

Bethinking of Old Orleans

C.W.Lattin County Historian

Vol. XI

11-23-89

No. 47

STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

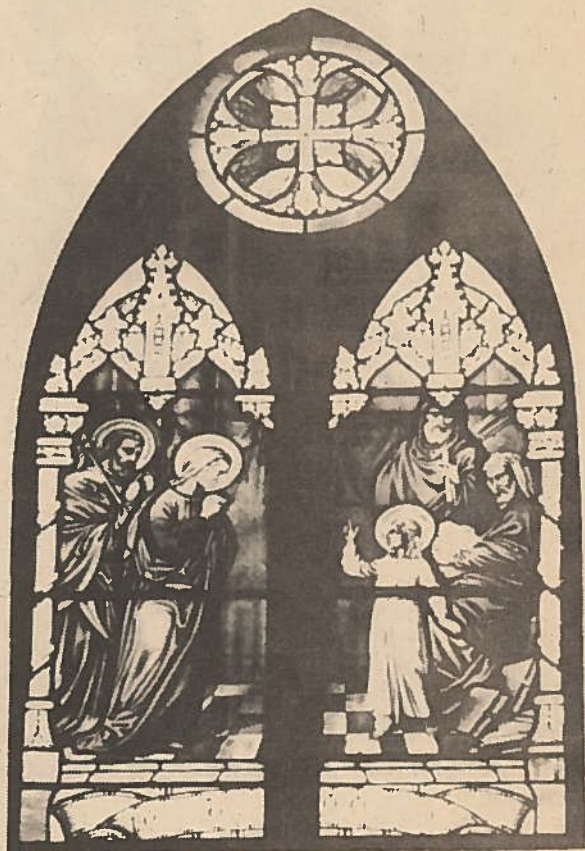
Last winter I started a series of articles on stained glass windows from Orleans County churches. Each article represented a different church and religious subject. From time to time I would like to continue in this vein, stories about historic windows. Perhaps you will get a chance to see a work of art with which you are unfamiliar. The window shown here is an original from St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church in Albion which was built in 1896 and dedicated in 1897. This particular window is actually somewhat obscure, rather small in nature and therefore not the most obvious or grandiose of the many windows at St. Joseph's. It is a clear story window located in the sanctuary at about twenty feet above eye level. Because of its location it is hard to see and that is the reason I've selected it to write about. The other reason is that it tells a religious story which has not yet appeared concerning stained glass windows in this column.

We find the Biblical validation for such a scene as this in Luke Chapt. 2, verses 41-52. "Annually at the Passover Feast His parents travelled to Jerusalem And when He was 12 they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast. When the days were ended and they returned, the boy Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem without His parents being aware of it. Supposing that He was in the caravan, they travelled a day, then looked for Him among relations and acquaintances and, not finding Him, went back to Jerusalem in search of Him. The third day they found Him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and His answers."

"When His parents saw Him they were amazed, and His mother said to Him, "Child, why have You treated us this way? Your father and I have anxiously been looking for You". He said to them, "Why were you seeking Me? Did you not know that I ought to be in My Father's house?" But they did not understand the saying which He spoke to them."

"He went down with them to Nazareth and submitted Himself to them, and His mother treasured all these matters in her heart. And Jesus advanced in wisdom and in stature and in favour with God and men."

Therefore, the title of this window is "The Finding of the Child Jesus in the temple". The inscription at the base notes "In Memory of Timothy McMahon and Wife." The right lancet shows Jesus at age twelve wearing a white tunic suggesting religious purity. He points heavenward as though proclaiming "Did you not know that I ought to be in My Father's House?". The teachers in the background (the ones without halos) appear to be lis-



tening to his great wisdom. One wears a green robe suggesting hope of the future while the other wears purple which denotes martyrdom. The left lancet depicts Joseph and Mary as they entered the temple to find Jesus. Mary is shown wearing a blue mantle over a red robe. The blue indicated truth, the red love. Joseph appears in a golden brown robe which suggests the goodness of God.

To my knowledge, the only other window of this same subject in our county, is found in a similar location at St. Mary's Church in Medina. This particular scene is the fifth and last in a series considered the Five Joyful Mysteries. In order, they are I. The Annunciation, II. The Visitation, III. The birth of our Lord, IV. The Presentation of our Lord in the Temple, and V. Finding of the Child Jesus in the temple.

When St. Joseph's Church was constructed there were originally five such windows in the sanctuary which depicted the Joyful Mysteries. In 1952, II, III and IV which were located above the main altar were covered over with a large mural which depicts St. Joseph, glorified. However, we find "The Annunciation" and "The Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple" still remain visible in this series.