

A Tour of Saint James the Greater Church

Exterior of the church

On the Hubble Road façade is a stucco relief of the Resurrection. On the east façade (facing the office building) is a figure of Saint James the Greater.

Above the west entrance hang two of the three bells from the 1849 church. They still ring for Mass and to signal the time of day. The third bell, the smallest, was lost sometime in the 1960s or early 1970s.

Main entrance

The lower west vestibule gives access to the church and the church hall. The doors on the right lead to the steps into the church. On the left is the elevator to the church.

A major feature of the stairwell is the stone tablet from the old church on Cheviot Road. It reads, in German:

Roman Catholic
Saint James
Church
Erected Renovated
A.D. 1849 A.D. 1868

Next to it is a print of a painting of the 1849 church. The original oil painting hangs in the parish office. It is attributed to Father Francis J. Pabisch who was pastor at Saint James from 1851 to 1856.

At the landing of the stairs there is a picture of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the patroness of all the Americas. On the opposite wall are the bronze plaques commemorating the consecration of the present church on November 7, 1980 by Archbishop Joseph L. Bernardin and the completion of the renovation on May 11, 2013.

Upper west vestibule

The major focus of this area is the wood carved statue of the Risen Christ.

A shrine to the saints of the United States is on the wall to the right of the statue. There are pictures of each of the United States saints, using photographs when possible.

Baptismal font

The Baptismal font is the first thing one sees when entering the church. The font is large enough for adult baptisms at the Easter Vigil. The smaller basin is used as the holy water font when entering the church. The font is trimmed in the same marble and granite as the sanctuary to show the connection between Baptism and Eucharist as sacraments of initiation. The arches of the altar are repeated in the font, too. The four sides of the font represent the four Evangelists.

Sanctuary

The 12 arches on the altar represent the 12 Apostles. A relic of Saint James the Greater can be seen in the base of the altar. The altar was consecrated by Archbishop Daniel E. Pilarczyk on February 1, 1997.

The ambo was designed to reflect the altar. It has a "throne" for the Book of Gospels after the proclamation is finished. There is a step that slides out when needed by the lector and the entire top cantilevers down for accessibility.

The sanctuary step is Crema Marfil marble. The flooring is Absolute Black granite. Both have a small brass trim running along the edge.

The sanctuary is handicapped accessible by ramps at the rear.

Crucifix

The crucifix in the sanctuary is from the old Cheviot Road church. More recently it hung in the chapel in the cemetery. The inscription indicates it commemorates a parish mission held in 1878. It was completely refinished for the 2013 renovation of the church. It is 10'6" x 6'.

Blessed Sacrament Chapel

This area provides a quiet place for private prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. The marble and granite of the sanctuary are used again for the floor. The arches of the altar are reflected in the arches of the front wall and on the base for the tabernacle. This helps express the connection between the celebrated Eucharist at the altar and the reserved Eucharist.

The tabernacle is 3' high and sits on a granite, marble and wood column. The white marble base has 12 sides representing the 12 Apostles. There are four sides to the column representing the 4 Gospels which reveal Christ to us. The tabernacle was originally used at the Holy Spirit Chapel of the Fenwick Club downtown. (The Fenwick was a residence and athletic club for men at the site of the present Procter and Gamble headquarters.)

Shrine area next to the Blessed Sacrament Chapel

This shrine area is dedicated to Saint James. The painting depicts the call of St. James by Jesus. In the foreground is James. Jesus is approaching along the shore. The light surrounding Jesus is slowly overtaking James as will the call to "Come, follow me."

Shrine area by the north sacristy

In this shrine area there are two statues – Our Lady of Lourdes and Saint Joseph with the Child Jesus. A statue of Our Lady of Lourdes was chosen because it was at Lourdes that Mary called herself the Immaculate Conception. Under the title of the Immaculate Conception, the Blessed Virgin is the patroness of our country. A statue of Saint Joseph with the Child Jesus was chosen because Saint Joseph was protector, guide, teacher and father-figure for Jesus.

