

# Stained Glass Angel Windows



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**“For to his angels he has given a command about you,  
that they guard you in all your ways.” [Psalms 91:11]**

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## **Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church**

**201 Lake Shore Drive East  
Ashland, Wisconsin**

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**Welcome!** Thank you for your interest in our beautiful stained glass angel windows. We hope this brief informational booklet will be helpful to you.

## A Brief History of Our Lady of the Lake



Various sources document that, on June 21, 1873, Dr. Edwin Ellis donated three lots for the construction of the first Catholic church in Ashland. A frame building, completed in 1877 on Third Avenue East, marked the site of the original St. Agnes Church. The construction of the present church, the first in the area to be built of native Lake Superior brownstone, commenced in 1886. The windows in the new church were donated by parishioners. The first services were held in November of 1887

in the basement. The church was dedicated and blessed by Rev. Kilian Flasch, Bishop of LaCrosse, on July 22, 1888. Construction continued over the next several years, as the church spire, side entrances, etc., were completed. In 1990 Holy Family Parish (the nearby Polish parish, which had been established around 1900) and St. Agnes Parish combined to form Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Community. Renovations were made to the structure, sanctuary, and social hall, lending a modern touch while maintaining the historical integrity and making everything handicap accessible.

[photo: roamincatholicchurches.blogspot.com]

## Angels

According to *The Catholic Source Book*, angels are “heavenly beings, genderless, of a fixed population, who neither marry nor are given in marriage (Mark 12:25); distinct from saints (which humans may become); mentioned nearly 300 times in the Bible.”

In his Letter to the Colossians, St. Paul names four of the angelic choirs when describing Christ as the “image of the invisible God.” St. Paul says, “For in him were created all things in heaven and earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers” (Colossians 1:16).



## Archangeli [Archangels]

The Archangels, second highest of the third sphere and meaning “chief angels,” deliver messages of great importance, are guardians of nations and countries, and are concerned with issues and events surrounding these, including politics, military matters, commerce and trade. It is believed there are seven archangels. The most recognized names are Michael, traditionally seen as the protector of Israel, Raphael, and Gabriel.



## Angeli [Angels]

Angels are the third rank of the third sphere. By their nature and duties, Angels are closer to man than any other celestial spirit. Guardian angels come from this rank and guide and protect individual souls during their earthly pilgrimage. Angels are many different kinds with different functions. They are concerned with the affairs of living things and are sent as messengers to mankind.



### Potestates [Powers]

The Powers, third highest of the second sphere, are bearers of conscience and the keepers of history. Their duty is to oversee the distribution of power among humankind. These angels appear to collaborate, in power and authority, with the Principalities (Rulers). They are also warrior angels created to be completely loyal to God. Some believe that no Power has ever fallen from grace, but another theory states that Satan was Chief of Powers before he fell.



### Principatus [Rulers]

Highest of the third sphere are the Principalities or Rulers. They appear to collaborate, in power and authority, with the Powers. These angels are shown wearing a crown and carrying a scepter. Their duty is to carry out the orders given to them by the Dominions and bequeath blessings to the material world. Educators and guardians of the earth, the task of these angels is to oversee groups of people. Principalities are said to inspire living things in art, science, etc.

*The Catholic Encyclopedia* indicates that the orders of angels have been mentioned in Catholic scholarly literature since the fourth or fifth century. St. Thomas Aquinas, in *Summa Theologica*, divided the angels into three hierarchies or spheres, each of which has in turn three orders or choirs. Angels all have virtues, but a special virtue characterizes each choir. The office of the first sphere is **enlightenment: heavenly counselors**; the second is **government: heavenly governors**; the third is **execution: heavenly messengers and soldiers**.

Perhaps the most familiar angels are the Archangeli (archangels), who include Gabriel, Raphael, and Michael. It was Gabriel who gave Mary the news of her role in the Incarnation (Luke 1:26-34). Raphael is the archangel who assisted Tobit and Sarah in the Old Testament narrative (Tobit 3:16-17). Michael leads the angels in the battle against Satan (Revelation 12:7-10). Michael is also one of the three “voices” named by St. Joan of Arc as the intermediaries who gave her guidance and consolation.



### Seraphim

The highest angelic class of the first sphere, Seraphim, having six wings, serve as caretakers of God’s throne. Standing by His throne, with bright, blinding light emanating from them, they continuously shout praises:

**“Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts.”**

Seraphim are distinguished by their burning zeal and love for the Trinity.



### **Cherubim**

The Cherubim are the second highest angelic class of the first sphere and are among the first mentioned in the Bible. They guard the way to the tree of life in the Garden of Eden and the throne of God. Cherubim have four faces: one each of a man, an ox, a lion, and an eagle. They export knowledge to the lesser orders. Images of Cherubim were erected in gold on the Ark of the Covenant [Exodus 25:18].



### **Throni [Thrones]**

The Thrones or Ophanim are the third highest class of the first sphere, are living symbols of God's justice and authority, and have as one of their symbols the throne. These angels seem to be especially concerned with contemplating and mediating the judgments of divine wisdom. Their chief virtue is steadfastness. Throni are sometimes shown in a kneeling posture of adoration.



### **Dominationes [Dominions]**

The Dominions are highest in the second sphere of angels. Presented as lordships, they regulate the duties of lower angels. It is only with extreme rarity that these angelic lords make themselves physically known to humans. They preside over nations and the universe and maintain God's authority. Dominions are often shown wearing royal robes and crowns.



### **Virtutes [Virtues]**

The Virtues are second highest in the second sphere. Their primary duty is to supervise the movements of the heavenly bodies in order to ensure order. The name of the holy Virtues signifies a certain powerful and unshakable virility welling forth into all their Godlike energies. They give men strength and grace, and their characteristics are strength and enthusiasm.