



**Saints Martha, Mary & Lazarus,
Friends of Jesus
Catholic Church
Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston**

Tour Guide

Welcome to the parish of Saints Martha, Mary and Lazarus, Friends of Jesus Catholic Church

Saint Martha parish was established February 23, 1979, when Bishop John L. Morkovsky announced a new parish to be located in Kingwood, Texas. He appointed Msgr. William L. Tinney as the pastor. Msgr. Tinney was no stranger to building churches. He had built St. John Vianney parish just 12 years prior to St. Martha and also headed the Building and Planning Commission for the Diocese of Galveston-Houston.

Msgr. Tinney chose the name Sts. Martha, Mary and Lazarus, Friends of Jesus, to honor the friends and family of Jesus. It is known that Jesus never stayed the night in Jerusalem until the night before he died. He and his Apostles would always walk to Bethany and stay with Lazarus and his two sisters. Their home became a home of hospitality. Msgr. Tinney hoped that St. Martha would be a community of hospitality to all and "would grow close as friends of Jesus."

While the church was under construction, the 867 registered families of St. Martha met for services in the Elm Grove Elementary School Cafeteria. The church was completed in September of 1980 and the dedication took place on October 21, 1980.



St. Martha continues to grow. In 2010, over 5000 registered families participated as volunteers in approximately 101

ministries, councils and the school that serve St. Martha and its surrounding community.

Our parish celebrates the richness of our diversity by sharing our time, talent and treasure. It is the only way for St. Martha to honor our past, celebrate our present and envision our future in our new faith community home for future generations to come.



St. Martha is the only parish to date in the Archdiocese to be given permission to move its entire campus.

Thank you for visiting the parish of St. Martha. We pray you will return again for the beauty it contains, the prayer it inspires, and the community it offers-----all possible through and for our Lord, Jesus Christ.



The Design

Before designing the church a survey was taken to determine the needs of the community. The parish wanted a traditional church. After much consideration the mission architecture was accepted with its terra cotta dome and bell tower each adorned with a gold cross.

Msgr. Borski, Pastor of St. Martha, introduced the idea of the limestone to be used throughout the design as a salute to our Texas heritage and all those who brought the faith to this part of the country.

Landscape Design

Along the drive framing the property on Woodridge Parkway will be 41 live oaks each representing an ancestor of Jesus. There will be four clusters of trees representing the women listed in Matthew's Gospel. In the center of the parking lot will be twelve columnar accent trees standing as the Apostles leading the way to Christ. Under these trees will be plants representing the crossing of the Red Sea and Baptism. In the courtyard will be nine flowering/fruited trees recalling the fruits of the Holy Spirit. In front of the breezeway will be four large shade trees acting as living pillars to the entrance of the church as the four Evangelists. On the right side of the church will be an Easter court made of palms connecting us to the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. On the left side of the church will be the Advent court using trees and shrubs with the liturgical color of purple.

The Plaza

The plaza area in front of the church introduces the Jerusalem Cross. The Jerusalem Cross was selected by Msgr. Borski to

be used throughout the church. The Jerusalem Cross with its four small crosses around the large cross is a symbol of the Gospel being spread to the four corners of the world by the four Evangelists with Christ as our center.

The Plaza area welcomes the community as it leads to the worship space. Certain liturgical celebrations will begin in this space. On Palm Sunday the triumphant entry of Christ into Jerusalem will be reflected in the procession of palms. At the Easter Vigil, the Paschal Candle will be prepared and lighted at the fire pit and then lead all into the church to celebrate the Rite of Christian Initiation and the Resurrection of our Lord.

Bronze statues of Jesus, Mary, Martha and Lazarus are being created and prepared by parishioner Mike Kaney to be placed in the Plaza area. These life-size statues emulate the hospitality extended by the parish of St. Martha. Because of the lengthy process in creating these works of art, they will be added to the Plaza in 2012.

The Welcome Mosaic

Above the main entrance is a mosaic of Jesus welcoming us to His home. The mosaic was the vision of Msgr. Borski. He wanted to make the connection between the original church and the new church while expressing the hospitality of Saints Martha, Mary and Lazarus, Friends of Jesus. The artwork



was created by Donna Rueby and fabricated in Italy through Inspired Artisans of Milwaukee.

