



St. Stephen Protomartyr Ukrainian Catholic Church

views from the pews

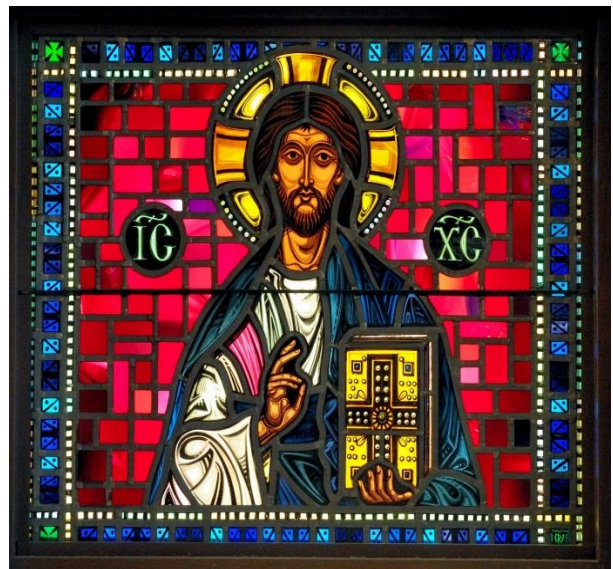
How it all began . . .

December 9, 2018

RELIGIOUS ART *submitted by Arni Wawruch*

The Religious Art Committee was created to select a project to celebrate the 1988 Millennium of the 1988 introduction of Christianity in Ukraine. On December 7th, 1988, forty years ago, the Christ Procreator stained glass window portrait located in the northwest corner of the main level of our church, was set into its frame. This portrait by Christopher Wallis was the first of all our windows to be installed. It was the initial work of the artist for the project to be viewed by parishioners and was installed before the end of 1988.

The original volunteer committee functioned with the guidance of Very Rev. Father William Hupalo and Orest Demco, Kay Mykulak, Lesia Sachkiw (Secretary) and Arni Wawruch (Chairman). At the initial meetings it was



decided to add the knowledge and experience of additional members: Stanford Perrott, Southern Alberta College of Art, former head, Sr. Christine Opalinsky, SSMI, Masters of Religious Studies (Icons), Gonzaga University, Joe Sakundiak who managed donor and financial activities of the project. Joe also acted as the interface between the artist and the installers. Subsequently Joe coordinated the St. Stephen 1967-2010 book, a chronicle including chapters recording the art of the Millennium Religious Art project.

The committee meetings determined the method of selecting artists for the project. The mosaic icon work was assigned to Boris Makarenko. His studio was in Yonkers New York. He was assisted by his son Sviat, who was to succeed Boris in completion of the work. Today the family tradition continues as Sviat is assisted by his daughter. The approved designs of the icons were sent to Murano Italy for manufacture and delivered to St. Stephen's for installation.

The completion for other church art was advertised by a hand poster designed to announce the project and request Canadian artists' proposals. CBC gave us coverage during one of its national radio art programs. More than 75 submissions were received, and two finalists were selected. These two finalists were flown to Calgary and enjoyed a Ukrainian meal prepared by the ladies in the committee, Lesia and Kay. They were able to familiarize themselves with our church. They were each awarded \$1000 to develop their proposals.

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After the arrival of each of the finalist's pieces, the committee reviewed and then mounted them for parishioners viewing and vote. The successful artist, Christopher Wallis, was then retained to design and craft all the stained glass, presently, spiritually enveloping worshipers at St. Stephen's. This project has enjoyed the efforts and participation of several parishioners who were not on the committee. Their contributions added to the success of this project, particularly Joe Karapinka who coordinated altar illumination and Joe Sudeyko who crafted the framing for Christ and the Children. Our parish has benefited from the participation of many other contributors as well.

St. Stephen's has been recognized for our stained glass in a unique way. The 1997 \$0.90 Christmas stamp honours the windows of the Blessed Virgin Mary located in the main south entry's east wall. The Virgin and Child stamp is a recognition that we can add to the measure of our Church building when it was awarded a Massey Medal of Architecture. St. Stephen's was further honoured by being included in the list of Canada's one hundred best buildings up to the year 2000.



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- ❖ Please continue to share your memories as they are important to our parish family.
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