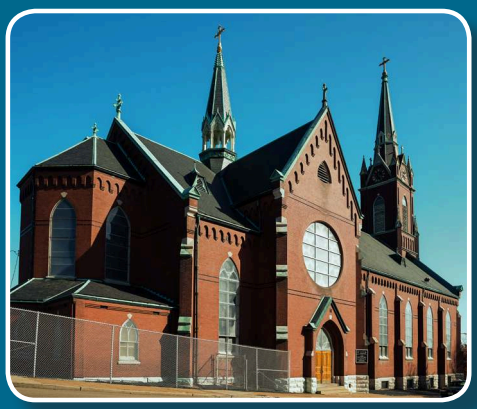
Guidebook for St. Agatha Church in St. Louis, Missouri

St. Agatha Church - Polish Roman Catholic Parish
3239 South 9th Street (at Utah) St. Louis , MO 63118-2629
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St. Agatha Church in St. Louis, Missouri Polish Roman–Catholic Parish

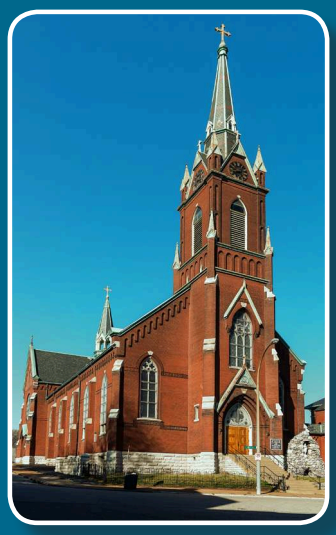


History

- In 1871 a piece of land is bought on the corner of 9th Street and Utah. On October 29th of the same year a cornerstone was laid for the building that was to serve as the church, school and rectory. This building, which does not exist today, was located on the southwest corner of the property. Most of the parishioners were of German descent.
- In 1872 the first school was opened.
- In 1873 the new rectory building, which does not exist today, was erected.
- On April 12, 1885 a cornerstone was laid for the new church and on September 27th of the same year, the building was dedicated by Bishop Joseph Rademacher.
- On April 7, 1893 Sisters of the Most Precious Blood, who taught in the school, moved into the newly built house, which has served as their Convent to this day.
- In 1896 the current day rectory was erected.
- In 1899 the church was enlarged by building a transept.
- In 1909 due to the increasing number of school children, a new school building, which is currently standing on the property, was erected.
- On December 31, 1921, two months after the church renovations were completed a fire broke out and caused serious losses.
- In October 1922 the renovations, which were necessary due to the fire, were completed.
- In the summer of 1926 extensive improvements were performed in the school hall to help render the building fireproof.
- In September 1928 new bells were installed in the clock tower.
- The next redecorations of the church took place in 1937; and in 1945 improvements were made to both the church and school.
- The improvements carried out in 1945 to the presbytery have remained in place until the current time.
- In 1993 the parking lot was enlarged and resurfaced, and tuck-pointing was performed around the church and the remaining three buildings.
- Between 1983 and 2005, with the permission of the Vatican, Latin Tridentine Masses were celebrated in the church.
- On July 1, 2005, the church was given to the Poles residing in St. Louis and the surrounding areas.
- Between 2005 and 2012 a variety of improvements and redecorating took place in all of the buildings including: redecoration of the Café, changing the lighting from incandescent to fluorescent.
- In 2005 the Polish Library was founded.
- In 2011 the Blessed John Paul II Polish School was founded, and after canonization of the Holy Father in 2014, changed its name to St. John II Polish School.
- Between 2012 and 2014 renovations of the rectory, parking lot, the small spire, and the church clock tower took place.

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Pastors



Fr. J.A. Stroombergen	*1871*
Fr. Herman Leygraaff	*1871 – 1874*
Fr. William Hinssen	*1874 – 1883*
Fr. Henry Schrage	*1883 – 1911*
Fr. Henry B. Geers	*1911 – 1918*
Fr. Otto Siesener	*1918 – 1941*
Fr. James Ehlenz	*1941 – 1951*
Fr. Vincent Schuler	*1951 – 1963*
Fr. Edward J. Clohesy	*1963 – 1983*
Fr. Bernard Granich	*1983 – 1990*
Fr. James Rodis	*1990 – 2005*
Fr. Adam Hurbanczuk	*2005 – 2005*
Fr. Czesław Litak	*2005 – 2012*
Fr. Hubert Zasada SChr	*2012 – present*

Architecture

The church was built in a Neo-Gothic style, which was created in mid-eighteenth century England and was commonly used in sacred architecture in Europe and United States until the beginning of the twentieth century. This style was characterized by soaring towers, bigeminal roofs, high cross-ribbed vaults, archivolts above the doors and windows, multicolored stained glass windows and ornate spires.