The three crosses centered in the top of the design reflect our original church, our first home. The three crosses remind us of Christ and the two thieves and how daily we have the decision to deny or to follow Jesus. The gold mosaic tiles in the crosses reiterate the resurrection and Christ's promise to all of the salvation that comes through the crosses we carry in our own lives.

The mosaic's design is rich in symbolism and reflect several Biblical passages:

- The deer, water, and trees in the design reflect Psalm 42:1-2, which was taken from the sculpture in the baptismal font of the original church, "*As the deer longs for streams of water, so my soul longs for you, O God.*" As a community of faith, we are like the deer longing to be refreshed and our thirst quenched by God's grace. The water represents the cleansing waters of Baptism. The trees connect us with the livable forest and the beauty of God's creation in which we live.
- The outstretched hands of Jesus extend an invitation to all of us to join him. "*Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest.*" Matthew 11:28. The wind blowing Jesus' hair illustrates how he is the breath that moves the winds. His face is contemplative, with kind and gentle eyes that keep us in his constant view.
- The rendering of Jesus was to bring out as much light and brightness as possible. There is a strong contrast of light on his face and hands, because he is the light of

the world.

- The people in the foreground of the mosaic illustrate the diversity of our parish family and that Jesus calls everyone to himself.

The Welcome Mosaic is just that, an invitation from Jesus, eager for us to come together as one, as he gives us the gift of himself through the Eucharist.

The Main Entrance

The large wooden entrance doors have pulls made of oil-rubbed bronze material and are in the shape of a twisted rope representing the strong rope used to outline the nets used by the fishermen in Jesus' time, suggesting the reading from scripture that they will be fishers of men.

Passing through the large doors, you enter the Narthex, the gathering place, a space large enough to greet each other, gather information and register for upcoming events.

There are six arched niches in the Narthex. The first arch on the left contains the Book of Gratitude which lists the items and parts of the church that have been memorialized.



Art work is an important element in Catholic Churches. It reminds us where we are, it teaches us the Gospel message and it creates and surrounds us with divine beauty.

The first art piece is located in the Narthex and is a commissioned tapestry of Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness

of the Americas, created by John Nava, of New Mexico. His design was made in Belgium. This image based on the reading from Rev 12:1, "A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars" has a long and beautiful history in the church.

Two monitors have been mounted in the Narthex to post information and announce upcoming events.

In the corridor leading off the Narthex to the right will be restrooms, and rooms for the Altar Servers and the Ushers, Lectors, and Extraordinary Ministers of Communion. In the corridor leading off the Narthex to the left will be additional restrooms, the Reception Parlor, Nursery, Family Room, and Vesting Sacristy.

The Nave

Every church is the house of the Lord. It is here that the children of God come to visit with him, pay him homage and receive his graces, blessings and instructions. Just as our Jewish ancestors believed that God resided in the Holy of Holies in the Temple, we as Catholics believe that Christ is truly present Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity in the Tabernacle. We are on holy ground when we enter the Nave of the church. We leave time and space at the door and enter God's eternal presence.

The word "Nave" comes from Latin, meaning "boat". The church is often referred to as a boat adrift on the sea which represents, in the Jewish understanding, the ungodly world. Just like the Apostles, the Church is on a journey but we are not

alone. Christ is with us, guiding and protecting his people on their way.

On entering the Nave you will notice the Baptismal Fount located in the center aisle. The fount has an upper and lower basin. The upper basin will be used for infant Baptisms and the lower for adult (immersion) Baptisms.

God fashioned the world in six days and rested on the seventh day; the eighth day is the new creation. This eighth day inspired the design of the eight sides in the Baptismal Fount, the Altar, the Mosaic and the Rose Windows. The eight sides symbolize the "new creation" we now live. According to the Church Fathers, this new life, the "eighth day," is one that is shared by the Trinity.



The bottom of the lower basin in the Baptismal Fount is granite with the mosaic tile Jerusalem Cross in the center, reminding us that our journey leads us to the Sacrament of Baptism where we become children of God and heirs to his Kingdom.

Approaching the Baptismal Fount, each person will dip their hand into the blessed water and make the Sign of the Cross to remind themselves of their Baptism and that they are marked with the sign of Christ.

