

Saint Francis Xavier Basilica
The Way of the Basilica Windows



Father Anton Kortenkamp 1862~1889

In February of 1862, Bishop Smyth of the Diocese of Dubuque sent the newly-ordained, 27-year-old, Father Anton Kortenkamp, to be the second pastor of the parish of Saint Francis Xavier. He spent the rest of his life here, 27 more years.

Fr. Kortenkamp built churches, schools, rectories, a convent and most importantly, the spiritual faith of the Saint Francis Xavier parishioners.

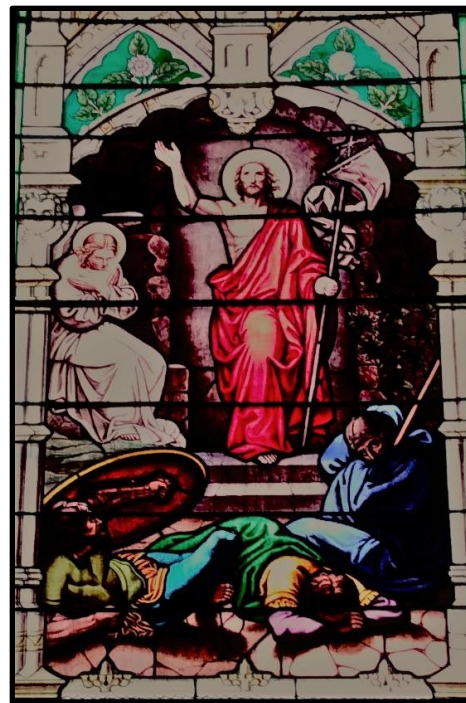
Fr. Kortenkamp was also a missionary priest to the Catholics of Worthington, Delhi, Nottingham (today's Earlville) and Petersburg. It was on a visit to Delhi one winter night that Fr. Kortenkamp was thrown from his horse and buggy into a swollen creek and almost drowned. His health was never the same after that.

In early 1887, Fr. Kortenkamp began purchasing the land and buildings adjacent to the old church. He began planning a church that no future pastor was ever going to have to enlarge. With the help of Fr. Brinkmann, the parish's first assistant pastor, he built the largest church in the state of Iowa. Fr. Kortenkamp did it all from the rectory, reviewing plans and watching out the window, because from mid-1887 he was shut-in, due to his failing health.

One of the things Fr. Kortenkamp was able to do from his room in the rectory, was design the stained-glass windows for the new church. In late 1887, a representative from the Chicago Stained Glass Company took the train from Chicago to Dyersville to confer with Fr. Kortenkamp about the windows. (The windows are actually "burned glass," which means the colors, designs and paintings were baked into the glass.)

Fr. Kortenkamp died on September 14, 1889, just a few days before the partially-completed church was opened for Mass. We hope that in his last lingering illness, he was at least able to see the beautiful windows he designed.

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2021



The Resurrection Window

Monsignor Edward Petty 1947~2007

Father Petty served the Archdiocese of Dubuque in many capacities during his 30 years as a diocesan priest. He was the pastor of Saint Francis Xavier Basilica from 1992 to 2004.

Fr. Petty oversaw the twenty-one-month restoration of the Basilica that began in January of 2000 and concluded in October of 2001.

During the restoration, Fr. Petty preached twenty-three Sunday sermons. The sermons related the history of the parish and the building and completion of the current church. Fr. Petty compiled his sermons into a book entitled: *St. Francis Xavier Basilica, The Historical Sermons*. **In honor of the 20th anniversary of the completion of the Basilica restoration, excerpts from Fr. Petty's sermons are reprinted in this prayer guide.**



