

THE STAINED GLASS WINDOWS OF SAINT ANN'S PARISH

Our next grouping of stained glass windows can be seen on the left side of the church entering from Saint Ann's main entrance

Saint Polycarp

Polycarp (c. 69-c.155) is considered one of the *Apostolic Fathers*, a term used to describe a small group of early Christian authors who lived and wrote in the second half of the first century, and the first half of the second century. These were men who had personal contact with the Twelve Apostles, and thus provide a link between Jesus and the founders, defenders and developers of orthodoxy in the Church. Polycarp was bishop of Smyrna (now Izmir in Turkey), and was involved in the development of the Church in the East. Our knowledge of him comes from three main sources. The first is a letter written to Polycarp by Ignatius. The second is a letter written by Polycarp to the Christians of Philippi. Among issues he deals with is the emergence of a heresy supported by Marcion, a second century docetist, who believed that Jesus was not really a human being. Polycarp uses strong words to condemn this concept, thus attempting to steer the still emerging Faith along the correct path of the understanding of Christ. The third piece of information comes from *The Martyrdom of Polycarp*, which is the earliest account of a Christian martyrdom from outside the New Testament. This eyewitness account took the form of a letter from the Christians of Smyrna to the church of Philomelium, in Asia Minor. Polycarp was arrested (at age 86) when he refused to worship the Roman gods, an act which would have spared his life. He was tied to a stake in front of taunting crowds, and the pyre was lighted. Miraculously, the flames did not harm him, so he was killed with a sword. He is seen in our windows as holding flaming logs. His feast day is February 23rd.

Saint Henry II

Henry was born in 973 to Gisella of Burgundy and Henry II, the Duke of Bavaria. He was educated at the cathedral school of Hildensheim. Upon his father's death in 995, Henry ended his thoughts of becoming a priest, and succeeded his father as Duke of Bavaria. He eventually succeeded his cousin Emperor Otto III in 1002. A warrior, he spent several years consolidating his political power on his German borders. He was called to Italy by the clergy for another campaign in 1013, and was summoned to Rome where he was crowned Holy Roman Emperor in 1014. Henry's most significant contributions as emperor came in the realm of church-state relations and ecclesiastic administration within the Empire. He quelled rebellions, protected the frontiers, worked to establish a stable peace in Europe, and was involved in reforming the Church while respecting it's independence. He founded and restored many bishoprics, and aided them

in establishing their temporal rule over broad territories. Henry founded the Diocese of Bamberg, which quickly became a center of scholarship and art, in 1007. Henry died in 1024, and is pictured in our stained glass panel holding a model of a bishopric.

Saint Thomas Aquinas

Saint Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225-1274) is a towering figure within the Catholic Faith, whose influence permeates our world to this day. He was born to an aristocratic family in Roccoasecca, Naples. At the age of five, Thomas began his education at the Benedictine monastery at Monte Cassino, where his uncle was abbot. At sixteen, he entered the University of Naples, where he came under the influence of the Dominicans. He resolved to enter that order, which upset his parents so much that they seized him and brought him back to their castle in San Giovanni. He was held captive there for more than a year, but Thomas held fast to his intentions, and eventually assumed the habit of Saint Dominic. Saint Thomas continued his studies in Cologne, and eventually at the University of Paris, where he received his master's degree. In 1256 he was named doctor of theology, and began lecturing in Paris, Rome, and other Italian towns.

At the start of the 13th century, Christian thought was divided on the relationship between faith and reason. Aquinas fused both concepts, believing that while faith and reason are separate, they are both gifts from God, and could be used to understand Catholic beliefs. His writings and arguments were compared to geometric proofs, meticulously reasoned in order to come to his conclusions. He was influenced by Aristotle, whose works had at that time been rediscovered. He believed "that for the knowledge of any truth whatsoever, man needs Divine help, that the intellect may be moved by God to its act".

Saint Thomas is one of the 33 Doctors of the Church. His writings include the *Summa theologiae*, and *Summa contra Gentiles*, which, along with his many other writings, helped to form the foundations of Catholic theology. He is depicted in our windows as having a dove, the sign of God's inspiration, above his ear.

Other Images

Besides the Hierarchy of the Choirs of Angels (Powers), we can see below the saints the images of fountains, seas and rivers, and a great whale and a great fish.