The Reconciliation Rooms are located on the right and left of the Baptismal Fount. The glass in the doors of the

Reconciliation Rooms resembles the water that connects the cleansing of our souls through the Sacrament of Reconciliation with the new life in Christ through the Sacrament of Baptism. These two sacraments flow together in God's mercy and grace, establishing our covenant with him and sustaining it throughout our lives. The Reconciliation Rooms are designed for celebrating the sacrament either face to face with the priest or behind a screen.

To the left of the Baptismal Fount is the Shrine for the Book of the Gospels and the Processional Cross. Further to the left you will see a statue of Mary, the Mother of God, extending her arm, drawing your attention to the Altar and Crucifix.

To the right of the Baptismal Fount is the Ambry. This recess with glass doors contains the Holy Oils used in the sacraments of the Church (Oil of the Sick, Oil of Salvation, and the Sacred Chrism). Beside the Ambry is the Book of Remembrance which will be available throughout the year for people to enter the names of loved ones or friends who have passed away. Further to the right you will see a statue of Joseph, also extending his arm and drawing your attention to the Altar and Crucifix.

The church pews are in a radial shape allowing for a larger seating area. They are stained African mahogany and are equipped with kneelers. Seating for the disabled is provided throughout the Nave by chairs and wheelchair locations. The church seats 1600 people.

The Choir

The Choir area, also a part of the Nave, is located in the front

on the left.

The Relief



Another piece of artwork is located in the front of the Nave on the right, depicting Martha, Mary and Lazarus serving Christ. This relief was made in honor of the tapestry that was hung in the original church. It is made from 100 pieces of linden wood glued together.

You will notice the statues of Mary and Joseph and the Relief are similar in style and material. They were all designed by Inspired Artisans of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and fabricated in Italy.



The Sanctuary

At the head of the Nave is the Sanctuary, the sacred space for proclamation of the Word and celebration the Eucharist, the center of our faith. In the Sanctuary are the Altar, Ambo, Presider and Deacons' chairs and Crucifix.

The **Altar** is the table of the Lord where we gather to celebrate the Eucharist. At each celebration, by the power of the Holy Spirit bread and wine



are changed into the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ. We remember and do as Jesus asked, "Then he took the bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of me." Luke 22:19. The Altar table is 8 feet by 5 feet and is made of white limestone. The twelve wooden columns that support the altar represent the 12 tribes of Israel (Old Testament) and the 12 Apostles (New Testament).

The **Reliquary** is a small bronze box located in the base of the altar which contains the relics of 6 saints. This tradition dates back to the early church when Mass was said over the tombs in the catacombs. The relics are to honor those who have lived their lives for God. The relics remind us of their lives and serve as a model for us.

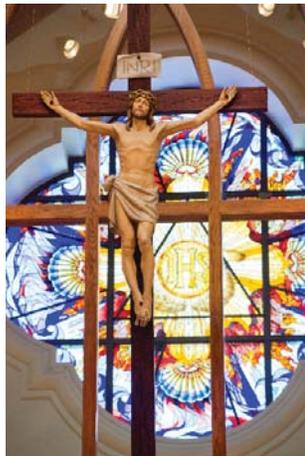


Ambo comes from the Latin word, *Lectio*, meaning "to read." From here the Word of the Lord is proclaimed. On Sundays the first reading proclaimed is from the Old Testament, a Psalm is sung, the second reading proclaimed is from the New Testament, and the third reading proclaimed is

from the Gospels. The exception to this is the Easter Season when the first reading may be proclaimed from the Acts of the Apostles. In a three-year period, the majority of the Bible is proclaimed. In Year A we hear the Gospel of Matthew, in Year B, the Gospel of Mark, and Year C, the Gospel of Luke. The Gospel of John is heard every year during certain seasons.

The **Crucifix** is suspended above and slightly behind the Altar as a reminder of the sacrifice our Lord made for all humanity.

It is the Catholic Tradition to have the corpus on the cross in the Sanctuary of the church. Having Christ present on the cross helps us to accept our daily cross and persevere in our journey to the Father. It is a constant reminder of how much each of us is loved.



The corpus on the cross represents Christ still living with his eyes directed to the Father as he quotes Psalm 22, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Mt 27: 46. It is very difficult to speak while hanging on the cross, yet Jesus gave us this psalm to reflect on. If you read the whole psalm it tells us that life is difficult and hard but God is faithful to those who persevere. What an amazing message for all to meditate on. Jesus trusted his Father completely and he commends his life to him. So should we. In so doing Jesus defeated death and we can rise with him into the joy of eternal salvation.