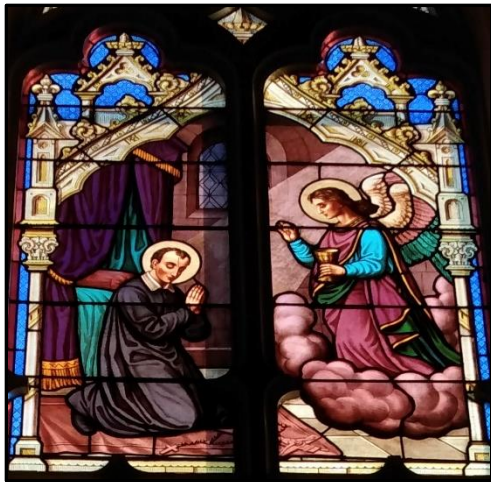
(On the left (south) side from the back of the Basilica)

Saint Stanislaus Kostka

St. Stanislaus Kostka is one of three young Jesuit saints depicted in the Basilica windows. Father Kortenkamp received his high school and university education in Muenster, Westphalia in Germany from the Society of Jesus, the Jesuits. He retained a great love for the Jesuits and their traditions throughout his life. Hence, the windows and statues related to the Society of Jesus.

This window was donated by the First Communion classes of 1888 and 89.

St. Stanislaus Kostka was born in Poland in 1550. St. Stanislaus was from a wealthy, noble family. At age 13 he was sent with his older brother to Vienna, Austria to the new Jesuit college, where both would receive a good education. At the college, he gave his life to Christ, and decided that



he wanted to enter the Jesuit order when he was of age, in those days 16. His family seems to have given the older brother tacit approval to “cure” St. Stanislaus of his religiosity and desire to enter the Jesuits. One day after beating him, his brother locked St. Stanislaus in his room, so he could not attend Mass on a general Communion day. St. Stanislaus prayed and, according to what he later told a spiritual director, an Angel brought him

Holy Communion in the locked room. That’s what is pictured in this window. St. Stanislaus Kostka is the patron saint of students and seminarians.

Prayer before the Blessed Sacrament

O Jesus, present in the Sacrament of the Altar,
teach all nations to serve you with a willing heart,
knowing that to serve God is to reign.

May your Sacrament O Jesus,
be light to the mind, strength to the will, joy to the heart.
May it be support for the weak, the comfort for the suffering,
the wayfaring bread of salvation for the dying,
and, for all, the pledge of future glory.

by St. Pope John XXIII (1881-1963)

Saint Joseph the Worker and the Child Jesus

The Saint Joseph the Worker window was donated and designed by Father Joseph Brinkmann, during the building of the Basilica.

Fr. Brinkmann, newly ordained, came to Dyersville in 1886, as the parish’s first assistant pastor. He was involved in all the planning and he did all the legwork in the building of this church. He was under the close supervision of Fr. Kortenkamp, who was very ill at the time. Fr. Kortenkamp watched the progress of the building, like a hawk, from a window in the rectory. Hence, the prominent window and the face of the child Jesus that bears a striking resemblance to Fr. Brinkmann. This window is of St. Joseph the Worker and the boy, Jesus. It is also a clever message from Fr. Brinkmann, to let us know of the daunting task he endured. St. Joseph the Worker is the patron saint of workers and the universal Church.



Prayer for the Spirit of Work

God our Father,
Creator and Ruler of the universe,
in every age you call us to use
and develop our gifts for the good of others.
With St. Joseph as our guide,
help us to do the work you have asked
and come to the rewards you have promised.
Please grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen

From Saint Joseph the Worker Shrine
37 Lee Street, Lowell, MA 01852
(<https://www.stjosephshrine.org/Prayers-to-St--Joseph-For-Workers>)



Saint Helena and Saint Francis of Assisi

Saint Helena is standing at the left section of the window in her traditional pose, with the true cross and the nails, which she excavated in Jerusalem in the early part of the 4th Century. Her main historical importance is that she was the Christian mother of the Emperor Constantine. Under her influence, 250 years of persecution of Christians ceased in the Roman Empire, the Faith

was made legal and eventually encouraged. Helena was always considered a patroness in an area where the Church was not welcome. When Fr. Kortenkamp came to Dyersville, it was an English Protestant town. Thus, St. Helena probably had special significance to Fr. Kortenkamp.

St. Helena is the patron saint of new discoveries.

