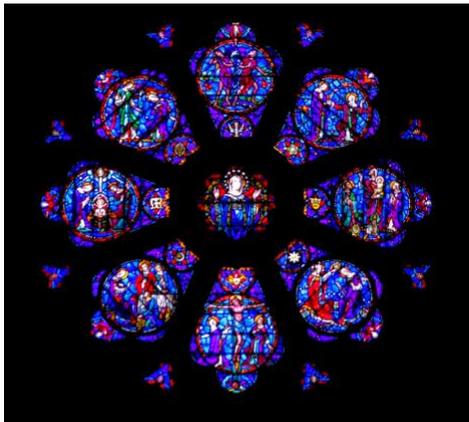


MOTIFS IN THE ROSE WINDOW ¹
Recurring and distinctive motifs in the Window

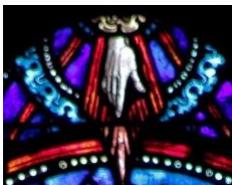


*A large rose window above the choir loft
 portrays Mary's relationship with her divine Son.
 It is a marvelous visual record of the events
 that have shaped our Christian history.*

We will eventually consider in detail the central image of Mary and each of the eight rose petals. The present reflection focuses on motifs that are repeated in the window and others that are unique.



Along the outer edge of the window eight small angels appear between the pedals; their wings are blue, the color often associated with Mary. Similar images of angels appear on six of the petals; these have red wings, the color often associated with the Sacred Heart.



Two of the petals have distinct images. The one portraying Adam and Eve displays the hand of God passing judgment on the serpent and our first Parents.

The other portraying the death of Jesus displays a skull and cross; they depict human death.



Each of the eight petals on the bases closest to Mary's image has a distinctive image. The following list suggests possible interpretations of their meaning:

¹ This script was composed by Fr. Frank Sacks, C.M. who creates our Shrine Reflections.



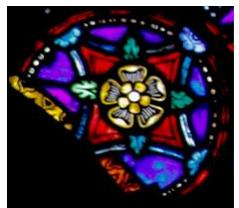
1. *Adam and Eve*: a *dove* representing the Holy Spirit-God who created our first Parents and remained active throughout Salvation History.



2. *Crucifixion*: A *heart* with the *letter M* and a *cross*, Mary's heart pierced with two *swords* symbolizing her participation in the death of her Son collaboration with him for the atonement of the sins of the world.



3. *Annunciation*: A *fluer-de-lis*, a stylized lily often associated with Joseph and Mary as a sign of their purity.



4. *Visitation*: a *stylized flower* before a red background symbolizing the precursor John the Baptist announcing the Lamb of God who will take away the sins of the world.



5. *Bethlehem*: an *M* representing Mary the mother of Jesus. The right side of the letter appears as an *R* for *Regina* representing Mary as the Queen Mother who has given birth to the King of the World.



6. *Presentation*: a *golden crown* symbolizing Simeon's prophecy about this King to be revealed: "...*my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in sight of all the peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel.*" (Lk 2:30-32)



7. *Wedding at Cana*: a *sunburst* before a field in red and white suggesting Jesus who worked his first public sign by changing water into wine at the bidding of his Mother.



8. *Coronation of Mary: an eight-pointed star* before a field of black. The star symbolizes regeneration and is traditionally linked to re-birth and baptism. It represents Mary who embodies the fullness of redemption that has overcome the darkness of evil and sin.

Future reflections will discuss these symbols further in their relationship to specific scenes portrayed in each petal.

Throughout the Rose Window one sees *six-pointed stars*. They are prominent in the scene of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. Such stars represent the Creator-God. In a classic, familiar form they are composed of two triangles, one superimposed on the other as an inverted triangle (the triangle is a Christian symbol for the Holy Trinity). Together they form the Jewish Star of David, a symbol of Zionism today. We have seen examples of such stars in other windows and most dramatically in the floor mosaic in the Central Shrine of the Miraculous Medal.



Our prayer this week addresses God the Creator-Spirit whose six-pointed star permeates the entire Rose Window.

We pray:

*Almighty and loving God,
Creator, Redeemer and Consoler,
we praise You for your work of Creation
and redemption through your incarnate Son.*

*We continue to rely on your Spirit to
guide us in the world of sin,
to help us live your Son's Commandment of Love
and to come at last to enjoy
his heavenly victory over sin and death.*

*We ask this through Virgin Mary,
she who participated in the mysteries
revealed in the life of your divine Son.*

Amen!

In future Reflections we will discuss in detail each of the eight petals on the Rose Window. Our next Reflection focuses on the central image of *Mary*.