The cross is 14 feet long and 7 feet wide. Jesus' body is 6 feet tall. The Crucifix is made from linden wood and weighs over 350 pounds. it was designed by Inspired Artisans.

The Presider and Deacons' chairs located to the right of the altar were designed by liturgical consultant, Ken Griesemer of Albuquerque, New Mexico, and hand crafted by Robin Rueby, a parishioner. The arms of the chairs take the same profile as the contour edge of the altar, ambo and tabernacle base.

The design back of the Presider's chair mimics the arches that are throughout the church and has the Jerusalem Cross set in the top. This chair represents the authority of Christ as he ministers to his people through the body and voice of the priest.



The Altar, Ambo, and Tabernacle Stand were designed by Ken Griesemer from suggestions by the Liturgical Design Committee and fabricated by Brian Dumaine of Spring, Texas.

There are sliding glass doors behind the Altar which separate the Sanctuary from the Adoration Chapel. The glass in the doors was chosen for the resemblance to water, the symbol of Baptism. The "Rainforest Green" marble surrounding the glass and extending to the ceiling contains brownish red veins on a field of green with blue. It was selected as it reminded us of many scriptural references: creation is evident in the veins as it reminds us of the tree of life as well as the wood of the cross, the crown of thorns, and the blood of Christ. The blue reminds us of the waters of Baptism, the living water that Jesus' promised while the green reminds us of creation, hope and new eternal life.

The Adoration Chapel

In the Garden of Gethsemane as Jesus prayed, his Apostles slept. He said to them, "So you could not keep watch with me for one hour?" Mt 26:40. In response to this passage this small chapel was designed for individuals who wish to spend an hour

with the Lord in adoration. Parishioners select a day and time and they faithfully come each week year- round, 24 hours a day seven days a week. Jesus is never left alone. This devotion began over 18 years ago. The chapel is open also for those who want to drop by and stay in prayer for any length of time, at any time.

The chapel is located directly behind the Sanctuary and is visible to the Church. The Tabernacle is centered in the front of the chapel on a pedestal made of limestone and wood. The bronze Tabernacle was designed by a parishioner, Donna Rueby. Each of the sides of the Tabernacle depicts a Gospel teaching on the Eucharist. The background motif on the Tabernacle is the same motif carried from the Eucharistic window located on the back wall of the chapel. The water and blood flow from the window to the heart of Jesus in the Tabernacle. The Paschal Lamb on the front duplicates the look that is found on the Crucifix as Jesus surrenders to his Father. The grapes and wheat represent the work of human hands

offered to God, who transforms these elements into the Living Bread and Living Cup, the Body and Blood of Christ, which we receive at Eucharist.

In the niches of the chapel wall are four paintings created by parishioner, Emily LaCour. Each painting represents a Saint who was devoted to the Blessed Sacrament. The Saints are not painted ichnographically within an isolated narrative or time but rather, they are sitting reverently in the adoration chapel. They are depicted in their moments of calm and reverence, fueling and stillness. With their life works aside, they are

present before the source of their strength and perseverance.

St. Thomas Aquinas (1225 – March 7, 1274)

St Thomas Aquinas is usually depicted writing with eyes directed upwards. Here he is infused with a more humanitarian element. The suggestion of manuscripts around him represent his writings and studies but they are pushed aside so he can open himself as a vessel, formed by the primary source, the Eucharist which is outside the painting, transforming St Thomas Aquinas himself and inspiring his writings.



Mother Theresa (August 26, 1910 – September 5, 1997)

Mother Theresa required her sisters to attend one holy hour a day. She is surrounded by repeated forms suggesting the presence of the other nuns, as well as her personal persistence. The space around her is diluted so her gaze and personal reverence towards the Eucharist is the larger pictorial language.



St. Charbel (May 8, 1828 – December 24, 1898)



St Charbel's lifestyle as a hermit required grand humility. He lived a life detached from materialism and superficiality but he was attached to the earth itself and God's presence in the things around him. He is seen on his knees. His open hands, humble posture, meditative face and the glow around him are all symbolic of his character, as well as miracles attached to him.

