.com/greek/3485.htm) [forty-six](http://biblehub.com/greek/5062.htm) [years](http://biblehub.com/greek/2094.htm) [to build,](http://biblehub.com/greek/3618.htm)' [the](http://biblehub.com/greek/3588.htm) [Jews](http://biblehub.com/greek/2453.htm) [replied,](http://biblehub.com/greek/2036.htm) ‘and [You](http://biblehub.com/greek/4771.htm) [are going to raise it up](http://biblehub.com/greek/1453.htm) [in](http://biblehub.com/greek/1722.htm) [three](http://biblehub.com/greek/5140.htm) days?’ But Jesus was speaking about the temple of His body. . .” Jesus is the Temple and the Sacrifice (the Lamb from Revelation) that feeds the world and gives life. In the context of the faith, all of this is referencing the Sacrifice of the Mass and the many graces that flow from it, an interesting tie in to the fact that the tester is designed to show the importance of the altar, the sacrifice of the Mass, and the healing nature of the Eucharist.CHI RHO: **T**he forward altar, added to the church after the Second Vatican Council, has an “X” and “P” monogram on its legs. The Chi and the Rho are the first two letters of the word Christ in Greek and thus serve as His monogram.

BAPTISMAL FONT: **O**n the front of the baptismal font (located on the left side of the sanctuary) is the dove that represents the Holy Spirit which Jesus saw upon coming up out of the water at His own baptism and which we also receive when we are baptized. Surrounding the font are wavy lines that denote the waters of baptism made holy by Christ’s own baptism. Water is a symbol of cleansing and purifying and in baptism we are cleansed from sin and we rise from the waters to newness of life.

SAINT MARY: **T**he altar to the left of the font is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. However the artist used no symbols to denote this.

SAINT JOSEPH: **T**he altar to the far right is dedicated to Saint Joseph. In his right hand he holds lilies, a symbol of purity, with which he is often depicted. In his left hand he holds a carpenter’s’ square most readily associated with Saint Joseph as he was a carpenter, the trade he taught Jesus.

ALTAR RAIL: **T**here are two symbols on the altar rail. At each end there is a depiction of a pelican feeding its young. **DEEP DIVE: I**n ancient mythology it was thought that the pelican so loved its young that it would pierce its own breast with its beak to feed them. This legend was “baptized” and clearly gives us the idea of Christ feeding the world with his Body and Blood. Also along the rail is the Chi Rho mentioned above.

**PART II**

**THE CLEARSTORY**

THE WINDOWS: **T**he clearstory is the gallery of windows high on the church walls. **DEEP DIVE:** All the windows were made by Francesco Marcion over the period of one year. After an astonishing career creating a great deal of quality liturgical art, he passed away in November of 2012.

You might notice that a primary color used in the windows is blue. This is due to founding pastor Monsignor Zwisler’s devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. There is a second reason however. Notice that as you take in the windows starting in the sanctuary and moving back to the ones nearest the choir loft that they increase in the use of blue. Artists have often used this technique over the centuries to help draw one’s attention to the sanctuary. Blue glass tends to let in less light than yellow and so it is hoped that the brighter light nearer the altar would provide subtle clues as to the focus of our worship and prayer.

This church entrusted to the intercession of Saint Sebastian is in many ways also a tribute to the Blessed Virgin whom Henry Wadsworth Youngfellow called, “Our tainted nature’s solitary boast.” Beginning in the sanctuary the many panels of windows are divided into sets of three with corresponding windows directly across from them. Each set of six (three windows on each side) depict two persons who would represent Mary’s Queenship named in the Litany of Loreto (Queen of angels, Queen of Patriarchs, Queen of Prophets, etc . . .) In a clever way they also represent the many people that make up the mystical Church and who are in attendance with us at Mass.

**PLEASE NOTE: The windows follow in sets of three. Further, each set of three windows corresponds with the set of three windows in the opposite wall. We will begin with the two sets of windows in the sanctuary and work our way back toward the choir loft.**

QUEEN OF ANGELS: **M**ost interesting are the windows that ended up in the sanctuary. These windows depict the angels and their role in salvation history. The Mass is said to be the closest thing to "heaven on earth." So how appropriate having these heavenly beings depicted here.