As we walk through the front door, we notice a vast expanse of the main nave and the side aisles, crowned with an elevated chancel with three neo-Gothic altars.

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High altar

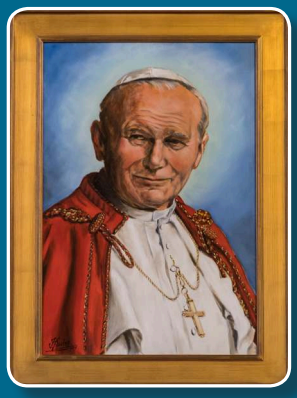
The massive high altar is carved in wood and adorned with gilding. Centrally placed is a picture of St. Agatha, the patron of the parish and flanking it on both sides are carved sculptures of angels. A mural depicting the crucified Jesus completes the design of the altar.



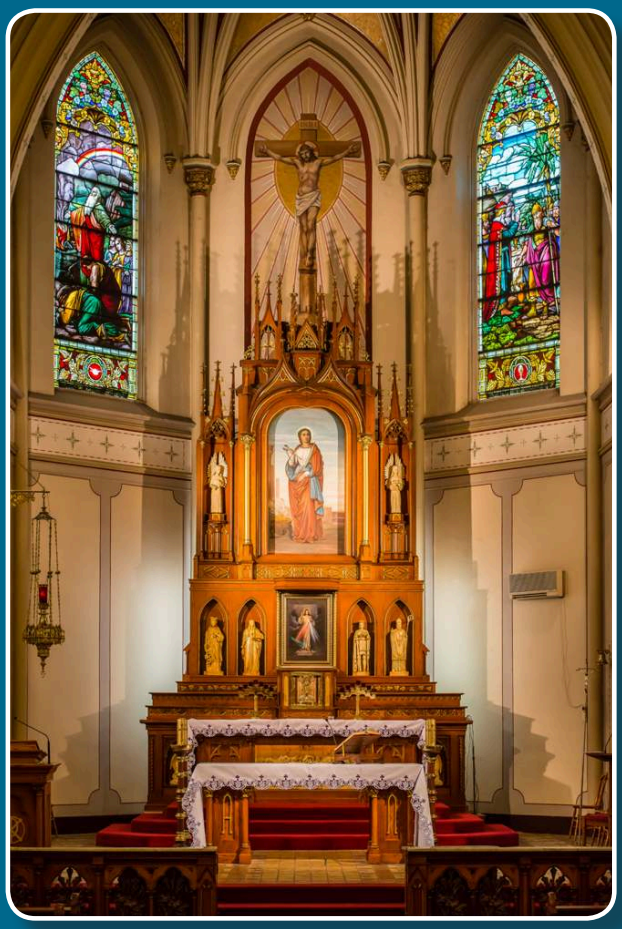
At the base is a bas relief of the Last Supper.



On a pillar to the left is a copy of an Image of Our Lady of Częstochowa, Queen of Poland.



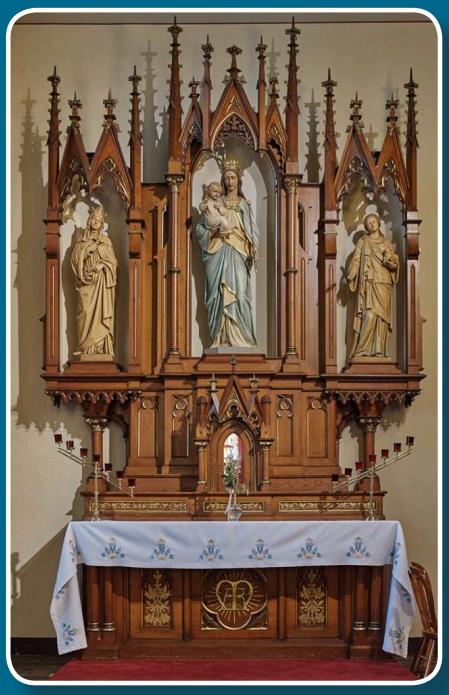
On the pillar to the right is a painting of St. John Paul II.



Above the tabernacle is the Image of the Devine Mercy and on the sides, statues of saints (from left St. Catherine of Alexandria, St. Cecilia, St. Louis, and St. Boniface).