St. Katharine Drexel (November 26, 1858 — March 3, 1955)

St. Katharine was devoted to the spiritual and material well being of the underprivileged. She avidly worked for them and founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Black and Native American peoples. The Native American Medicine wheel was included in the painting. Each color of the wheel honors the various lessons and truths that life brings and it is a symbol of equality, which is something St. Katharine Drexel sought. She is depicted eager yet poised in her reverence and prayer.



Three Rose Windows: Designed by Donna Rueby

The **Eucharistic Window** located in the Adoration Chapel was designed to frame and enhance the Crucifix hanging above the Sanctuary. A more abstract design was created through colors and symbols. A great deal of movement was incorporated into the design representing the movement of the Holy Spirit

actively working in the hearts of the people.



The window has a strong emphasis on the Sacraments of Initiation through which we become children of God, heirs to his kingdom and Disciples of Christ. The sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation are depicted by the water and fire bursting from the Eucharist.

This bursting of grace that refreshes, renews and justifies us through the blood of Christ brings us to eternal life.

The window has a strong emphasis on baptism in Christ, the first sacrament received. Our original sin is washed away and we belong to the Father. The four scallop shells, a symbol of baptism, flow with water streaked with the blood. Through his blood we are made clean and given a new life in Christ. "This is the one who came through water and blood, Jesus Christ, not by water alone, but by water and blood. The Spirit is the one that testifies, and the Spirit is truth. So there are three that testify, the Spirit, the water, and the blood, and the three are of one accord." 1 John 5:6-8

The fire in the window represents the Holy Spirit.

The mullions around the Eucharist are in the shape of a triangle representing the Trinity.

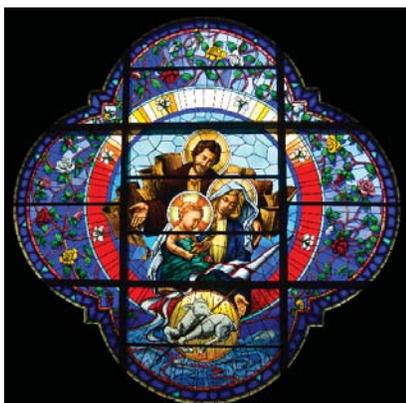
As you study the window, a cross emerges from the center

formed by the dark blue of the water that flows from the shells representing baptism in the name of the Trinity

The IHS in the center of the Eucharist is the monogram of the name of Jesus. His hands appear as they do in the Mosaic over the entrance to the church, offering the gift of the Eucharist for all to receive in love. "We love because he first loved us."

1 John 4:19

The **Holy Family Window** located on the left tells the story of the beginning of our salvation with the fulfillment of scripture through Mary's fiat. "And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth." John 1:14



We begin this story of our salvation with the Christ Child contemplating the symbols of his destiny under his parents' protection and watchful eyes.

St. Joseph, protector of the Holy Family and universal church, lovingly extends his arms about his Holy Family in protection. His right hand is gesturing for us to behold and receive them, while his left hand lovingly holds them to himself. His mantle flows and envelops them in the protection that God the Father entrusted to him.

Mary, the Mother of God, and Mother of the Church, holds her

child with love, knowing that he was born not for her, but for the world. She holds the Incarnation of her Son in her right arm, but with her left, she beholds the reality of his destiny, the Paschal Lamb, the one to be sacrificed for our sins so that we may have eternal life. "Behold, the lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." John 1:29.

The baby Jesus holds the symbol of his destiny, the cross with a single red rose. The rose is a symbol of the love with which he embraced his cross. He, along with his mother and foster father, accepts this cross as they gaze at it with a look of love, peace and total surrender.

The lamb is depicted as a baby lamb as opposed to a more mature lamb as it represents Mary's baby. This symbol of Jesus as the Paschal Lamb holds the Banner of Victory. This banner is Christ's victory over death. The red cross on the banner, which flows down and out into the water represents the mixing of blood and water which has triumphantly washed away our sins.

The Holy Family is framed by a circle which represents infinity; it has no beginning and no end. God always was and always will be.

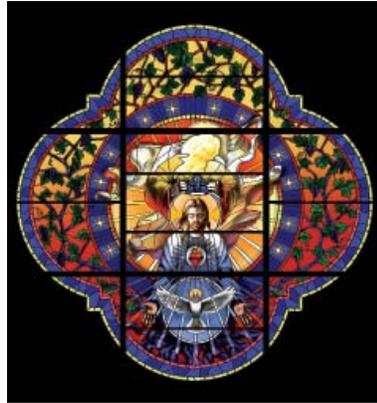
The lilies on the circle are associated with St. Joseph. The lily is known for its purity, strength and glory.