**DEEP DIVE:** The word "[angel](http://clevelandpriest.blogspot.com/2007/09/entertaining-angels-unawares.html)" is not what these beings are but rather what they do. They are pure spirits. The word angel means “God's messengers.” This is a bit like a person being called a mailman. Delivering mail is what they do not who they are. These angels then act on God's behalf to further the cause of salvation history in creation.

**T**o the left as you face the sanctuary is a window depicting the Archangel Michael. Here Michael is thrusting Satan out of heaven with the flaming sword of expulsion in his right hand and we can see just the tip of the fallen angel's wing as he descends into the fires of hell. In his left hand he holds the scales of justice as he administers punishment to Satan and his spirits. On the bottom left is an angel holding a palm branch which represents victory. Above him is an angel swinging a thurible (balanced by a similar angel on the other side of Saint Michael) whose rising incense asks God that our actions and worship be pleasing to Him. "Let my prayers be set before You as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice" (Psalm 141:2). At top left is an angel holding a cross that was intended to have conquered God but then is used by God as the ultimate foil of the Devil. The final angel at center top holds the cup of salvation. It is interesting to note that of the private prayers a priest might say before receiving communion in part is this, "Let it not bring me condemnation but health in mind and body." For those who are friends of God it is life giving elixir (My cup runneth over), for those who are not it is condemnation (The cup of wrath). And thus is the power of darkness overthrown.

**T**he corresponding window is directly opposite. At center is the archangel Gabriel who, with horn in hand, announces to Mary, depicted below by the letter "M" and the lily (symbol of her purity), that she has been chosen to be the vessel of the incarnation. To his left the archangel Raphael accompanies Tobia (Tobit's son) on a long journey (hence the staff) and provides for him a cure for his father's blindness made from a fish (hence the fish).

Across the top of the window are three cherubim who have six sings and are covered with eyes and are thus all seeing creatures. The first orders God's command with pointed hand directing Tobit and the directives of the Old Testament in general. The second holds open the Old Testament showing that Jesus is to fulfill it. The last wears a stole and points to Jesus' scepter showing Him to be the High Priest, below him an angel holds a sword showing Jesus to be the Victim, and finally the orb showing Him to be Ruler of the Universe. Here can be seen three great ages: the first panel before the incarnation, the incarnation itself, and creation after the incarnation.

QUEEN OF PATRIARCHS: **T**he next title for Mary as Queen in the Litany of Loretto and subsequently the subject of our next set of windows of consideration is Queen of Patriarchs. There are seven patriarchs; Adam, Noah, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. The word patriarch refers to the heads of prominent families of the Israelite tribes that appear in Genesis. The two focused on here are Abraham (east side) and David (west side) though David's title as patriarch is one more of honor rather than in actuality (Acts 2:29).

**DEEP DIVE:** Here on the east side is the famous scene in which Abraham was willing to sacrifice his son in obedience to God. The angel stops his hand while pointing to heaven to announce God recognizes his willingness but calls him to stop. Notice down in the right hand corner is a cross. That is because this story is a foreshadowing of the story of our Father and His only Son. The stories have many parallels; a father who is willing to sacrifice his own son for the forgiveness of sins. The son, born of under mystical circumstances, is without blemish, carries the wood of his own death on his back, forgiveness being brought about through obedience, and finally, in the end, for Abraham, a ram was offered but in the case of Jesus, He is the lamb that was offered.

The stars that trail down the right side depict God's promise to Abraham that because he so loved God that he was willing even to sacrifice his son, God would make his descendants "as numerous as the stars in the sky." The burning coals at the left are the coals that they brought with them to use in the sacrifice.

