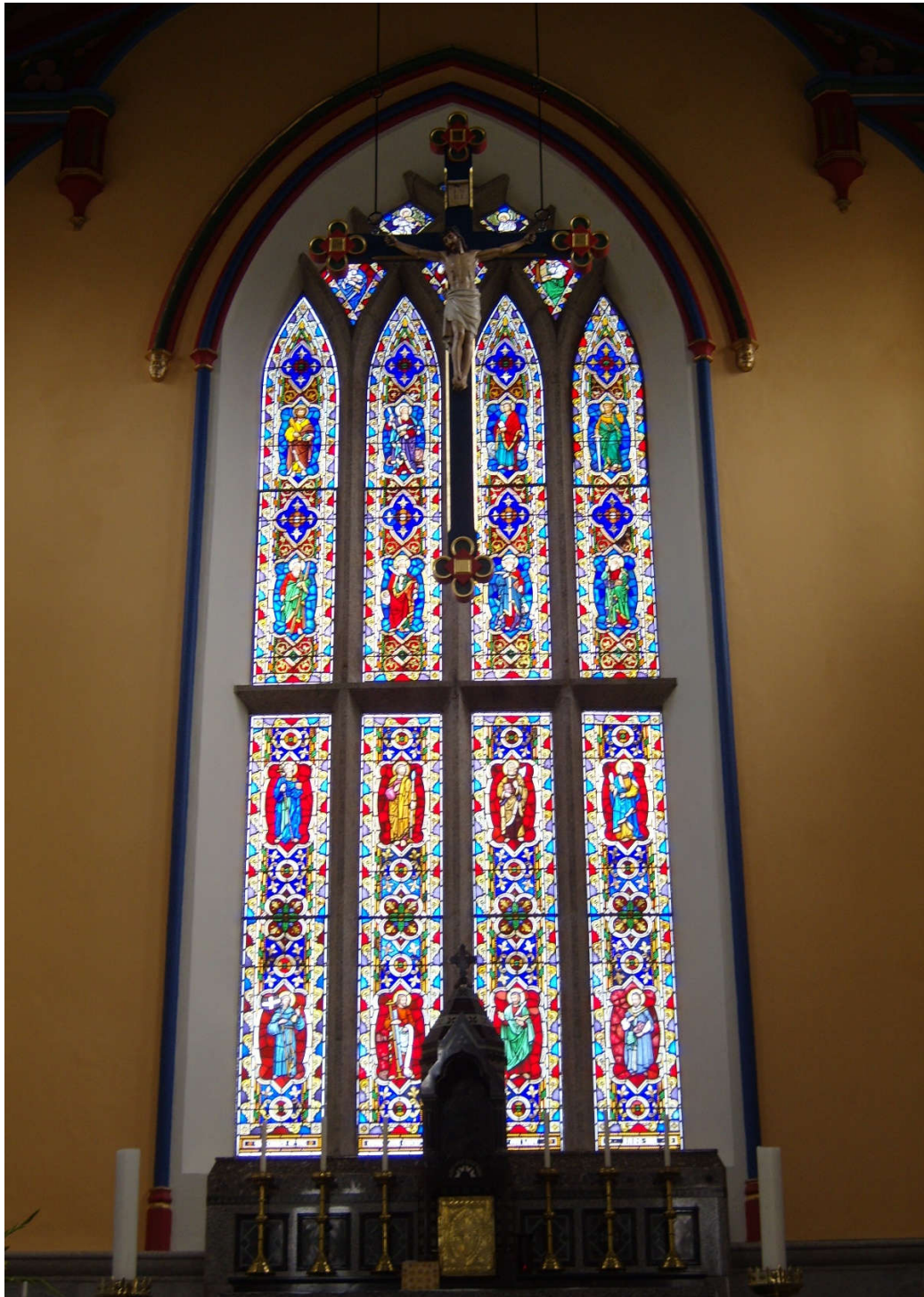


"Blessed be God in His Angels and in His Saints"
from the Divine Praises, said at Benediction

A MEDITATION ON THE SAINTS



The Magnificent East Window in the Church of the
Immaculate Conception of Our Lady, Penzance.

Made by Hardman & Co. 2011

To contemplate this magnificent window is to be drawn into a vision of the Church Triumphant in Heaven.

