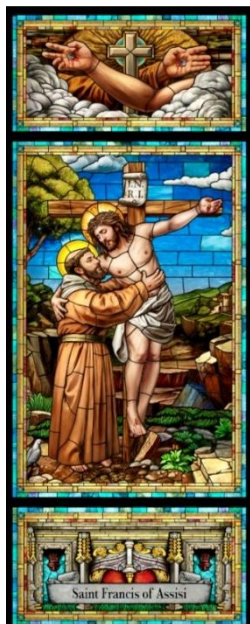


ATRIUM TOUR

(23) St. Francis Embracing Christ on the Cross Stained-Glass Window



This stained-glass window is based on St. Francis Embracing the Crucified Christ, an oil-on-canvas painting by Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, created in 1668–1669 and now housed in the Museum of Fine Arts of Seville. The painting was originally part of a series commissioned by the Capuchin Order for their monastery church in Seville, each work highlighting an aspect of Franciscan spirituality.

The image captures St. Francis's deep union with the suffering Christ. It reflects the saint's total renunciation of worldly goods and his wholehearted embrace of a life of poverty, love, and discipleship. In the composition, Christ wraps His right arm around St. Francis, a sign of His acceptance of the saint's offering of self.

In Murillo's original painting, St. Francis rests his foot on a globe, symbolizing his rejection of worldly attachment for the sake of Christ. Two angels hold a book inscribed with the words: "You who do not give up everything that you have cannot be my disciple." The scene points to the defining moment of Francis's spiritual life: his choice to leave behind everything in order to follow the crucified Lord.

St. Francis (1181–1226) had a profound devotion to Christ crucified. That love took visible form in 1224, when he received the stigmata, the wounds of Christ, while praying on Mount La Verna.

During the Assisi Scholars' pilgrimage to Italy in 2024, there was a unique opportunity to mark the 800th anniversary of St. Francis receiving the stigmata by celebrating Mass in the Chapel of the Stigmata at the Franciscan Sanctuary of La Verna. Shown at right is Fr. Pat McCloskey, OFM, celebrating Mass in the chapel.



This window also recalls the prayer of St. Francis before the crucifix:

*Most High, glorious God,
enlighten the darkness of my heart.
Give me right faith, sure hope, and perfect charity.
Fill me with understanding and knowledge
that I may fulfill your command.*

His feast day is October 4.

ATRIUM TOUR

The window is in memory of Dr. Deborah M. Luebbe who passed away peacefully on October 23, 2024 while in the loving care of Hospice of Cincinnati.

Deborah was born January 26, 1951. She spent her formative years growing up in Price Hill and Delhi. After graduating from Holy Family, she continued her Catholic education at Seton High School. Deborah continued her education at both The University of Cincinnati and Xavier University.

Deborah started her career as an English teacher before spending several years in the corporate world as an Executive Development Coach. During this time, she earned a PhD in Corporate Psychology. In 2003 Deborah returned to her real calling of teaching at Roger Bacon High School.

Dr. Deborah Luebbe, affectionately referred to as Deb, spent over 34 years in Catholic education – 23 years at Roger Bacon High School. She taught every grade and every academic level of English. She served on committees for admission, search committees for administration and multiple committees for the Board of Directors. She also served as English Department Chair. Dr. Luebbe spearheaded the development of the innovative Assisi Scholars Program and was instrumental in two other student-centered initiatives – the San Juan Bautista Pilgrimage and the St. Clare Society. Known as a caring teacher who challenged students to be their best, Deb was known for her leadership, kindness, generosity, and willingness to help all who came in contact with her. A mentor to her fellow teachers and shining example to her students, she was the embodiment of the Franciscan values of humbleness, service to others, compassion, and joy. Deb made an immeasurable and lasting impact on the entire Roger Bacon school community.