**Pray for us, Saint Helena,
That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.**

The other half of this window shows St. Francis of Assisi receiving the stigmata. Fr. Kortenkamp had already brought the German, Franciscan Sisters to Dyersville to staff the parish schools, and it was most appropriate to have their founder and patron in one of the windows. Although, St. Francis receiving the stigmata is a rather unusual portrayal of him for a parish church. But, don't forget that by 1888 Fr. Kortenkamp himself had already received the "stigmata" of his final illness and was in continual pain. That event in St. Francis' life probably had great meaning for him.

This window was given by the family of Franz (Francis) and Helena Westemeier.

St. Francis is the patron saint of animals and ecology.

Saint Francis Vocation Prayer

Most High, Glorious God,
enlighten the darkness of our minds.
Give us a right faith, a firm hope, and a perfect charity,
so that we may always and in all things
act according to your Holy Will.
Amen.

Saint Kunegunda and Our Lady of Consolation

This window is referred to as the "Luxembourger Window."

The window was donated by those parishioners who had immigrated from or whose parents had come from the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, a tiny country in northern Europe.

On the right-hand side is Our Lady of Consolation, the Patroness of Luxembourg. The window is based on a 16th Century dressed statue of Mary and the Child Jesus, kept in the Cathedral of Luxembourg. The statue stands on a pedestal, which reads, "Mary Mother of Jesus; Consoler of the Afflicted."



On the left-hand side of the Luxembourger window is St. Kunegunda.

St. Kunegunda was born in 983 A.D. in Luxembourg, the daughter of the first count of Luxembourg. When she was of age, she was married to Henry, Duke of Bavaria, who eventually became the Holy Roman Emperor, and a saint himself. St. Henry and St. Kunegunda spent their lives doing good. In fact, they were so good

that the people in the court didn't like St. Kunegunda. When St. Henry was away on governmental business, St. Kunegunda's enemies began a whispering campaign of vicious gossip about her, in order to get rid of her. St. Kunegunda vowed to prove her innocence by withstanding a "trial by fire." She publicly walked barefoot across a long path of red-hot iron spade heads and emerged unscathed. After St. Henry died in 1024, St. Kunegunda spent a year giving away the rest of their wealth to charity. She then retired to a convent and became a nun.

Prayer to End Gossip

Lord God,
grant that I may never fall into the sin of slander and gossip.
Help me to think charitably about my neighbor
and to never spread lies or rumors about them.
Please grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Pray for us, St. Kunegunda,
That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Saint Francis Xavier

This window was commissioned to depict St. Francis Xavier, a Jesuit missionary, preaching to the natives of India. We can smile at this window, because there must have been some miscommunication between the representative of the Chicago Stained Glass Company and the artists about what the window was supposed to show. Although St. Francis Xavier is pictured in his traditional pose of preaching, holding up the crucifix, he looks more like a Victorian, white, Anglo-Saxon, rather than a zealous 16th Century Spanish missionary.



Also, take a look at both the audience and the background in the window. Fr. Kortenkamp probably asked for a window with St. Francis Xavier preaching to the “Indians,” meaning the people of the country of India. Instead, he received a window showing two Native Americans in a tropical paradise. Although Fr. Kortenkamp was probably disappointed when he saw the window, it turned out okay, since the interpretation gives us some enjoyment today.

Saint Francis Xavier is the patron saint of this Basilica and missionaries. This window was donated by the Saint Francis Society, an insurance society.

**O my God, almighty and merciful Father,
creator of all things of the world:
I firmly believe in you, my God and Lord,
since you are my entire good.
You, Lord, created me
and you have given me body and soul
and all that I have.
And you, my God,
have made me in your likeness.
Thanks be to God!**

From the *Short Catechism* written by St Francis Xavier
for the people of Goa in India, May 1542.

Saint Boniface

St. Boniface is the patron saint of Germany and is known as the “Apostle to the Germans.” The window depicts the conversion of one of the tribes of northern Germany. It shows St. Boniface cutting down a large tree, and baptizing the leader of the tribe. Many of the tribes believed that the god Thor made his home in the tree, and if anyone touched the tree, Thor would strike them dead. St. Boniface took an axe, chopped the tree down and used the wood to build a church, which he dedicated to Saint Peter.