At its apex Christ, King of the Universe, is surrounded by angels and St. Cecilia, Patron of music, all playing instruments and singing praises to the Lord God Almighty. Songs of praise are a vital part of Christian worship.

Below Christ are the Gospel writers, the Apostles including St. Paul, and two local Saints: St. Piran, Patron of Cornwall and St. Cuthbert Mayne, one of our Diocesan Patrons. A plaque near the statue of Our Lady describes this window as the "*Gospel in Glass.*"

Contemplation of these Saints should inspire in us a wish to take our place in the Communion of Saints in Heaven: and that Christ, who is our life, may show Himself to us as He did to them. (St. Bernard).

Because of its focus on the Gospel, the range of Saints portrayed in this window has to be limited.

Not all the Saints are venerable men with beards. Many are contemplative nuns, religious sisters in teaching, nursing and parish work, and housewives such as St. Margaret Clitherow. Many Saints are married with families.

There is also a long line of Saints who died while in their teens and twenties: from St. Agnes, portrayed near Christ the King, and St. Cecilia in the fourth century, down to St. Thérèse of Lisieux d. 1897, St. Maria Goretti d. 1902 and Bl. Carlo Acutis d. 2006 at the age of 15.

The Apostles' Creed, dating from the fourth century states: "I believe in the Communion of Saints." The Church, whether on earth, in Purgatory the ante-chamber of Heaven or in Heaven itself, is a Communion of followers of Christ, who through their Baptism have been transformed by the Holy Spirit. Every Christian is called to be a Saint. (Romans 1:7) In the early Church all the baptized were called

"the Saints." Our life is "hidden with Christ in God," (Colossians 3:3) and so "we must look for the things that are above, where Christ is."

Our window portrays the victory of Christ and His Saints who have come through the trials of life on earth (Revelation 7:14) and now reign with them in Heaven.

The Saints are holy. The very earliest followers of Jesus were called a "Holy People." (Acts 9:13) God himself is "the Holy One." (Isaiah 6:3) He chose the People of Israel, setting them apart (the basic meaning of holiness) to serve Him. (1 Kings 8: 51-53) And so those consecrated to his service are called holy, or Saints. (1 Peter 2:9)

Only Our Lord and his Blessed Mother were sinless. Saints are not faultless, but have followed Jesus heroically. Whether canonized (officially recognized by the Church) or not, they are known by their goodness. Every parish has its unofficial Saints ". Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses," (Hebrews 12:1) the Saints can guide us towards Christ. They do not come between us and Him. They are with us in Christ as brothers or sisters. "Be imitators of me," said St. Paul, "as I am of Christ." (1 Corinthians 11:1) Like him they can say: "It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me." (Galatians 2:20)

Just as we often ask our fellow Christians to "*say one for me,*" so too the Saints intercede (Latin = intervene) on our behalf. Towards the end of her life on earth, St. Thérèse of Lisieux said: "*I want to spend my heaven in doing good on earth.*"

"Love the Lord, all you his Saints.
He guards His faithful." (*Psalms 30:23*)

Recommended Reading:

1. Leviticus 11:45, Isaiah 6:3, Revelation 4:8 *God is Holy*

1 Kings 8: 52-53 *God has set us apart to serve him*

Jeremiah 31:34, Zechariah 8:8, Ezekiel 36:28
 "They will be my people and I will be their God"

Philippians 1:1, 2 Corinthians 1:1 *The baptized are Saints*

2. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)

Paragraph:

- 828 *The Saints are our models of Holiness*
- 956, 2635, 2647 and 2683 *The Saints Pray for us*
- 1195 *Keep the Memorials, Feasts and Solemnities of the Saints*
- 2013 *All are called to holiness*
- 2165 *In Baptism a Saint's name is recommended as a Patron*

3. Leaflet describing the East Window – 2011

The Penguin Dictionary of Saints, *Donald Attwater (regularly up-dated)*
Short Lives of the Saints: *(Many published by CTS)*
St Piran, Patron of Cornwall, *Canon David Annear, 2022*
Leaflet: A Brief Life of St Cuthbert Mayne, *Canon David Annear, 2017*

Fr. David Annear *Solemnity of All Saints, November 2022*