

St. Mary Church Tour-Algoma, WI

As we enter St. Mary's Church we notice the 1906 church operates or carries on through three channels-tradition, the scriptures and the sacraments. The windows portray in modern form the seven sacraments of the church and the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Windows

Baptism—the pouring of water, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the anchor showing the virtues received of faith, hope and love. Wisdom is shown with oil to remind us to keep our lamps lit and well filled and fortified with the knowledge of the Scriptures.

Confirmation—is depicted with the sign of the Holy Spirit and the shield, as we are to be defenders of the faith. Understanding is maintained by prayer—the incense rising to the altar of God.

Holy Eucharist—carries the symbols of the bread and wine from wheat and grapes. This sacrament is the main stay of the Catholic Church as we hold to the Real Presence. The virtue of counsel is shown with the helping hands.

Reconciliation—here repeats the sign of the key that Peter holds...the power to forgive or not to forgive sins along with the hands and sign of absolution. Fortitude depicted by the cross and the sword reminding us to take up our cross daily.

Anointing of the Sick—with the oil of the infirm, the branch of hope and the cup of suffering. Knowledge is shown with the torch of light.

Holy Orders—call for the ordained to be priest and teacher...the stole and the scroll. The priest wears the stole when celebrating sacraments. He lives according to the Scriptures and is the only one able to change the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ. The daisy or a flower portrays piety.

Matrimony—has the symbolic rings, circle of unending love intertwined along with the cross. The marriage needs three; the man and woman each helping the other to the God of Love. The virtue here is that of the fear of the Lord shown as the all seeing eye of God.

Above the sculpture of Jesus taken from the cross, we see the Tabernacle and Sanctuary Lamp, which burns to remind us that Jesus is present in the Scriptures and the Eucharist. The Blessed Sacrament is present for adoration and Communion.

In the center of the sanctuary is the Altar of Sacrifice. To the left we see the Paschal Candle.

Side Altars

The St. Ann's altar was carved in 1890. Originally it had St. Ann and Blessed Mother statue in the center. Above are three women: **The Blessed Mother**, Lady of Grace is in the center; **St. Elizabeth of Hungary** is holding roses. She dedicated her life to the poor. As she was going one day to deliver food, her angry husband accosted her. As he pulled open her cloak, roses were displayed—opening his eyes to the good works and virtues of his wife. **St. Catherine of Alexandria** is shown with the wheel of torture on which she was bound for her faith. When the wheel broke down, she was beheaded.

In the center of this altar are the Sacred Oils. The oil of Catechumens used in Baptism, the oil of the sick or infirm used in anointing the sick and dying, the oil of Chrism used in Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders. In front of this altar is the Baptismal Font.

On the right altar we have **St. Joseph**, foster father of Jesus and protector and provider of the Holy Family. With Joseph we have **St. Francis of Assisi** who loved all of creation, founded the order of Franciscans and helped reform The Church. Then with the Christ Child we have another Franciscan, **St. Anthony of Padua**, Italy. Fr. Cipin built this, his first altar, in 1884.

Body of Church

Now to the left of the body of the church we note the Sacrament of Reconciliation Room. The room offers penitents a choice between confessing anonymously and talking with the Priest face to face.

Along the wall of the Church are the Stations of the Cross— Fourteen reliefs that remind us of the journey of Jesus to Calvary and what happened there and along the way.

The next window has the Greek symbols of the Chirho that looks like PX, the sign for Jesus the Christ, as well as the A and the upside down U—the Greek Alpha and Omega symbolizing Jesus is God with no beginning and no end. If we look at the position of these symbols we see that Jesus came to this earth through his mother Mary. He made her Queen of Heaven and Earth. We do not worship Mary but we hold her in high esteem, as she is the mother of the Church who prays for us to the Almighty.

The large window on the north side celebrates the Holy Family, Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

The large window on the south side celebrates Saint Isidore and his wife Saint Maria Torribia. Their only child, a son, died in his youth. They are patron saints of farming. They farmed near Madrid, Spain.

Center Altar

The **Sanctuary**, which was once separated from the people by a communion railing, we see the high altar once used before Vatican II, when the Priest offered Mass in Latin and had his back to the people. The main altar was hand carved by Fr. Cipin in 1891.

The **Sacred Heart of Jesus** stands over all. Below the Sacred Heart statue are the figures of **James** and **Jude**, apostles of the Lord. Next we have **St. Peter** holding the keys symbolizing the power given to him by Jesus with full authority to lead. Opposite Peter is **Paul** who is called Apostle to the Gentiles. Christ called Paul after the Ascension of our Lord. Paul was not one of the original twelve apostles. He was called from persecuting the early church to be an evangelizer. He is shown with a sword by which he met his death.

The four evangelists, the writers of the four gospels, are shown with their own symbol: **Matthew** with the man since he begins with the Genealogies, **Mark** with the lion as he begins his gospel with John the Baptist roaring in the desert, **Luke** has the ox or cow present in the narratives of the birth of Jesus and his early childhood plus the incidents in Mary's life; and finally the eagle with **John** who soars in his poetic writing style of the immense love of God.