It was a frequent tradition in Irish parishes that the Irish pastor donated a window of St. Patrick, the “Apostle to the Irish,” in a new church. Not to be outdone by an Irishman, Fr. Kortenkamp donated a window to St. Boniface, the “Apostle to the Germans,” in this new church.

Prayer to Saint Boniface

**Please pray for all those who do not believe in God, St. Boniface.
Please especially keep in mind those
who are within my own family or are my friends.
Inspire me also to talk about God wherever I go,
so that all may have the opportunity of knowing Him.**

Read more at: <https://www.praymorenovenas.com/st-boniface-novena>

The Little Windows

The little windows are at the tops of the main windows, or high above the side entrances. Each of these windows are separate from the main windows and have their own depictions, primarily religious symbols. The little windows on the north side of the Basilica are related to the corresponding little windows on the south side. That is how they are meant to be viewed. For example, on the north side you'll find a window with a pelican and her young chicks. It was thought in medieval times that the pelican pierced its own breast and fed its chicks with its own blood. So, the pelican became a symbol of Christ, feeding us with His precious blood. In the upper window across from the pelican is Christ, as the Lamb of God, who was sacrificed and shed His Blood for us.

(From the right (north) side of the front of the Basilica)

Two Young Jesuits



St. John Berchmans (on the left) and St. Aloysius Gonzaga (on the right) are the two young Jesuit novices pictured in this window. The window was donated by the St. Aloysius Young Men's Society of this parish.

St. Aloysius Gonzaga was born in 1568 near Florence, Italy to a royal family. He disliked the intrigue, licentiousness, greed and occasional murder, at the royal court. When he was 14, he read a book about St. Francis Xavier and the early Jesuit missionaries, and he resolved to

become a Jesuit. Although his parents fought him, at 18 he joined the Jesuits in Rome. He went out of his way to serve the poor. When a plague struck Rome, Aloysius nursed the sick and dying. Eventually, he caught the plague, became sick and died at age 23.

He is the patron saint of Catholic youth and plague victims.

**Pray for us, Saint Aloysius Gonzaga,
that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.**

St. John Berchmans was born in Belgium in 1599. He grew up loving to serve Mass and he frequently served two or three Masses each day. As a teenager, he wanted to become a Jesuit, but his father was strongly opposed to the idea. At age 17, he won out and began his two-year novitiate, and then went on to study philosophy in Antwerp. He decided the school in Antwerp was not that great, so at 19 he hiked from Belgium to Rome and entered the Roman College of the Jesuits. He was a popular student and an excellent scholar. He continued to serve Mass every day and was considered a leader among his classmates. After taking part in a formal debate one evening, Saint John Berchmans became suddenly ill and died a holy death, at age 22.

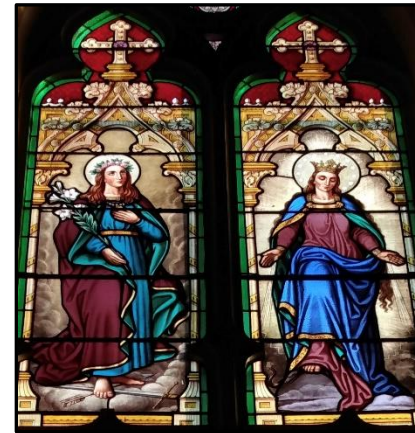
He is the patron saint of altar servers and students.

**Pray for us, Saint John Berchmans,
that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.**

Saint Philomena and Our Lady, as the Immaculate Conception

This window was donated by the Young Ladies Sodality.

The Saint Philomena representation is the last public depiction of her left in the Archdiocese of Dubuque. When the catacombs in Rome were unearthed in the 19th century, an ancient tomb was discovered in the Catacomb of Saint Priscilla. In the tomb were the bones of a young girl and a vial of blood. The vial of blood was thought to be a sign of a martyr. Rearranging some tiles that were outside the tomb led to a Latin phrase that read, "Peace be with you, Philomena." Although there was no known historical record of her existence, nor her martyrdom, devotion to Saint Philomena spread quickly throughout Europe and in the United States.