In this area one also finds the processional cross used at Mass. This cross was created for the parish. On the back is a shell, the symbol of St. James.

Stations of the Cross

The stations are bronze and were first hung in the basement church in 1962. Above each is a small mahogany cross.

The Church Windows

The Blessed Trinity

The large window on the east side above the altar.

The gold equal-sided triangle borrows from one of the oldest representations of the Trinity. It signifies the unity of God and it has three equal sides and three equal angles to represent the three equal Persons of the Trinity.

God the Father is represented by a hand in the act of creation.

God the Son is represented by the Lamb of God, symbolic of the act of redemption. The red field represents the shedding of Jesus' blood surmounted by the cross and the white flag of victory. The red flowing from the Lamb to the brown sphere (the earth) at the lower left represents the salvation of the world through the sacrifice of Jesus.

God the Holy Spirit is represented by the dove in front of a red field depicting the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit. The seven small flames represent the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The Eucharist

The large window on the west side above the font.

The central figure is a host inscribed with the "I.H.S.," an abbreviation for "Iesus, Homium Salvator" – "Jesus, Savior of men" and the chalice below it. The red flowing downward indicates the redemptive blood of Christ in the sacrament. The large red cross recalls the sacrifice of Calvary.

The grapes and wheat depict the elements of the Eucharist, bread and wine. The bundle of sticks in the lower right represents the Old Testament sacrifice of Abraham. At the far right the sacrifice of Melchisedech is recalled by loaves and a jug for wine.

The twelve crosses around the center represent the apostles. The green leaves in the upper right and lower left signify the spiritual life which is nourished with the Eucharist.

The Church Year

Smaller windows on the east side near Hubble Road (from the left by the door)

Advent

The four candles form the Advent wreath. The "M" represents Mary and the red crosses represent the apostles.

Christmas

The Chi Rho is a sacred monogram for Jesus formed by the first two letters of the Greek word for Christ. The crib or manger and the star of Bethlehem are the most familiar symbols of Christ's nativity. The staff represents St. Joseph and the shepherds.

Epiphany (Two small windows)

Three gold urns or chests represent the three gifts the magi brought to Jesus. The star is the star that led the magi to the Lord.

Lent & Easter

The three crosses represent the Crucifixion of the Lord and the two thieves. Red lines above the crosses are the lightning bolts on Good Friday. The Chi Rho is Christ with the white banner of victory. The lower right corner shows the empty tomb.

Ascension

The chariot is symbolic of Elijah who was taken into heaven by the fiery chariot. The crown is a symbol of victory. The foot prints in the lower right corner are signs of the resurrection.

Then there two small windows of simple colors.

Pentecost

The descending dove is the most familiar representation of the Holy Spirit. The red flames are the tongues of fire that descended on the apostles. The ship is an ancient symbol for the Church, carrying the faithful through all conditions of life. The shell represents baptism which makes us part of the Church.

The Sacraments

Smaller windows on the west side (from the Hubble Road doors to the left)

Baptism

The dove represents the Holy Spirit; the shell is a symbol of baptism. The Chi Rho symbolizes Christ and the hand, God the Father. The snake and apple are symbols of original sin taken from the Book of Genesis. The color blue symbolizes water and is found in all of the sacramental windows, indicating that it is Baptism that opens to us all the other sacraments.

Confirmation

The red tongues of fire are the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, which is symbolized by the dove. The sword and shield symbolize the strength received to live Christian lives.

Matrimony

Interlocked rings illustrate the unity and oneness of marriage. The cross reminds us that Christ is the center of every marriage and the green leaves symbolize new life.

Eucharist (two small windows)

The wheat is the bread that becomes the Body of Christ; the grapes are the wine which becomes the Blood of Christ.

Penance

The keys represent the power given to the Church to forgive sins. The lamb symbolizes Christ. The hand represents the priest's raised hand while giving absolution. The staff symbolizes Jesus the Good Shepherd who cares for and protects his people.

Anointing of the Sick (two small windows)

The jug represents the oil used in the sacrament. The red crosses are the five senses and the crown is the symbol of victory and eternal life. The bird illustrates the soul of the departed ascending into heaven.