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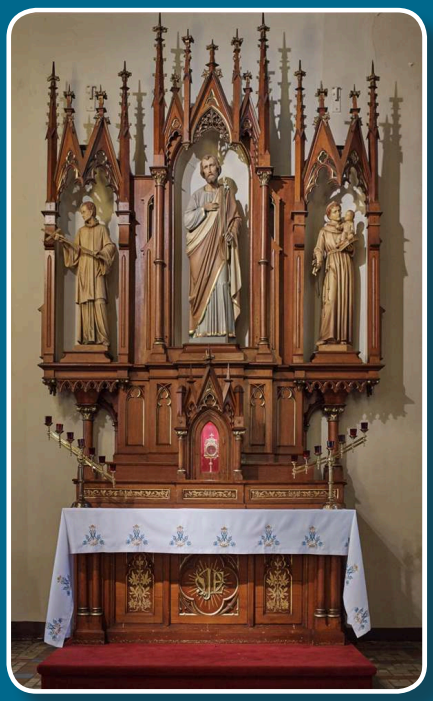
Side altars in the chancel



The side altars are made in the same style as the high altar.

Left side of the chancel: Altar of Mary the Queen with St. Elizabeth of Hungary on the left and St. Agnes on the right. A relic of St. Agatha is also located in this altar.

Right side of the chancel: Altar of St. Joseph with St. Aloysius on the left and St. Anthony on the right. A relic of St. Blaise is also located in this altar.



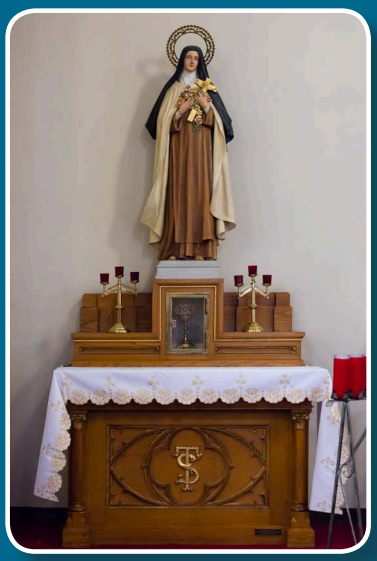




Above the side altars are murals depicting the Holy Family with the Baby Jesus on the left and Mary and Jesus with the dying Joseph.

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Altars in the left transept



On the left
Altar of St. Therese of Lisieux known as St. Therese of the Child Jesus. A relic of this saint in located in this altar.

On the right
Altar of Our Mother of Perpetual Help.



Altars in the right transept



On the left
Altar dedicated to the Infant of Prague.

On the right
Altar with the Pieta.



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Stained glass windows around the high altar









Stained glass windows around the high altar depict scenes from the Old Testament.

On the left:
Sacrifice of Cain and Abel
(Genesis 4:4-5)

Noah's Sacrifice
(Genesis 9:13-17)

Abraham being blessed by Melchizidek
(Genesis 14:18)

Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac
(Genesis 22:9-12)

Symbols were placed in the lower portion of the stained glass windows.
From the left:
Wheat - the Eucharist;
The dove of peace - the Holy Spirit;
Chalice and Host - Christ's Body and Blood,
The eye - the 'eye' of God the Father.

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Stained glass windows in the chancel



On the left
The Annunciation of Mary. In the circle at the top – God the Father. The triangle behind his head signifies the Holy Trinity. On the bottom - a Latin phrase, "Ave Maria gratia plenta" – "Hail Mary, full of grace".

Stained glass windows in the chancel depict scenes from the New Testament.

On the right
Baptism of Jesus
In the circle at the top, - a dove, symbol of the Holy Spirit. On the bottom - a Latin phrase, "Filius Meus dilectus in quo mihi bene complacui" – "My Beloved Son, in whom I am Well Pleased."

