

June 6, 2022

STATIONS OF THE CROSS:

To Give Form to the Light of God Through the Eyes of Christ

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These designs for the glass paintings:

Are a distillation of the narrative, evoking the experience that Christ might have felt as he suffered through his journey

Offer visual inspiration for the imagination of believers

Are meant to be a spiritual catalyst for participation and emotional involvement through the Way of the Cross.

Are intended to be beautiful and transformative

I like imagining how children will appreciate these windows

And it is said that stained glass bridges the gap between the earthly and the divine.

I Jesus is condemned to death

Pontius Pilate orders Christ to be crucified washing his hands of the pronouncement. A foreboding early morning: hints of dappled blue sky, but darkness (impending doom), above. Negative space, the clear forms, suggest two figures in opposition.

II He is made to bear his cross

Jesus is mocked by the Roman guards for claiming to be the King of the Jews. He is flogged again and again and made to wear a purple robe and crown of thorns. The bursting purple and ruby cross signifies his pain and the realization of the suffering to come. Yet the purple of his robe foretells his true status and his burden; "the cross he bore has become the jeweled cross of Victory".

Also a reference:

"At your passion, a sword of sorrow pierced the loving heart of your Mother"

III He falls the first time

Christ falls from the weight of his burden. Face to the ground, the cross landing on his back, the guards continue to whip and kick him. Lying in pain, it is the first realization of the true weight of the cross and white (clear) light expresses the shock on impact.

There was no one to help. Color shifts to yellow, symbol of faith and the glory of God.

From the jolt of physical pain forewarning his death, to the promise of resurrection and salvation.

My story of falling at the church while taking measurements....connection

IV He meets his Mother

Jesus meets his grieving Mother. As Mary follows his journey, amidst shouting voices, she sees the pain and confusion in her son's eyes. Christ sees the sorrow his Mother must bear. The embrace of blue and trail of tears suggest her compassion. Blue, a celestial color, is often associated with Mary and evokes a deep calm; yellow, the presence of God.

V Simon of Cyrene is made to bear the cross

Each step looked like his last, and so weakened, soldiers forced a man on the sidelines to help carry the burden of the heavy wooden cross. The soldiers wanted Christ to finish the journey so he would die through the spectacle of crucifixion. Together, their bodies entwined, Simon and Christ struggle with heavy steps as they proceed. Green represents new growth, Spring, Easter, and perhaps the spiritual growth of Simon; brown, signifies strength, humility, devotion and the wooden Cross to bear. A metaphor for their interdependence might be an oak tree: leaves turn light energy into food for the tree, the roots and trunk provide nutrients and water to the crown. Show 700 yr old tree pic

VI Veronica wipes Jesus' face

"Moved by love beyond her fear", a woman pushes past the guards; Veronica wanted to help Jesus, an act of tenderness. She took her veil to wipe the blood, sweat and dirt from his face. The weave of the fabric against his face is backlit by the sun, projecting an aura of radiating light in the blue sky.

VII He falls the second time

Many of these designs reflect aspects of Ojai nature, the mountains, trails and skies. His failing body falls to the stone and dirt path, once again. Earth is roused on impact, the shock of the fall now without bright color, just an echo of the jolts of pain as he weakens. "His throat dried up like baked clay". A tattered ring of light blue (Mother Mary's presence) holds the space as Christ barely holds on.

VIII Jesus speaks to the women

"Do not shed tears for me, weep for yourselves". Christ acknowledges the women of Jerusalem who weep for his suffering but do not accept him as the Messiah. Veils of different colors (diversity) represent the women as they encircle Him. The colors bleed together and co-mingle, suggesting group sorrow. "Far from me are all who could console me".

IX He falls the third time

Clouds of darkness portend the ominous end to his journey of suffering as Christ falls yet again. He lays prostrate in the dust, so weakened, crushed and profaned. What can He see? The dust from which God made us and to which we shall return, portending Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent and the time of penitence. Gray corresponds to immobility without hope; it tends to despair when it becomes dark.

X He is stripped of his garments

Soldiers vie for the robes of Christ as they are violently ripped from his wounded body. The earth is scuffed as the soldiers compete to capture their piece of cloth. He is left with nothing. The robe is purple, prefiguring his majesty, despite the soiled truth of the fabric. Purple also represents the suffering of Christ when in the desert for forty days (Lent) and the promise of his resurrection.

XI He is nailed to the cross

Christ's overwhelming suffering culminates as his body is nailed to the cross. "I can count all my bones." A wash of reds, wounds bleeding, the color of the physical suffering of Christ. Lifeblood is drained from his body as they left him to die in anguish. Red, is the color of martyrdom and associated with Good Friday.

When Cardinals wear crimson outer-garments, it is because it expresses the church's belief -- like the martyrs -- that they are witnesses of the faith and ready to shed blood for the Church and Christ.

XII He dies on the cross

"It is finished, Father. Into your hands I commend my spirit." A barren mountain and darkening sunset sky is the backdrop of the physical death of Christ. His bright spirit ascends. White and gold, symbols of the resurrection.

XIII He is taken down from the cross

Transition is taking place. The body of Christ is lowered from the cross. Full of grief, Mary holds her now dead son, the physical suffering has ended. Joseph, his beloved disciple, is allowed to take the body away. From grief to grace, bands of color from dark to light suggest the transformation from the physical to the spiritual and the transcendent/emotional states of Mary, Mary Magdalene and Joseph.

XIV He is placed in the sepulchre

"...You will not abandon my soul to the nether world"; light triumphs over darkness. Out of the shadow of the crypt rises the light of his spirit which dissolves the now empty cross. And on the third day Christ is resurrected. "Lead us home to heaven with You." Christ is both absent and present. In anticipation, the cross is yet to become the holy symbol of Christ.

Choir Loft/Mezzanine windows

15. Our lady of Guadalupe/Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe

The Virgen Mary appeared to Juan Diego in 1531 in Mexico. A copy of her image is in the sanctuary. Her appearance is both Mestiza and Spanish, the two cultures come together with this visionary experience. Mary is the Mother of God, Queen of Peace and woman of Heaven and Earth. The Virgen keeps all things in her Sacred Heart, and is surrounded by rays of divine light/fire. Her robe is blue green (life giving) and is the color reserved for the great god Omecihuatl from indigenous Mexican beliefs (Aztec). Her robe is decorated with stars as she is the Mother of the celestial heavens.

16. Halo, Mitre, Crown symbolizing the legacy of Christ: the light of grace, his teachings, the Catholic church and reward in heaven.