**O**n the opposite side is King David seated upon his thrown. Over his head like the stars of the sky are depicted eleven of the twelve tribes of Israel. At bottom right is the symbol of the tribe from which he comes. "The Lion of Judah". The six pointed star next to him, the star of David, represents the Kingdom of Israel. Notice that David holds a harp as he was a writer of songs. About half of the psalms in Scripture are attributed to him. To his immediate left is a young David playing for King Saul. Below that is the head of Goliath. Just above the head is David's sling with the smooth, round rock in it. There is another rock embedded in the head of Goliath who was beheaded by David with Goliath’s own sword and thus you see the river of blood flowing below.

QUEEN OF PROPHETS: **T**he next set of windows as we move further back in the Church is in honor of Mary Queen of Prophets; those special friends of God through whom He brought us closer to Him.

**DEEP DIVE: T**he first window (east side) is Jeremiah with pen and paper in hand. He prophesied that Jerusalem would be destroyed and the Temple burned (hence the flames) because of the sins of the people. Above him, like a vision in the future, is Saint Luke who quotes Jeremiah in Zechariah's Canticle about God restoring His people. Saint Luke also records the prophecy that the second temple would be destroyed.

**T**he opposite window is dedicated to the prophet Isaiah, perhaps the most important prophet for Christians as his prophecies concern the coming of the Messiah. The scroll he holds states, "And he shall be called Emmanuel." Once again, like a vision from the future is the Christ Child (so identified since he has the nimbus or halo with the three tell tale red rays.) To the upper right is Saint Matthew who quotes Isaiah's prophecy about Emmanuel. The saw on the lower right refers to the legend that Isaiah died by being sawed in half.

QUEEN OF APOSTLES: **R**epresenting the apostles are Saint Peter (east) and Saint Paul (west) who are standing guard and watching.

**DEEP DIVE:** Paul wears red, a color that informs us that he was a martyr. The sword that he holds is the instrument of his martyrdom for legend tells us that he was beheaded. Notice his deep gaze and upraised hand as though he were giving a thunderous sermon.

At the upper right hand corner is the "chi rho.” It is Christ's anointing falling on Paul and guiding his ministry directly.

To the left we see the story of his conversion in Damascus where he was "knocked off his high horse." Here is another example of tradition working in our lives. The Scriptures do not mention a horse at all yet (Acts 9:4) we all know the story and the saying. The ribbon extending from this scene scrolls around the rest of the picture marking the other cities through which Paul traveled and the people he met while spreading the Good News. The objects in the upper left hand corner are scrolls representing the letters Paul wrote.

**S**aint Peter's window is anchored around a portrayal of him as a "Fisher of Men." The net also calls to mind the encounters he had with Jesus when he was instructed to cast the net over the other side of the boat. As with Saint Paul, notice the yellow glass cascading down from the hands of God holding the keys to the kingdom. Peter also stands in a boat which is often called "the Bark of Peter." Bark means boat and the boat is the Church which he led and is thus recognized by the Universal Church as the first pope.

At the lower right is the rooster which Jesus predicted would crow after Peter had denied him three times. The upper left corner shows Peter's crucifixion. Not feeling worthy to be crucified in the same manner as Our Lord, he requested to be crucified upside down.

Just below this and a bit difficult to see in this picture is a depiction of Saint Peter Basilica in Rome. It was over his grave that the great Saint Peter Basilica was built, the altar being located directly over his grave.

QUEEN OF MARTYRS: **N**ext in the litany is Queen of Martyrs.

**DEEP DIVE:** The first to represent the martyrs is the first martyr, Saint Stephen (east). Not only was he the first martyr he is also the first deacon. Here we see him dressed in a dalmatic, the distinctive vesture for deacons. In this particular case the dalmatic is red, the color worn today when we commemorate the martyrs who spilled their blood for Christ.

One of the responsibilities of the deacon at the Mass is the proclamation of the Gospel. At bottom center is the open Gospel book. Three stones lay on top. His witness for Christ was not only his proclamation of the Word, but that he would defend it even to the point of death. On either side of him are the men who stoned him to death for his loyalty to Christ. The stones on top of the Gospel book pay tribute to this witness.