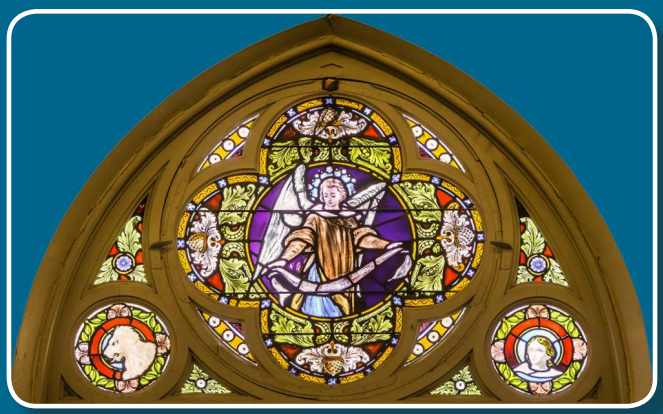


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Stained glass windows above the left side entrance



Rosette window depicting the Sorrowful Mother. Six symbols of Mary are depicted around the Mother of God. Starting at the top and moving clockwise (every other portal) are: the crown of heaven; Star of Bethlehem with a palm; lily; white roses; dove of peace.



Right above the door is a small stained glass window depicting an angel holding a banner. Towards the bottom is a head of a lion which symbolizes St. Mark and a head of a man symbolizing St. Matthew.

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Stained glass windows above the right side entrance



Rosette window depicting the Suffering Christ.
Six symbols of Christ are depicted around him. Starting at the top and moving clockwise (every other portal) are: banner of Latin acronym "S.P.Q.R. – Senātus Populusque Rōmānus" - "The Senate and People of Rome"; hammer and pliers; spear and ladder; St. Veronica's veil; crown of thorns and nails; inscription: "I.N.R.I. - Iēsus Nazarēnus, Rēx Iūdaeōrum" - "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews".



Right above the door is a small stained glass window depicting an angel holding a banner with the inscription: "Domus Dei" – "House of God".
Towards the bottom is a head of an eagle which symbolizes St. John and a head of an ox symbolizing St. Luke.

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Stained glass windows on the left side of the nave



Scenes from the New Testament:

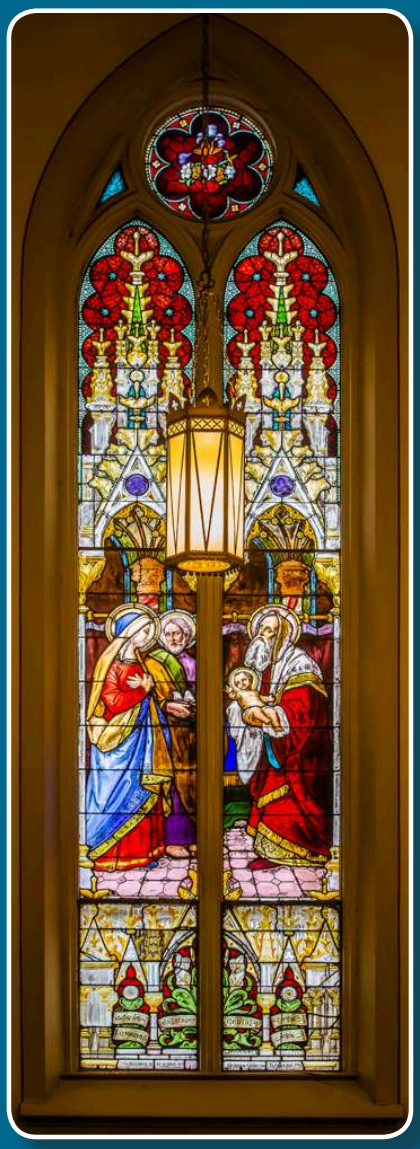
On the right:
Visit by the Magi.
In the circle at the top the star, that shone the way to Jesus.
On the bottom, a Latin inscription "Christus apparuit nobis venite adoremus" – "Christ appeared to us - come let us adore him".

On the left:
Birth of Christ
In the circle at the top an Angel announcing the birth of Christ.
On the bottom, a Latin inscription "Verbum caro factum est" – "The word was made flesh".



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Stained glass windows on the left side of the nave cont.



Scenes from the New Testament:

On the right:
Finding Jesus in the Temple.
In the circle at the top Ten Commendments.
On the bottom, a Latin inscription "Oportet me esse in iis quae Patris mei sunt" – "I had to be in my Father's house".

On the left:
Presentation of Jesus in the Temple.
In the circle at the top the sword that pierces the Sacred Heart of Mary.
On the bottom, a Latin inscription "Lumen ad revelationem gentium" - "A light to enlighten the nations".



