

Stabat Mater Ecclesiastic Stained Glass Windows



*Stained Glass Window
5968: Sorrowful Mother*

Stabat Mater

Many pieces of church stained glass for sale that honor the Virgin Mary commemorate the more joyous times in her life. These include depictions in faceted glass of the Nativity scene when Mary held her newborn son for the first time and the announcement of her miraculous pregnancy by the archangel Gabriel. It's important not to forget, however, that the life of the Virgin Mother also had its share of sadness. The Seven Sorrows of the Virgin Mary are described in the Gospels, and have inspired countless sculptors, painters, and stained glass artists. The times of anguish in the life of the Blessed Virgin are important inclusions in any series of Catholic stained glass honoring her. They remind us of the sacrifices this holy woman was willing to make to serve God, including the most heartbreaking one of all: watching Jesus die on the cross.

The Meaning of Stabat Mater

Translated, the term “stabat mater” means “the mother stood.” It refers to the fact that Mary stood next to Jesus as He perished on the cross—this scene of anguish is often shown in Christian stained glass art. Stabat mater is also the name of a hymn describing this unimaginable trial in Mary's life. The opening lines of this Roman Catholic song are: “At the cross her station keeping/Mary stood in sorrow weeping/When her Son was crucified.”

The two other themes often found in works of stained glass showing the Sorrows of Mary are mater dolorosa



*Stained Glass Window
5976: The Sorrowful Mother*

The Meaning of Stabat Mater continued

and pieta. The first is a Latin phrase meaning “sorrowful mother.” In these works of stained glass, Mary’s facial expression and body language clearly indicate she is full of woe and anguish. These pieces often feature simple scenes, and Mary is in many cases the only figure in the work. Pieta is the Latin word for pity. This is certainly a suitable title for this category of Catholic stained glass, as Mary is shown cradling the body of Jesus after He is taken down from the cross.

Works of stained glass featuring these three themes reveal Mary’s humanity, and all followers will certainly identify with the devastation she must have felt in the hours leading up to and following the crucifixion of her only child.

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