The stones also mimic the vision of the Trinity which he had at the time of his death. Stephen was the first recorded person to pray to the resurrected Christ. In calling out to him, he had a vision of the Trinity and here we see the Father holding an orb and imparting a blessing, Jesus in a red martyr’s mantle and holding His Cross, and the Holy Spirit descending as both a dove and a tongue of fire.

**T**he opposite window depicts Stephen’s modern counterparts; the North American Martyrs who came to the New World to bring Christ to the indigenous people. They were martyred by the Iroquois 1642 – 1649

QUEEN OF BISHOPS: **T**hese are St. Hilary (east) and St. Augustine (west.)

**DEEP DIVE:** St. Hillary was born into a noble family. A pagan, he was eventually baptized and finally became bishop of Arles, hence the miter that he wears and the crosier or bishop’s staff at his side. The Church was experiencing persecution at the time and perhaps that is the meaning of the snake wrapped around his crosier although this saint is patron of those bitten by snakes. Because of the persecution he wrote a book entitled, “First Book to Constantius” begging him to restore peace to the Church. He went on to write quite extensively (he is a doctor of the Church.) His most important work, “De Trinitate”, or “Of the Trinity” explains the symbol of the Trinity in the upper left hand corner, the aura of which flows down to the book and pen with which he writes.

In the lower left hand corner is a child. St. Hilary is often pictured with a child, “sometimes in a cradle at his feet, raised to life by him.” He was also married and had a daughter when he was elected bishop. Some will identify this baby as the Christ child and is thus a reference to his treatise on the nature of Christ. Then again, he is also patron of unruly children.

From the Saint Sebastian Parish Directory, “St. Augustine was the fifth century Bishop of Hippo and many regard him as the greatest Christian writer. His mother, St. Monica, is shown praying for his conversion, and he was finally baptized by Saint Ambrose. The church represents his labors on behalf of God’s people. “Veritas” refers to the truth of God’s word. The book and quill symbolize his writings. The heart reflects his deep burning love for God and willingness to suffer in serving Christ.”

QUEEN OF VIRGINS: **T**hese are St. Maria Goretti and St. Agnes.

**DEEP DIVE: T**he first of our figures to represent all virgins for Mary’s title as Queen of Virgins is Maria Goretti. She wears both white, the symbol of innocence, and the red of a martyr. In her hand is a bouquet of lilies for purity and palms which alludes to her victory over death. She was martyred when her attacker stabbed her in the neck with a knife. She lived for several days ultimately forgiving her attacker. The angles guide her to heaven into the hands of her loving, heavenly Father who is represented by the hands extending from the heavens at top.

Agnes too was a young when she was proposed to by a pagan. She had already decided to give herself completely to Jesus who is represented by the chi rho whose rays descend upon her, and so she declined the suitor’s offer. He reported her to the authorities and had her sent to a brothel. In the upper left hand corner we see that God protected her from lewd advances and so she was able to preserve her innocence as symbolized by the lilies. The sword tells us that she was beheaded. “Agnes” means lamb (Agnus Dei – Lamb of God) and we see the Lamb on the Gospel book to the lower left.

QUEEN OF ALL SAINTS: Here we have St. Mary Magdalene and St. Monica.

**DEEP DIVE:** Our east window shows Saint Mary Magdalene at the foot of the Cross during the crucifixion and we can see the two thieves at either side of Jesus. She was a witness of both His death and of His resurrection. So to the left we see the skull, a remembrance of death, and to the right a phoenix, a symbol of the resurrection.

The reason the phoenix is a symbol of the resurrection is because ancient mythology said that the phoenix was a mystical bird that, when it grew old, would dive down into the flames of a fire, only to rise from it rejuvenated. Baptizing this mythology we can readily make the symbolic jump to Jesus’ death and rising to new life. As Mary was a witness to the Resurrection we see her here watching the phoenix rising from the flames.

To the bottom left is the Gospel in which her life is recorded. To the right are the jars of oil with which she intended to anoint the body of Jesus.