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Stained glass windows on the right side of the nave



Scenes from the New Testament:

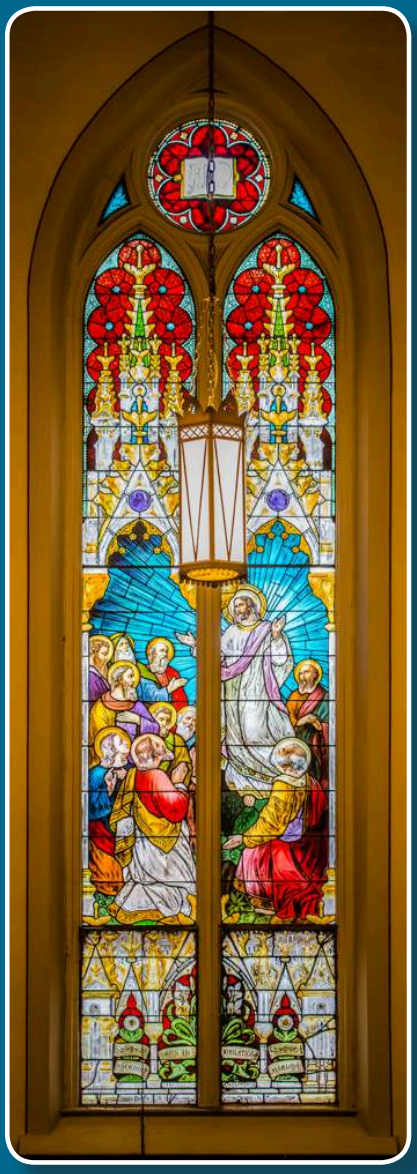
On the right:
Christ gives the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven to Peter. In the circle at the top papal crown.
On the bottom, a Latin inscription: "Tibi dabo claves Regina Caelorum" - "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven".

On the left:
Resurrection.
In the circle at the top an angel announcing the Resurrection of Christ.
On the bottom, a Latin inscription "Surrexit Dominus vere. Alleluia" - "The Lord is truly risen - Alleluia".



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Stained glass windows on the right side of the nave cont.



Scenes from the New Testament:

On the left: Ascension of Jesus.
In the circle at the top - Greek letters Alpha and Omega, which symbolize Jesus, who is the beginning and the end of all that is.
On the bottom, a Latin inscription "Ascendit Deus in Jubilatione. Alleluia" – "Ascends to God in Jubilation. Alleluia".

On the right: Pentecost.
In the circle at the top a dove, which symbolizes the Holy Spirit.
On the bottom, a Latin inscription "Repleti Sunt omnes Spiritus Sancto. Alleluia" – "All were filled with the Holy Spirit. Alleluia".



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Stained glass windows in the back of the church



Stained glass windows on the right side of the narthex (visible from the organ/ choir loft)
In order from the left: St. Rose of Lima, St. Barbara, St. Francis de Sales, and St. Augustine.



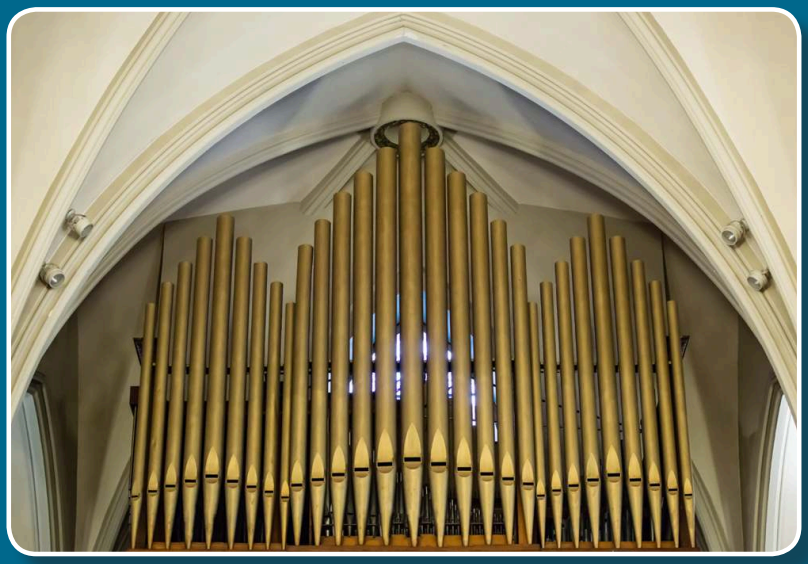




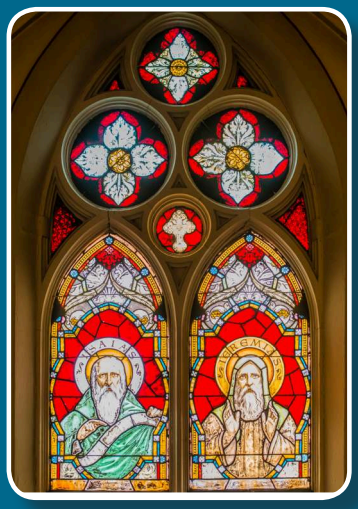
Stained glass windows on the right side of the narthex (visible from down below).
In order from the left: St. Francis of Assisi, St. Vincent de Paul, St. Margaret, and St. Mary Magdalene.
Underneath each saint, a German inscription of one of the eight Beatitudes.