Just as the lilies represent St. Joseph, the roses being the queen of flowers, represents Mary, the Queen of heaven and earth. The outside of the circle is adorned with 20 roses. Each rose represents a mystery of the rosary. The five yellow

roses for the Joyful Mysteries, the five pink for the Luminous Mysteries, the five red for the Sorrowful Mysteries, and the five white for the Glorious Mysteries. Through these mysteries the birth, life, death and resurrection of Christ are prayed.

We've come full circle when we come to the **Trinity Window**. This is our God, the one who always was and who will always be...three persons in one, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the Trinity.

Looking at the center of the window, the first thing you notice is the ethereal glowing light which expresses the warmth and inner glow of God the Father. This was intentionally done on a faint



level as eye has not seen the true appearance of the Father and therefore is in a place beyond our knowing. "God is love..." 1 John 4:16. His love is beyond our understanding. Therefore, the artist, rather than using browns and blacks to shade the face, has used yellows and golds to depict brightness as opposed to an image allowing each observer to imagine the Father as they know and see him in their hearts through faith.

The Father is crowning Jesus fulfilling scripture, "To the one who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor, glory and might, forever and ever." Revelation 5:13. Christ has triumphed over death and attained his glory and his kingship in heaven. Christ's Kingdom will endure forever, and is to be attained by all who, through Baptism, becomes one body in

Christ.

Jesus' Sacred Heart is exposed revealing the crown of thorns that surrounded his heart on earth. That crown is now replaced with the crown of glory in heaven. His heart still aflame with a love for all souls and his grace radiates from his heart and flows out through the Advocate, the Holy Spirit.

The love of the Father transmitted to his Son, and made evident by his crowning, is transmitted through Jesus' heart and pierced hands through the Holy Spirit to us.

Under the Holy Spirit is the trunk of the vine where the source of life in Christ begins. The vine goes out encircling the perimeter of the window creating an endless circle of life. "I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing." John 15:5. Jesus sends us forth to carry on the work of salvation for all mankind. We become his hands and feet. It's through this grace from the Holy Spirit that our work bears fruit which is represented by the grapes.

The trunk also represents the tree of life that was in the Garden of Eden and from which humanity was barred by sin. Jesus has restored access to the tree of life, and believers who remain faithful to the will of God will eat from the tree of life which is Christ.

The inner circle with the twelve stars on a blue background is the presence of Mary, the Queen of Heaven. She is the spouse of the Holy Spirit, the Mother of the Son and the daughter of the Father. She is our perfect model of what humanity should be

and she dwells with the Trinity in heaven.

The colors for the window of yellows and red remind us of the beauty and light that emanates from the Trinity to us. "Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." John 8:12

All three Rose Windows were fabricated and installed by Foster Stained Glass of Bryan, Texas, as they worked closely with Donna Rueby

Stations of the Cross



The Stations of the Cross is a devotional prayer form that developed in the early church to honor the passion of Christ. One tradition says it was the Blessed Mother who began this prayer. It is said that soon after the crucifixion, to be close to her Son, she would go to various places that marked incidents in the passion and pray. Others followed her example. Records

show, as far back as the 4th century, pilgrims in Jerusalem would follow the route that Jesus took from the Fortress of Antonio to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. (The church was built over Calvary and the tomb of Jesus by Emperor Constantine in 335AD.) This route is known as the Via Dolorosa, the Sorrowful Way.

Some people unable to journey to Jerusalem would use pictures or statues depicting the various "stations" of Jesus' passion. In this way they could pray the stations wherever they lived. There are various prayer aids for the stations. It

is proper to use whichever one brings you closer to Christ. The main idea is to walk with Christ and to love him more as we come to know what he did for each of us. The Stations are the 14 plaques of stained linden wood located in the transept of the church between the windows. Inspired Artisans also designed the beautiful works of art.



Conclusion

Standing in the Nave of the church, looking from right to left everything speaks to our hearts of the Paschal Mystery: the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is having the New Testament come alive through color, light and art. We are outside of time and space. Let us be in his presence. Let us lift our hearts to the Lord.

Thank you for joining us on this tour.

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Photographs provided by Charles Falk Photography