Saint Monica was the mother of Saint Augustine, who was not such a saintly younger person. This should give even the most tried mother hope. She prayed ceaselessly for her wayward son. Here we see her lifting her prayers to Jesus represented by the letters IHS, a monogram for Jesus using the first three letters of His name in Greek: IHSUS. To the right we see the fruit of her prayers: a crosier which is a symbol of the office of bishop which her son, after his conversion, became and from this office became a saint.

Constant prayer even in the face of seemingly helpless odds takes much courage and strength. To the left of her we see from where her courage and strength came, the Eucharist and Holy Scripture.

**PART III**

**SIDE AISLES**

**F**inding ourselves in the back of the Church let us take in a view of the side aisles. We will begin on the west side of the church (away from the church parking lot.)

SAINT ANTHONY: **F**irst we are greeted by Saint Anthony (statue) who stands guard over the west aisle on the back wall of the Church. **DEEP DIVE:** Saint Anthony (1195-12312) was a Franciscan. We can see this in his habit. When laid flat the Franciscan habit forms a Tau or letter “T”, which in turn resembles a cross. Saint Francis taught the spiritual exercise that we should place ourselves on Christ’s cross – or take up our own cross – which is symbolized in their habit. The cincture or belt is tied with three knots in it. These represent the vows that Franciscan takes of poverty, chastity, and obedience. In his hand he holds a book symbolizing his great learning. Anthony is a doctor of the Church and a great defender of the faith and one of the best preachers the Church has known. He is patron saint of lost articles.

COAT OF ARMS: **W**alking down the aisle to your left you will notice on the ends of the pews the parish coat of arms. It can also be found on all of doors, on the front and back of the exterior of the church building and throughout our campus. **DEEP DIVE:** The version of our arms seen here was introduced in the late 1950s. The two bottom fields come from the original coat of arms divided per pale. The field dexter (the shield’s own right) contains seven crosslets. These represent the sacramental mission of the church. The sinister (left) has three arrows. The arrows allude to the first attempt on St. Sebastian’s life in which he was tied to a tree and shot with arrows by his own company. That there are three of them pointing upward gives testimony to his trust in God, one in three Persons, for which he gave up His life and to Whom the parish offers her worship.

Added to the coats is an area called the chief (across the top.) It was once suggested that what is represented here is chevrons denoting Sebastian’s rank in the Roman army. But this would be completely anachronistic. These are more likely stylistic representation of palm branches, the symbol of victory over death; most appropriate for Sebastian who was a martyr.

In the year 2009 there were several versions of the coat of arms being used in the parish. A decision was made to return to the original coat of arms in all further uses in order to give a unified identity to the parish. Architectural flourishes on the new church building are one of the few places where this 1950’s version is still prevalent.

PILLARS: **N**otice the green marble pillars. There are 12 of them and this is not because that is a good number architecturally for the size of the building. Twelve is the number of the Tribes of Israel as well as the number of Apostles. Symbolically it is also the number of the Church. The 12 pillars represent the whole Church that gather for Mass and can be found in the nave of Catholic churches of all sizes.

**NOTE:** Notice the base colors of all of the side altars. They vary greatly, which might seem like an odd choice but the architect did this purposefully to represent all of the different skin tones of the world.

SAINT PIUS X: 1835 – 1914 Pope. **K**nown for many great achievements as pope he is probably best known for encouraging Catholics to receive the Eucharist more often and he also lowered the age for First Communion. Because of this you will notice the chalice and host on the altar front as well as in the window to his right. The left window contains his coat of arms. The triple tiara refers to the office of the pope as do the crossed keys which were first given to Peter by Jesus in Matthew 16:19, “I give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven . . .”

