



ST. MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

2751 County Road 30
Florence, Alabama 35634
Phone: 256-764-1885 | Fax: 256-349-2186

Dear Parishioners of St. Michael's Catholic Church,

A contract has been signed with Emmanuel Studios in Nashville, Tennessee to restore the Zettler Stained Glass windows here in St. Michael's Church at a cost of \$430,000. The work is scheduled to begin in mid-October and is expected to be completed in the next several years. The windows serve to protect our church from the elements, but they have now become priceless artwork. Our church is our house of worship and the sanctuary to which we are drawn. It is also a museum of historical significance.

Stained glass windows manufactured at the time ours were produced had a life span of 75-100 years because the lead used in their construction breaks down over time. The lead used now is a different composition and is projected to last over 150 years. In March 2017, it was discovered that the St. Scholastica window has multiple bulges which will eventually lead to glass breakage. Other windows have problems as well with the St. Gregory window being the window in the worst condition. An independent inspector and four companies with expertise examined our windows and all agreed that it was time to begin our restoration work.

In 2022, the 150th Anniversary of the establishment of our church will be celebrated. The first church was built in 1872 and the building was a small, white, and wooden one. The church quickly grew and, in 1916, the cornerstone of our magnificent church was laid. In 1924, the priceless Franz X. Zettler Stained Glass Windows were installed. The ancestors of many of our 2020 parishioners, most of whom were farmers, sacrificed to build an edifice dedicated to the glory of God. The legacy these first families left us is this historic Gothic church.

Our St. Michael's Church community has grown from forty families in the 1870s to approximately three hundred fifty families now from all over the country and the world. After 148 years, the time has come to restore the windows to their original state and even better.

The legacy that the present generations leave St. Michael's will be the restoration of our precious windows which should sustain the church for around one hundred fifty years.

Members of the Windows Committee are Carolyn Eck, Jerry Eckl, Joyce Fedeczko, Eddie Krieger, Janet Ragland, Mike Stumpe, and Cindy Varner. Please direct any questions to one of the Committee.

Sincerely,



Father John O'Donnell, O.S.B.

October 4, 2020