

The Catholic Communities of
Southern Rensselaer County
present

**A TOUR OF THE WINDOWS
AT
CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

A Brief History of our Church building

In 1922, Bishop Edmund F. Gibbons approved a petition with 50 signatures to establish the first parish in East Greenbush. Ground was broken on May 1, 1923, and the first Mass was celebrated on Easter Sunday, 1924. The original arched and leaded windows were replaced in time for Christmas 1937 with stained glass windows. The windows were made by Francesco Ruocco Studios of Havervill, MA in a thirteenth century medieval design depicting scenes from the life of Christ and His Blessed Mother. In time for celebrating Easter 1992, a renovation and expansion project was completed which enlarged the church and resituated the altar. The Church was rededicated at Pentecost in 1992 and much of the information provided here comes from the rededication book.

The windows depict the stories of our faith from the Scriptures and can help even the youngest among us to learn these stories. They can inspire. They can guide us in prayer and meditation. They are beautiful representations of the faith of those who made them and gifted them to the church so we might be surrounded by their glow.

It is good to take time to stop and look around from time to time!

Window Key

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| 1. The Annunciation* | 10. The Lamb of God & wheat |
| 2. The Nativity * | 11. The Precious Blood & Casting Lots for His garments |
| 3. The Baptism of the Lord* | 12. Christ blesses the Children* |
| 4. The Agony in the Garden* | 13. Jesus preaches |
| 5. Pentecost/ The Upper Room | 14. Jesus heals |
| 6 & 7 Holy Spirit descending and Holy Spirit ascending | 15. Alpha & Omega (door insets) |
| 8. The Resurrection of Christ from the Dead* | 16. Holy Spirit Dove |
| 9. The Good Shepherd and the Light of the World | 17. The Eucharist—then & now |

Symbolism Overview

Throughout the windows are the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit depicted in words and symbol. The main panels of the windows reflect scenes of the life of Christ and His Blessed Mother. The lower portion of the windows symbolize the Apostles. The Lily and rose in the square borders are both emblems of the Blessed

In case you were wondering...

- | | |
|--|--|
| A. Statue of St. Terese of Lisieux, "the Little Flower of Jesus" | Mother, and nearby (on ramp) is the ambry which houses holy oils |
| B. Statue of St. Joseph | F. The Sacristy |
| C. Baptismal font, image of John the Baptist, location of the Easter candle during Ordinary time | G. Statue of Sacred Heart of Jesus |
| D. Sanctuary—Perpetual adoration candle, altar, tabernacle, and ambo | H. Holy Water font and informational literature |
| E. Statue of Mary, the Blessed | I. Materials for children, bulletin board, large print hymnals, Reconciliation Room, & Holy Water dispenser. |
| | J. Reconciliation Room |

Walking Tour—Right side

Window 1: The Annunciation*

At the top of the window, there is a nine-pointed star; each point represents one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and control—*Galatians 5:22*.

The main panel depicts the Angel announcing to Mary that she is to be the mother of God—*Luke 1:26-38*. Note the presence of the dove and the shaft of light aimed at Mary. Mary hears that she will give birth to The Word.

The three shells on the lower panel/ventilator are emblematic of St. James and represent travel or pilgrimage. The keys and inverted cross represent St. Peter's keys to the Kingdom of Heaven and his death on an inverted cross.

Matthew 16:18-19

Note that the words — wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude—are four of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Window 2: The Nativity*

At the top of the window, seven lamps represent the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, fear of the Lord—*Isaiah 2-3*.

In the panel, the Blessed Mother holds the Christ child while Joseph and a shepherd look on. The star of Bethlehem shines heavenly light on the baby to show that he is favored by God. *Matthew 2-12*

Below, two fish represent St. Andrew, who found the boy with five loaves and two fish at the feeding of the multitudes. St. Philip is remembered

Walking Tour—Right side

by the cross with two loaves of bread because of his remark about the cost of feeding so many in the same story—*John 6:7*.

The words—Thanksgiving, Glory, Godliness, and Blessing—echo *Revelation 7:12*.