**DEEP DIVE:** From the Wikipedia site: “The shield of Pius X's coat of arms is charged in two basic parts, as it is *per fess*. In chief (the top part of the shield) shows the arms of the Patriarch of Venice, which Pius X was from 1893 to 1903. It consists of the Lion of Saint Mark proper and haloed in silver upon a silver-white background, displaying a book with the inscription of PAX TIBI MARCE on the left page and EVANGELISTA MEUS on the right page. *Pax tibi Marce Evangelista Meus* is the motto of Venice and is Latin for *Peace to you, Mark, my evangelist*. This motto refers to Venice as the final resting place of Saint Mark. The display of the arms of the Patriarchate of Venice in the Papal Coat of Arms of popes who were archbishops of that city is traditional, and therefore the same *chief* can be seen in the arms of other popes, such as John XXIII and John Paul I, also Patriarchs of Venice upon election to the See of Rome. Renditions of this part of Pius X's arms depict the lion either with or without a sword, and sometimes only one side of the book is written on.

The shield displays the arms Pius X took as Bishop of Mantua: an anchor proper cast into a stormy sea (the blue and silver wavy lines), lit up by a single six-pointed star of gold. These were inspired by Hebrews 6:19, which states that the hope we have is the sure and steadfast anchor of the soul. Pius X, then Bishop Sarto, stated that "hope is the sole companion of my life, the greatest support in uncertainty, the strongest power in situations of weakness.”

SAINT JOHN VIANNEY: 1786 – 1859 Confessor. **DEEP DIVE:** Sent to a small town that was not very religious he soon set the parish on fire for love of God through his love and his great wisdom in the confessional. The left window has a purple stole and keys which are symbols of the sacrament of confession. The lamp shows his wisdom, knowledge, and understanding which he employed in the sacrament. The window to his right shows the sacrament of penance (in the form of the pillar) and the people who made pilgrimage to Ars to celebrate this sacrament. The beehive is a symbol of industry and represent his hard work in the confession, sometimes up to sixteen hours a day. In 2009 he was declared patron saint of all priests.

SAINT SEBASTIAN: 288 Martyr. **H**e is the patron saint of the parish. He was a fervent Christian as well as Roman soldier in a time when Christians were being persecuted. He acquired much fame as a soldier and was favored by the emperor until it was discovered that not only was he a Christian, but he had used his office to help other Christians. As a result he was tied to a tree and shot with arrows. Here we see Saint Sebastian tied to a tree and his body shot through with arrows. At his feet is his Roman soldier helmet. In the window to his left is the tree to which he was tied with the rope still hanging from it. In the right window the arrows and a cross shows that he was martyred for Christ. He did not die from the arrow wounds however. He was found by St. Irene and nursed back to health whereupon he headed back to the emperor to chide him for mistreating Christians. After the emperor recovered from his shock he had Sebastian beaten to death (notice the stones in the window) and his body thrown into the river. He is patron saint of athletes, archers, soldiers, municipal police, neighborhood watch operations, physicians, and a guard against plagues.

SACRED HEART: **J**esus’ love for us is said to be so strong that His heart is on fire for us. Dressed in red and having the wounds of His crucifixion He holds one hand to His chest indicating His heart and the other hand stretched out in a blessing to us. The window to His left is another symbol of the Sacred Heart, a heart on fire and surrounded by a crown of thorns. To his left is a pelican feeding its young. See Altar Rail detail above.

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI: 1181 – 1226 Founder. **DEEP DIVE:** Standing guard at the opposite end of this aisle from St. Anthony is Saint Francis, the founder of the Franciscans. He had a great love of nature seeing in it God’s love for us. Resting with him is a sparrow. It shows St. Francis’ love of nature as well as being a symbol of humility. This humble bird sports brown feathers (the color of humility) and is considered the lowliest of birds yet it too came to be by the will of God and receives life and nourishment from Him.

**EAST AISLE**

SAINT PATRICK: 390 – 461 Bishop. **DEEP DIVE:** He is said to have single handedly converted Ireland. By his miter and crosier we can see that he was a bishop. The snake coiled around the base of the crosier alludes to the legend that he had driven the snakes (sin) out of Ireland. He is patron saint of Ireland and Nigeria.

ANGELS – Looking directly to your left and over the doors you will see a symbol that is over all of the exterior doors of the church. Contained within the circle (a common symbol of eternity and eternal things) is a guardian angel standing watch at all of our doors. With their wings they form the letter “M” for Mary to whom Monsignor Zwisler had a particular devotion.