In 1961, scholars prevailed, and since there was no historical record of Philomena as a Christian martyr, the Church stepped in and said there could be no more public devotion to Philomena. In the Archdiocese of Dubuque, a parish was renamed and statues were removed, but this window depicting Saint Philomena still remains. Saint Philomena is pictured on the left. Our Lady is on the right.

Prayer for Persecuted Christians

O God of all the nations,
the One God who is and was and always will be,
in your providence you willed that your Church
be united to the suffering of your Son.

Look with mercy on your servants
who are persecuted for their faith in you,
grant them perseverance and courage to be worthy imitators of Christ.
Bring your wisdom upon leaders of nations
to work for peace among all peoples.

May your Spirit open conversion
for those who contradict your will,
that we may live in harmony.

Give us the grace to be united in truth and freedom,
and to always seek your will in our lives.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our Lady, Queen of Peace, pray for us.

by Archbishop William E. Lori, for the Knights of Columbus

The Epiphany Window

To the left of the main altar is the window of the Epiphany. The theological significance of the Epiphany is the manifestation of Christ to the Gentile, or non-Jewish world. A second theological reason, is that throughout all our lives there are many epiphanies or manifestations of Christ to us. The first, and most obvious is in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and in the other sacraments. Christ also comes to us in our personal lives to inspire us, to console us or to just let us know that He is with us. All these epiphanies of Christ to us, the sacramental ones and the personal ones, all lead to us sharing one day in His Resurrection. Hence, the juxtaposition of the Epiphany and Resurrection windows on either side of the High Altar in the Basilica.



Fr. Kortenkamp would have had a couple of historical reasons for putting this major window of the Epiphany in the front of this church. First of all, Bishop Loras came out to the little settlement of New Vienna and celebrated the first Mass for the first German settlers in 1846, on the Feast of the Epiphany. The second historical reason is that the Germans had great devotion to the Three Wise Men. The Cathedral of Cologne in Germany, still to this day, claims to have the bodies of the Three Wise Men in a beautiful reliquary behind the High Altar.

Prayer to the Three Magi

**O Holy Magi,
who offered to Jesus Christ gold, frankincense and myrrh,
thereby recognizing Him to be King, God, and Man;
obtain from the Lord for me the grace
never to present myself before Him with empty hands;
but that I may continually offer to Him
the gold of charity, the incense of prayer,
and the myrrh of penance. Amen**

from *Novena to the Three Magi*

<https://www.daily-prayers.org/novenas/three-wise-men-kings-magi/>

The Resurrection Window

The Resurrection is the next great manifestation of Christ to the World. Jesus, not coming forth from His mother, Mary, in His human body as a child; but coming forth from the tomb in His glorified, risen, human body. Christ rose from the tomb, conquering death; not just for himself, but for all of us.

If you look closely at the Epiphany window and the Resurrection window, you'll see an important lesson that Fr. Kortenkamp is trying to teach us. We can be like the Wise Men, and worship Christ and serve Him, with our gifts and talents. Or, we can be like the Roman soldiers in the Resurrection window, who also certainly knew about Christ. They witnessed the greatest miracle of His life, His Resurrection from the dead. But they denied Him and refused to follow what they knew was true.



In all of the other windows Fr. Kortenkamp designed for the Basilica, none of the figures are looking directly at the viewer, except one. If you look at the Roman soldier at the far right of the Resurrection window, he's looking directly at you. His eyes are eyes of terror, not at the Resurrection of Christ, but at what he did, even with the knowledge he had. He seems to be saying, "Don't make the same mistake I did." We always have a choice.

Christ is Risen Alleluia!

**Risen One, Bringer of Joy,
plant the seeds of great gladness
deep in the soil of my being.
May I enjoy life,
begin each day with enthusiasm,
and become ever more aware of you. Amen**

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