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# ART SMART

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6th Grade / March

THEME:

## St. Francis Xavier Church Tour & Scavenger Hunt



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6th grade

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## St. Francis Xavier Church Architecture

### Main Points

1. Built in 1931, designed by architect Joseph W. McCarthy.
2. Designed to resemble St. Sophia's church in Constantinople (modern Istanbul, Turkey). Istanbul was the capitol of the Roman Empire in the fourth century.
3. This type of building, rectangular with a barrel roof and an apse, or semi-circular area containing the main altar. is called a basilica, coming from the Greek word basileus for "king". It evolves from the basilica that the romans used for ceremonies and court sessions at the time Christianity was not just legalized, but made the state religion.
4. Signs of Roman influence:
  - a, The Roman arch is visible in sweeping rhythmns (beneath the dome, over the side altars, over the transept doors, and around the apse.)
  - b, The columns in the front alternating round and square supporting a classic pediment overhead. The columns also have Corinthian capitals.
  - c. The fact that Christianity had officially triumphed over other pagan religions in Rome was evident in much of the decoration of the fourth century. Most of the decoration in the church is usually shown as Christ the King and victor: the chuch in triumph. The canopy over the altar, can easily be seen as a crown held up to Christ the King.
  - d.. The color scheme is very Roman: everything is red and blue and gold, from the stained glass windows to the coats of arms over the transepts to the mosaics of the stations of the cross to the rosy hue of the marble.
  - e. Everywhere we look in here, we can learn of the origins of the Roman Catholic faith. Throughout the church, there is a rich network of symbolism.
5. The baldechin, or canopy over the altar consists of 4 monolithic columns of Rosa Corallo marble which support a golden dome above a framework of inlaid wood.

- a. At the base of the columns are 2 mosaics, commissioned by Monsignor O'Brien in 1965.
  1. On the east is St. Dominic receiving the rosary from the Blessed Mother.
  2. On the west is a mosaic of the Virgin of the Americas, Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of North and South America.
- b. Inside the canopy, in the back, on the left, is an eye, an Egyptian symbol of the all-seeing eye of God.
- c. At the top of the front column is a beautiful little ship, the bark of St Peter, an expression which describes the church on earth.
- d. At the top of the right column is the Gospel.
- e. At the base of the dome are 4 angels representing the 4 cardinal virtues - Prudence, Temperance, Justice, and Fortitude keep watch.

#### 6. The Dome

- a. At the base of the dome are 4 Latin inscriptions, three of which refer to the house of God. "Bless Lord this house, which is built in your name. Come to this place." "My house shall be called a house of prayer, says the Lord, in which all who ask will be heard." "Lord I have loved the beauty of your house and the place where your glory dwells."
- b. Around the central dome are a number of windows portraying symbols of eucharistic and sacramental significance. These symbols include the cross, anchor, the phoenix, grapes, host, and many more.

#### 7 Beneath the canopy is the main altar, crafted of Rosso Verona marble. On the front of the mensa(table) is the Lamb on the Apocalyptic Book of the Seven Seals, symbol of Christ at the Last Judgement.

- a. Windows behind the tabernacle show the Eucharist in 3 images.
  1. First is the chalice for the consecration of the Last Supper.
  2. Next, the Eucharist as the bread of life fed to us by Christ symbolized by the pelican feeding its young.
  3. Then the moonstrance symbolizing the Glorified Christ.
- b. High above the circular window show St. Francis Xavier, the

patron of our parish, baptizing in the Philippines.

8.. The east transept(side)

- a. St. Francis Xavier, sculpture, our patron saint, the 16th c Spanish saint known for bringing Christianity to the East. He is the patron of the missions.
- b. The east altar is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin.
  1. To the left of the statue is a snake encircling the globe, a symbol of the fall of man.
  2. To the right, a heart pierced by a sword, which recalls the words of Simon to Mary when she brought the baby to the Temple: "This child will be responsible for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and your heart will be pierced by the sword."
  3. The statue itself is shown standing on a crescent moon, a symbol of Mary as a reflection of Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness.
  4. The serpent at her feet reminds us of God's promise in the Garden that a woman would crush the head of Satan.
- d. The window above the altar depicts the deep blossoms of the Mystical Rose, symbols of Mary.
- e. The other stained glass on the North side is dedicated to the children of the church and was in place at the time of the church's dedication.

9. The west transept

- a. Altar dedicated to St. Joseph
  1. To the left of the statue are found a hammer and a carpenter's square, symbols of the foster-father of Jesus and of the dignity of labor.
  2. To the right, the pilgrim's staff and bag, symbols of both the flight into Egypt and of the pilgrim church.
  3. The stained glass circular window of 3 lillies, symbols for St. Joseph.
  4. The other window on the north end is a tribute to Christ the King, added in 1932-1933.
- b. The painting in the west transept is a copy of a very old painting called Madonna della Strada, Our Lady of the Wayside, the original is in the Jesuit church in Rome.