Window 3: Baptism of the Lord*

The seven pointed star at the top is symbolic of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The panel depicts the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River by John the Baptist. Again we see the Holy Spirit as a dove. *Matthew 3:17*

Windows 5, 6, 7, 9 and the sacristy windows were part of the original building, but no further description was provided in the rededication book.

Below on the right, St. John is represented by the chalice and the serpent. Early writers tell us of an attempt to poison St John, but he was miraculously saved. On the left, St. Bartholomew is represented by the three flaying knives, as the saint was flayed alive and crucified.

The words—Power, Might, Knowledge and Fear of the Lord—refer to the Holy Spirit.

Window 4: The Agony in the Garden*

At the top is the Crown of Thorns. The two weeping women represent the Sun, and the Moon—the sun is Christ the Light of the World; the moon is the Church, receiving her light from Christ. At the death of the Savior, both Sun and Moon are darkened. Near Christ is the chalice recalling for us the words, "If it

Baptistry & Choir

Window 5: The Upper Room at Pentecost

The image of the disciples gathered in the upper room has Mary at the center as the Holy Spirit descends upon them. Seven symbols fill the arch at the window's peak. *Acts 2:1-4*

Window 6 & 7: The Holy Spirit as Dove— Descending for Baptism, Ascending for Confirmation

The Spirit appears as a dove descending toward a Baptismal font, emerging from clouds, echoing the scene from Jesus' Baptism. *Mark 1:11*

The hovering dove represents the coming of the Spirit at Confirmation with a tongue of fire,

Window 8: The Resurrection of Christ from the Dead*

The seven flames at the top are the gifts of the Spirit.

This depiction of the Resurrection is based on an old ivory carving of the fifth or sixth century. Here the tomb is like a small temple, the guards leaning in sleep against it, while Christ, young, beautiful and triumphant, is rising by the eager hand of the Father Almighty grasped from above. An angel holds His burial wrappings. *Matthew 28:2, Luke 24:1-6*

St. Simon is remembered by the boat-hook and fish, symbolic of being a fisher of men. St. Simon was stoned and beheaded, hence the halberd (pike fitted with an axhead).

St. Mathias is said to have been crucified on a Tau

Children's Room &

Window 9: The Good Shepherd
and The Light of the World

The angels kindly tell us that these are depictions of the Good Shepherd and the Light of the World.

Jesus loves his sheep so much he'd sacrifice himself to save them; notice the cross behind him, the means of our salvation—*John 10:1-21*.

Jesus carries a lantern and knocks at the door of our heart inviting us to let in the Light of the World—*John 9:5*.

Window 10: Wheat and The Lamb of God

Echoing the Eucharistic prayer, the left side of the window shows wheat and grapes, the work of human hands. The right side shows the sacrificial lamb. Jesus is called the Lamb of God and the Lamb that was slain

Window 11: The Sacred Heart/ Precious Blood and Casting Lots for His Garments

This might be the most interesting window in the place!!!

On the left, a chalice collects drippings from the pierced heart—the Sacred Heart of Jesus becomes our living water. On the right, the images recall the moments after Jesus' death—the garment that the soldiers gambled for because they could not divide it, the dice used for their wager, and a ladder that would be used to take down his body from the cross. *Psalms 22:18*

Walking Tour—Left side

Window 12: Jesus Blesses the Children*

The orb and cross at the top of the window signify the triumph of Christ over the sins of the world.

Christ is seated upon a throne, representing his kingship and the tabernacle. Children come to him or are brought to him so that he may lay his hands on them and reach into their hearts.

St. James the Lesser is remembered by a saw in the lower panel for after his death his body was sawed asunder. St. Thomas was said to have built a church in India where he preached the Gospel and the builder's square tells that tale. The spear shows that after he died his body was pierced by a spear.

The words—Charity, Joy, Honor, Patience, and Peace

Window 13: Jesus Preaches

At top of the window is the Chi Rho, a symbol for Christ consisting of two Greek letters superimposed and often seen on vestments and altar cloths.

Jesus preaches barefoot—a vine grows behind him sprouting grapes. Four people are listening to him; a youth, a seated older person, and a man and a woman, representing the universality of Jesus' message.

The candle ablaze below symbolizes *John 8:12*, "I am the light of the world," while the crown represents Christ's kingship.