SORROWFUL MOTHER: **T**urning left and starting down the aisle you will first come to the Sorrowful Mother Shrine. The right window refers to Simeon’s prophecy, “And a sword your own heart will pierce.” To the left is the Cross and the lily represent the Mary present during the crucifixion.

SAINT ANN: **A**nn is Mary’s mother and is shown here teaching a young Mary about God. **DEEP DIVE:** In the right window, an angel sees the fulfillment of the prophecy, “A shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse.” The left window shows the presentation of Mary (two doves), refers to the legend that the one whose walking stick would flower would be the one whom God chooses to be the foster father of Jesus, and the crown showing that he would be (Joseph) of the house of David.

LADY OF FATIMA: **T**his is the name given to Our Lady who appeared to three shepherd children over the course of six months in Fatima in the year 1917. **DEEP DIVE:** The window to the right depicts the miracle of the sun that took place during the last apparition to help people believe and below shows a rosary which Mary called upon the faithful to pray. To the left we see a star that represents Mary’s appearing to them in the fields of Cova da Irea where she appeared, "brighter than the sun, shedding rays of light clearer and stronger than a crystal ball filled with the most sparkling water and pierced by the burning rays of the sun."

SAINT THERESA: 1873-1897, **S**t. Theresa doctor and virgin, is known as the Little Flower because she once said that she would let fall a shower of roses (which she holds in her hands) from heaven as a sign of her intercession for those who call upon her name. The left window proclaims her purity through the symbol of lilies and the rose in the right window reminds us of her title (Little Flower) and of her promise to intercede for us.

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST: **A**t the end of the aisle is a statue of John the Baptist. **DEEP DIVE:** Appropriately this saint who baptized Jesus is located right outside the old baptistery. He is dressed in the coarse camel hair garment described in Scriptures. The lamb alludes to his mission as the forerunner of Christ. He is said to have pointed to Jesus on the shore of and proclaimed, “Behold the Lamb of God!”

**PART IV**

**THE BAPTISTERY AND NARTHEX**

Turn to your right and enter the former baptistery. The gates to the baptistery suggest water through which we receive our baptism by its flowing bars topped by a cross. The room itself has eight sides. Eight is the symbolic number for baptism since eight days after Jesus entered into Jerusalem He resurrected from the dead. We say that we resurrect with Jesus at our baptism.

Around the edge of the ceiling are the words by which we are baptized. “*In nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti”* or “In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.” The shell is a symbol of baptism and is often used for the actual pouring of the water hence the center motif has shells and water droplets. We will look at the windows from right to left.

WINDOW ONE: The shell, the water, and the baptismal font are items used in the celebration of baptism and as such symbolize the sacrament itself.

WINDOW TWO: The next three windows depict the three Persons of the Holy Trinity. This first window is of the Holy Spirit Who comes down upon the water to make it holy. The Spirit (dove) is also reported to have descended upon Jesus as He came up out of the water from his own baptism.

WINDOW THREE: The Chi Rho (see above) coming up out of the water symbolized Christ’s baptism as does the fish (see above.)

WINDOW FOUR: The hand coming out of heaven with the two fingers extended and the three rays of light represent the Father to Whom we are reconciled in baptism. Doves drinking from the fountain of salvation are symbols of eternal life.

NARTHEX

FLAGS: Before we step into the lobby of the church, look up at the flags displayed on either side of the choir loft.

FLAG OF THE PARISH OF ST. SEBASTIAN: The flag to your right is the parish flag. **DEEP DIVE:** The center of the flag carries the markings of the parish’s coat of arms. There is an addition of a red field at the end of the flag to denote that St. Sebastian was a martyr for the faith.

