Creation, designed by Sister Gabriel Rooding, SSND, was created with the Tiffany Stained Glass method.

Stained glass windows a labor of love by St. Agnes parishioners, Father Ed Hussli, Sister Gabriel Rooding, SSND

When St. Agnes Church was built, the windows were simply made of clear glass. In 1981, Father Ed Hussli, proposed installing stained glass windows to beautify the church, so that it would be more like a "church should be." He enlisted the help of Sister Gabriel Rooding, SSND, who had a degree in art, and she agreed to do all the designs and supervise the project.

Sister Margaret Mary Dohms, SSND, explained how the project developed. Father Ed had been inspired by a mural in the gym that the students and faculty had created. He proposed using the Tiffany method of stained glass for the church windows. The artist, Louis Tiffany, had mixed the colors into his glass rather than painting the colors onto it.

"We gave up our recreation room in the convent basement," Sister Margaret Mary said. The work area became the "Madonna Art Studio" from 1982 to 1989 while the windows were made. Father Ed created the first two windows, "Creation" and "Nativity," Sister said. "Sister Gabriel designed the rest." She drew the design on paper first, and then her scale drawings were enlarged and used as patterns. Each panel is 4' x 6' in size.

Incarnation, designed by Sister Gabriel Rooding, SSND

"People would come downstairs (to the basement) and work on the windows," Sister Margaret Mary said. Father Hussli taught the volunteers learned how to work with stained glass. Volunteers ranged in age from 17 to 76.

The Tiffany method, however, was very time-consuming. After the first two windows were completed, they decided to forego the method and, instead, they painted the glass pieces. The most noticeable difference is that the Tiffany method employed a smaller size of individual glass pieces and deeper color intensity. The rest of the windows feature larger pieces of glass with more neutral background pieces, using tan and gray more frequently.

Sister Margaret Mary remembers how Al John climbed up on the ladder to frame the windows. "Then he would set each panel in its frame and install it over the plain glass windows," she said. It was scary to watch him do it.

A plaque in the back of church lists the most active of the volunteers. However, an article in a bulletin at the end of the project was more complete, naming 45 people who worked on the project:

Thank You

A special "Thank you" goes to all who have labored on our windows in any capacity:

Fr. Ed Hussli
Sr. Gabriel Rooding
Evelyn Naber
Joan Sierakowski
Catherine McMahon
Sophia Bundeschuh
John Drechsler
Bob & Pauline England
Irene Brahm
Marian Murphy
Joe & Toni Jung
Joe & Freda Hartung
Carl Verette
Ben Treichel
Ramona Treichel
Marge Kemeny
Paul, Mary & Amy
   Wendelberger
Ruth Maki
Claude & Rita Kepper
Jewel Pickert

John Berens
Debbie Beilfuss
Elaine Kauffmann
James Elder, Jr.
Ben Dall
Clarence Fleischmann
John Hahn
Evelyn Dosie
Maymie Wollenberg
Don Foster
Rosemary Toby
Kathy Taubner
Audrey Waitrovich
Bob Owen
Al John (frame maker)
Charles Burbach (installer)
Dick Kegel (installer)
Al Giuliani (installer)
Dennis Raynark (installer)

God bless you all! I hope nobody was missed in this listing!

Fr. Ed

One panel was designed in reverse, but most people never see it because it is in the choir loft.

Apostles Creed, designed by Sister Gabriel Rooding, SSND, and set in place backwards

Apostles Creed, reversed to show what it was intended to look like.

Unless you've used the exit doors at the front of church to the right of the sanctuary, you may not have seen the "hidden" window in the stairwell leading to the exit outdoors (shown below).

Mystery of God

Here are the rest of the windows in church.

Baptism of Jesus

The Holy Family

Last Supper

The Resurrection

The Four Evangelists

The Final Judgment

Jesus, the Good Shepherd

Jesus with Children

Pentecost

The Blessed Mother (Sister Gabriel's family donated $5,000 to pay for this window.)