Don't miss the small images: on the left is the Knights of Columbus coat of arms and in the right a dove over the world labeled—K of C 4th degree.

Walking Tour—Left & Back

Window 14: Jesus Heals

At the top is an olive branch, a symbol of peace and healing.

Jesus calls to the man at the pool near Bethesda, “Do you want to be healed? Pick up your mat and walk.” *John 5:1-15*

Victory, grace, faith, and hope are written on the lower portion of the window.

On the left, crossed quills, are symbols of a scribe—those who write and keep our history.

An anchor was used by Christians as a symbol of hope and safety, hope not in earthly things but in salvation. “Hope” set before us “as an anchor of the soul, sure and firm” *Hebrews 6:19-20*.

Window 15: The Alpha & Omega

The interior church doors contain stained glass inserts

Window 16: The Dove

The dove sends rays of grace down upon us, seven gifts.

Window 17: The Eucharist

The angels at bottom of the window give clues about the images:

“that they may have life”

The priest (Christ) raises the host above the chalice inviting men, women and children to the feast so they might live.

“their eyes were opened”

Two people sitting at table recognize Christ in their midst at the breaking of the bread as in the story about

Scavenger Hunt & Fun Facts

Now that you've looked at the windows, how many of these questions can you answer?

What year was the church built? _____

In which year was the addition completed?

Fun Fact: There are seven windows which include the image of a dove. Can you find them all?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

Up for more counting?

How many angels are in the windows? _____

How many pews are there down the center aisle?

Fun Fact: Hanging on the back altar is a San Domiano cross—the style of cross which St. Francis of Assisi prayed in front of when he received a message from God calling him to rebuild the church. Is there another wooden cross in the church?

No _____ Yes (where? _____)

While there are doves throughout the windows in the

Can you answer these?

Where can you find the Alpha & Omega—not in windows?

- A. Statue of the Sacred Heart
- B. Carved on the ambry
- C. The Easter/Paschal Candle
- D. In the Pentecost Window

The apostles were laborers before Jesus invited them to follow Him. What tools in the windows show this?

Which four symbols in the lower portion of the windows aren't connected directly to the apostles?

There are four sets of Rosary mysteries—twenty total. Our windows depict seven of the mysteries of the rosary. Can you assign the Mysteries of the Rosary to our windows?

J—Joyful, L—Light, S—Sorrowful, G—Glorious

- _____ The Annunciation
- _____ The Nativity/Birth of Jesus
- _____ Jesus is Baptized in the Jordan River
- _____ The Institution of the Eucharist
- _____ The Agony in the Garden

**Stop by or contact our Parish Faith Formation office if you have any questions! 477-8108
Come pray with us.**

Directions to other Southern
Rensselaer County Catholic Churches

Should you miss joining us for Mass or should you desire to gaze upon other fine windows, use the directions below to visit our neighboring parishes:

To Sacred Heart, Castleton

Leaving the parking lot, take a right onto Highland Drive. Take a right at the stop sign onto Greenwood Avenue. At the light take a left onto Columbia Turnpike and an immediate right onto Hays Road. Follow Hays to 9J/River Road and turn left (9J south).

Take a left at Stimpson Avenue, then up the hill, take the first right onto Catholic Way. The church is at the far end of the parking lot. (6.4 miles/14 minutes.)

To Church of St. Mary's, Clinton Heights

Leaving the parking lot, take a right onto Highland Drive. Take a right at the stop sign onto Greenwood Avenue. At the light take a right onto Columbia Turnpike and continue through six lights. At the seventh light take a right into the parking lot. You should be across the street from Kmart and Big Lots. If you reach Burger King, you've gone too far. (2.7 miles/4 minutes)

To The Parish of St. John's & St. Joseph's, Rensselaer

Start as if heading to St. Mary's, but continue on Columbia Turn-



Come worship with us! You are welcome here!

Church of the Holy Spirit

667 Columbia Turnpike
East Greenbush, NY 12061
518-477-7925

Reconciliation: Saturday 3:00pm and by appointment.

Mass: Saturday 4:00pm, Sunday 9:30am, 7:00pm