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Stained glass windows in the back of the church cont.



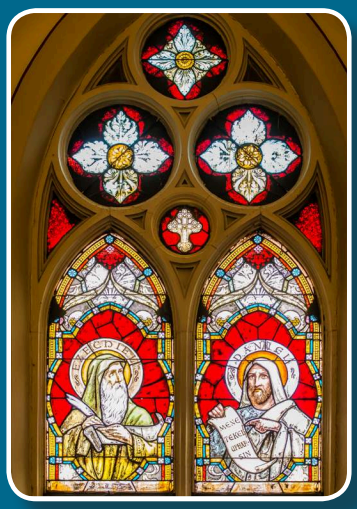
The pipe organ, located in the organ/choir loft and originally constructed in 1885 by the Pfeffer Organ Company, is still in use.



Standing in the organ/choir loft with your back to the altar, we see stained glass windows depicting of the Prophets of the Old Testament.

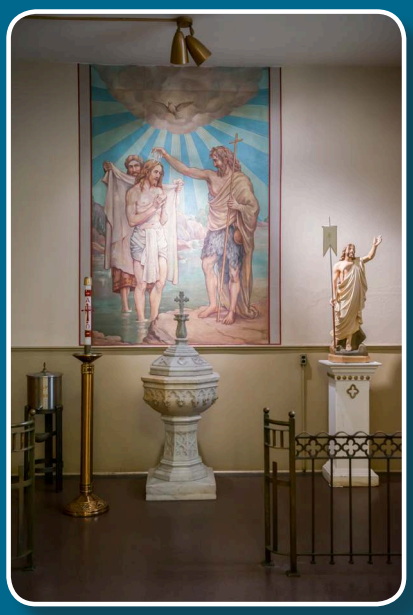
Stained glass window on the left side of the organ depicts prophets: Isaiah on the left and Jeremiah on the right.

Stained glass window on the right side of the organ depicts prophets: Ezekiel on the left and Daniel on the right.

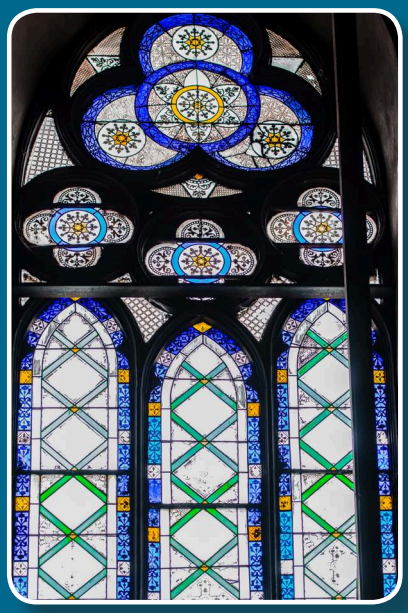


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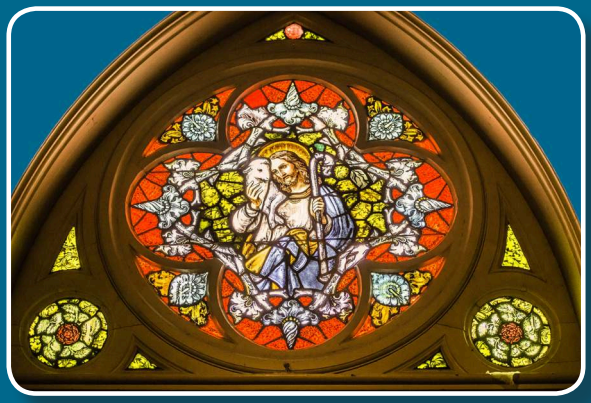
Stained glass windows in the back of the church cont.



In the back of the narthex, on the right side a baptismal font is located just beneath the mural depicting the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist.



Behind the organ - an ornamental stained glass window visible only from the outside.



Above the main entrance to the church - a stained glass rosette window depicting Christ the Good Shepherd carrying a lamb.

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