FLAG OF THE DIOCESE OF CLEVELAND: **DEEP DIVE:** From the Diocesan website: The arms of the Diocese of Cleveland are based on the family arms of General Moses Cleaveland (1754–1806), who surveyed and founded the city that bears his name. To the Cleaveland arms—which divide the shield with a line like an inverted “V” (per chevron), and charge it with a similar shape drawn with semi-circular indentations along its edge (a chevron engrailed)—the Diocese adds three small Crosses, the arms of which are crossed again (cross crosslets). The shield is painted black (sable) above the chevron; below, it is white with small black spots meant to represent ermine, a fur typically used to line the robes of royalty and nobility. The crosses and the chevron are counterchanged; that is, they are painted black where the shield is ermine, and ermine where the shield is black.

WINDOWS ON EITHER SIDE OF THE CHOIR LOFT: EAST WINDOW: This window is dedicated to St. Gregory the Great, Pope. **DEEP DIVE:** Here we can see his writing that were influenced by the Holy Spirit seen speaking into his ear. He know for establishing plain chant or Gregorian Chant in the Church, the oldest form of music that we have in its original form. It is still held in highest esteem in the musical forms to be used in the Church’s liturgies. At the lower right hand corner there is a music stand with Gregorian Chant music displayed on it. He is surrounded by angels laying various instruments. He is patron saint of musicians and singers, teachers and students.

WEST WINDOW: Here is depicted St. Cecilia, patron saint of music. **DEEP DIVE:** She was not known for being a musician herself but that she heard “heavenly music in her heart.” To her lower left is a tiny pipe organ, the official instrument of the Catholic Church. To her right are more modern instruments, a guitar and a drum. Over her head are angels singing and playing instruments.

Entering the narthex (lobby) of the church turn left and enter the cry room. To your right is the restroom in there is our first window:

WINDOW ONE: PIETY: This is represented by folded hands showing reverential prayer, the lily showing purity, and prayer through Jesus (the cross) in the power of the Holy Spirit (the dove.)

Stepping into the cry room proper and looking up you will see a small statue.

ST. GERARD MAJELLA: **DEEP DIVE:** He was born in 1726 in Muro, Italy to a family of seven. Majella grew up in a poverty with a great respect for the poor. He led a fascinating life eventually becoming a member of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. Majella's last recorded miracle is one that many credit toward his becoming the patron of expectant mothers. Shortly before his death, Majella encountered a young girl. He had dropped his handkerchief and she set out to return it, only to be told to keep it. Majella told her she "may need it someday." Years after Majella's passing, the young girl became married and with child. She unexpectedly went into labor and was on the verge of losing her baby. She called for Majella's handkerchief to be applied to her. Almost immediately, her pain abated and she proceeded to give birth to a healthy child, something very rare during that time. He is patron saint of expectant mothers.

WINDOW ONE: Knowledge – This gift of the Holy Spirit (dove) is one of the parish promoters for her youth exemplified most by her day school. Shown are some of the knowledge of the world and advances in the sciences made from this gift represented by the atom, snowflake, and plant.

WINDOW TWO: This window is dedicated to the Holy Family. The Chi Rho (see above) represents the child Jesus as it is seen in the crib. The lily plant on the right represents Mary and the flowering staff to the left (see above) represent St. Joseph.

WINDOW THREE: Council - This gift of the Holy Spirit (represented by the dove with the halo with three rays) is represented by the clock which shows it is 3:00 PM in afternoon, the hour at which Christ died. (Father, not as I will but as Your will be done.) and the torch, which is also sometimes used to denote the Passion of Christ for, “Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees came with lanterns and torches and weapons.” (John 18:3)

WINDOW FOUR: Love - The Cross represents Jesus and the two flowers represent the two Marys who were present at the foot of the Cross (His Mother and Mary Magdalene) showing their great love and dedication for each other, particularly that of Mother and Son. The dove (here not the Holy Spirit) in ancient and Christian art has been the symbol of purity and peace.

Leaving the cry room and heading across the narthex the first window to your left just passed the entrance to the choir loft.

THREE WINDOWS: **T**hese windows show the great three periods of the Christ. The first window with its scroll and torch represent the stage of history in which humanity waited for the foretold coming of a Savior. The center window shows Christ as King as He lived here on earth. The final window with the Dove (Holy Spirit) and the Gospel Book represents how He is still present among us today. The candle represents our waiting and longing for when He comes again.