- c. Statue of St Therese of Lisieux, who lived a short life in a cloistered Carmelite convent, but whose ceaseless prayers for the success of missionary work earned her the title of co-patroness of the missions.
10. The windows in the nave(main aisle) were commissioned by Monsignor O'Brien in the 1940's.
- a. On the west side are 3 windows depicting the life of Christ.
    - 1. The first, is the Annunciation by the angel Gabriel.
    - 2. The second, is the scene of Christ's Birth.
    - 3. The Eucharist.
  - b. On the east, represent 3 powers given by Christ to the church.
    - 1. Creation of the priesthood.
    - 2. Penance and the forgiveness of sins.
    - 3. Charge to all of us to "Teach all Nations".
  - c. Below these larger windows are 6 smaller windows which depict the 4 major prophets-Isiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekial: Moses, and David. These poses are all taken from the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel by Michelangelo, except Moses.
  - d. Two other windows rarely seen:
    - 1. Located in the Reconciliation Room, formerly the Baptistry, in the vestibule, depicts Baptism.
    - 2. The second in the choir loft is of St. Cecilia the patron saint of music.
  - e. In the pale green glass of the large stained glass windows is a different array of symbols. The rose, the symbol of the Messianic promise, from Isaiah: "The desert shall rejoice and blossom like the rose." The fleur-de-lys, or three pointed lily is a symbol of both the Trinity and Mary.
11. Other Symbols
- a. Arches over the transepts are several different representaions of the cross and the crown, victory over death.
  - b. Both the Latin and Greek cross are here.
    - 1. Greek cross is quartered with the ICXC, the first and last letters in Greek for Jesus Christus.
    - 2. The letters INRI stand for Jesus Nazareus Rex Judaeorum, Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews, placed on the cross by Pontius Pilate.
12. Changes to the church

- a. In 1931 the priest said Mass in Latin facing the altar, with his back to the people
  - b. The sanctuary was separated from the congregation by a beautiful gate and marble railing that stretched across the apse, with a step on which the faithful knelt to receive communion.
  - c. In the redecoration that followed Vatican Council II, the main altar was divided and the sacrificial altar brought closer into the congregation
  - d. The railing was removed and other parts used in the Sacred Oil Shrine in the east transept, and more on the face of the enlarged choir loft.
  - e. There was a mural painting in the apse that depicted Christ as victor coming in glory to judge the living and the dead. This was painted over in 1995 when the church was redone.
13. There are many more beautiful and thought-provoking things to be seen in our church to further enhance a spiritual experience. As you use this space to worship, remember the builder, the artists, the parishioners, the clergy, and the scholars who made it all possible. finally, the last symbolic work of art seen by the people of St Francis as they leave the church, is a mural of the Holy Spirit in repose above the choir loft. Our parish church stands as a gift to God before the eyes of everyone.

## *ART SMART*

### *DECEMBER SCAVENGER HUNT – ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CHURCH*

As we explore the theme of Roman/Greek art, we find many fine examples of this type of artwork in our very own church! We invite you read the clues and see how many “treasures” you can find....

We begin the challenge.....in the

#### **ALTER AREA:**

1. What is the item the Blessed Mother is giving to St. Dominic?
2. Can you find the MOSAICS of the patron saint of North and South America? Where is it?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What is her name? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Next move to the area covered by the canopy and find the Egyptian symbol of the ALL SEEING EYE OF GOD and draw it below:
5. Find the ship that belonged to St. Peter and describe its color
6. Find the 4 angels that represent cardinal virtues and guess what the cardinal virtues are:

#### **DOME AREA:**

7. Look at the windows in the large dome and guess the symbols of the Eucharist that are depicted – there are 5 of them.

#### **EAST TRANSIT**

8. What is the name of the man saint ? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Find the Blessed mother statue. What is at her feet? Can you guess what it symbolizes?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **WEST TRANSIT**

10. There is a statue of St. Therese of Lisieux, what is she the patron saint of?

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11. Look at the statue of St. Joseph. What tools of St. Joseph do you find?

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## **WEST SIDE OF CHURCH**

12. Find 3 stained glass windows on West side/ school side of church that describe the life of Christ. Pick one scene and describe what the scene depicts.

## **BACK VESTIBULE of CHURCH**

13. Find the stained glass window in the bride's room and describe what event is depicted.

14. St. Cecilia, Patron Saint of Musicians, has a stained glass window, can you find it? Where is it? (Hint: think about what she is a patron saint of.....)

## **CHURCH**

15. Find different columns (Greek and Roman style) and draw one of each.

16. Find the LATIN words in the DOME and guess what they mean

17. What are the main colors used for decorating the church?