Holy Orders

The Book of Gospels is shown with a red priest's stole around it. The chalice symbolizes the power given to priests to celebrate the Mass. The red flames are the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Saints

West wall opposite the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, from right to left

Saint James the Greater

The James is represented by his traditional symbols, the shell (There are three to represent the Trinity.), and the pilgrim staff. The sword references that he was beheaded. In each of the windows in this section there is a red flame symbolizing the flame of faith which inspired these apostles.

Then there two small windows of simple colors.

St Paul

The open book symbolizes that St. Paul was an author of letters in the New Testament and a preacher of God's word. The sword has a double meaning. The tradition is that St. Paul was beheaded. In Ephesians 6:17 St. Paul wrote of the "sword of the Spirit which is the word of God." The sword represents both of these.

St. Peter

Against the red flame in this window is the upside down cross. Tradition holds that St. Peter was crucified upside down. Superimposed on the cross are the crossed keys that are the traditional symbol of the authority Peter received from Jesus. (cf. Matthew 16:19).

Blessed Sacrament Chapel

The primary image in this large round window is the Host above the Chalice of Salvation. Behind it is a red cross with a golden sunburst suggesting the glory of the Sacrament.

Artists In Our Church

Tony Tasset

Tony is a multimedia artist. His work consists mainly of video, bronze, wax, sculpture, photography, film and taxidermy. He has exhibitions that can be seen in Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, London, Germany, Canada, Portugal, Italy, and Ecuador.

Tony Tasset was born in Cincinnati and attended Saint James the Greater School, graduating in 1975. In 1979 he graduated from LaSalle High School. He received his BFA from The Art Academy of Cincinnati and his MFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1985. In 1986, 13 pieces of his art were purchased by two New York art dealers at the Chicago Art Expo. He has received an Award in Visual Arts in 1989. He was also awarded the John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship and The Louis Comfort Tiffany Award. He currently resides in Chicago, Illinois and is an art professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

At Saint James, he designed the Resurrection for the Hubble Road exterior of the church in 1980. In 1995 he designed the figure of Saint James on the east façade of the church.

Joe Taylor

After 20 years as a commercial illustrator and with a fine art education from the Art Academy of Cincinnati, Joe followed in his grandfather's footsteps and began learning the decorative arts. He has been working mainly in this area since 1997. Because of his commercial art background, he is the go-to-guy for photo realistic trompe l'oeil and airbrush work. Joe's work has been featured in many major industry magazines, and has been instrumental in winning numerous awards for his employer.

At Saint James, he created the processional cross used at Mass.

John McCoy

Trained at the Art Academy of Cincinnati, this young visual artist believes it is important to create works that uplift and inspire and reveal something of truth and value. A primary goal of his work is to convey a Christian message or ideal to the viewer. John has worked with Cincinnati ArtWorks for the past five years to create works of art made to beautify and enhance public spaces. Among these he has taken lead roles in painting three large scale murals. Two of the murals are located in Covington, KY: *An Epic of Time and Town* and *Sunset Walk Through Helentown*. The third is located in Cincinnati, OH, entitled *Riverside Rides*. Additionally he worked on mosaics for Cincinnati Children's Hospital. His latest collaborated project with ArtWorks, entitled *Buds, Blossoms, Branches, Boughs for the Queen* is installed in the Cincinnati Duke Energy Convention Center. He lives in Independence, KY and is a parishioner of St. Patrick's Parish in Taylor Mill, KY.

For Saint James, he painted *The Call of Saint James* which hangs in the church next to the Blessed Sacrament Chapel.

Weberding Carving Shop Batesville, Indiana

This well-known firm is responsible for the altar and chairs in the sanctuary. This firm also created the statue of the Resurrected Jesus which is in the west upper vestibule.

Wittrock Wood Carvers
Cincinnati, Ohio

The architect for the 2013 remodel, David Sweeney, designed the ceiling and walls in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel and the ambo and wall behind the sanctuary. These were made by Wittrock Wood Carvers, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Demetz Art Studios
Ortesei, Italy

The statues of Our Lady of Lourdes and Saint Joseph with the Child Jesus were made by this firm in their studios in the small town of Ortesei in the Dolomite Mountains of Italy. These statues were part of the 2013 renovation.

Marcione Studios
Canton, Ohio

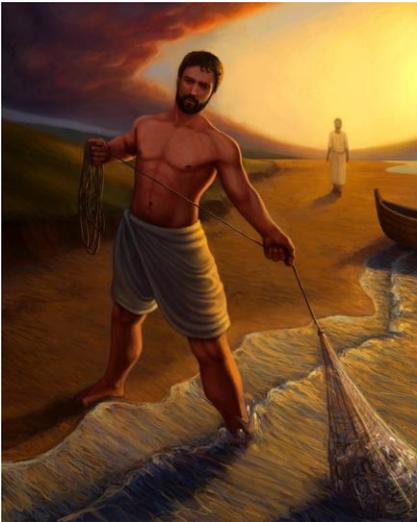
While they were installed 33 years apart, the stained glass windows were all made by this company. The Holy Trinity, Eucharist and the series on the sacraments and the Church year were installed with the building of the church in 1980. They had been designed by Frank Marcione, founder of the studio. He was a graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Art and was a master in several fields but especially stained glass and mosaics. The Blessed Sacrament Chapel, St. James, St. Peter and St. Paul windows were designed by Damien Marcione in 2013. Damien is a graduate of Kent State University and continues the business founded by his father. They have worked especially in large scale, fine art mosaics, including many in the Byzantine-Orthodox style.

Ernest Haswell
Cincinnati, Ohio

The artist who designed the bronze Stations of the Cross is unknown. There is a strong possibility that they were created by Ernest Bruce Haswell, a famous Cincinnati artist who taught at the University of Cincinnati from 1940 until his death in 1965. He was a student of the famous Clement Barnhorn at the Art Academy of Cincinnati. He is responsible for sculptures on the exterior of the Post & Times Starr building downtown and in the State Capital in Columbus. His works can be seen in Saint Peter in Chains Cathedral, several other churches, and on the main campuses of the University of Cincinnati and Miami University.

Norman Haubner

The small mahogany crosses above each station were made by Norman Haubner, a parishioner at Saint James.



The Call of St. James

The painting depicts Saint James just before he is called by Jesus to be a disciple. He is bringing in the last catch before going to clean and mend his nets. Jesus is approaching on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Soon they will meet and James' life will be forever changed.

The Scripture

As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea-for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." And immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him. (Mark 1:16-19.) (see also Matthew 4:18-22)

Light and dark

There is a change in the weather in the picture. Close behind Jesus is the sun. Light in the picture is synonymous with Jesus. The upper left is darker because Jesus has not arrived there yet.

Posture of James

James is leaning back and straining to show how hard the work is. His right foot is visible at the edge of the water. Besides showing how he balanced himself, it also demonstrates the change in St. James' life, as reflected in the lyrics in the hymn *Change Our Hearts*:

Brought by your hand to the edge of our dreams,

One foot in paradise, one in the waste.

Drawn by your promises, still we are lured

by the shadows and the chains we leave behind.

Following Jesus, James will put both feet in paradise, the land.

Son of Thunder

In Mark 3:17 James is referred to as the "Son of Thunder." The reference to the James as the "Son of Thunder" can be interpreted that he has a significant temper. It can be interpreted more accurately as an intensity which is shown in his face. Maybe the nickname refers to the way he tries to defend his friends, as he did Jesus when James wanted to call down fire on the Samaritans who would not let Jesus stay in their town on the way to Jerusalem. (Luke 9:52)

Shirtless

James is shirtless because of the reference about St. Peter who is fishing when he sees Jesus on the shore. John 21:7 (in the NAB, RSV and Jerusalem) says Peter was naked as he fished and put on clothes to go ashore to Jesus. It seems they didn't wear much when fishing.

Saint James the Greater Church
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