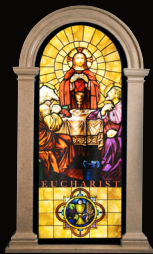
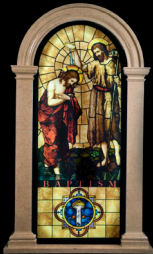


# HOLY SPIRIT CHURCH CASE STUDY

by Stained Glass Inc.



## *A Sermon of Light*

LED Stained Glass

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# A Sermon in Light

McAllen, TX- January, 2011 - Visitors to Holy Spirit Catholic Church in McAllen, Texas received a surprise when they entered their church. The newly remodeled church added new sacred art and stained glass windows. Behind the main altar is an enormous arched stained glass window with the image of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove with wings unfolded. The 14' x 12' window is patterned after the famous stained glass window at St. Peter's in Rome. Around the walls are saints and heroes of the Bible and emblems of the Seven Holy Sacraments glowing softly. "It brings me closer to the reality of being in the Lord's house," said Monsignor Louis Brum, the Pastor.

*"Sometimes beauty can reach us in ways that words cannot."*

## THE CHALLENGE

"They are beautiful, just miraculous," exclaimed Jaime Garza seeing the windows. In reality, no miracle was required. The stained glass windows are the brainchild of

*"Funding the stained glass was easy. Once the idea was presented to the community we immediately had seven families that wanted to sponsor them. They are all paid in full."*

Pastor Brum and artist Lyndon Stromberg of Stained Glass Inc. Brum has been pastoring at Holy Spirit for seven years. Stromberg is a Texas artist whose clients and commissions include Ave Maria Oratory, Faith Chapel Christian and St. Peter's Catholic. The church committee and Brum felt that the building needed more light, as well as sacred art, but they never thought stained glass was an option since the sanctuary had no windows. Stromberg listened to their wish list and then created custom backlit stained glass panels creating a window effect against a solid wall. "The technology in LED bulbs allows up to 20 years of lighting, using very little electricity. The stained glass windows can be used anywhere creating a wonderful effect," said Stromberg. As an added benefit they still shine when the sun goes down. The "glass" is a high strength and virtually unbreakable polymer making it safe for use overhead.



*Installation of the columns and stained glass window at Holy Spirit Church McAllen, TX.*



*Holy Spirit Church before the transformation.*







with one of the new stained glass “windows” for his church. The “window” arrived as a preassembled unit with the custom fiberglass frame and LED backlit system. The entire unit is 4” thick and hangs on the wall like a painting. This made installation as simple as hanging the unit and switching it on.

The Monsignor said he was not initially planning on using stained glass. He contacted Stromberg about the remodeling of the Church and “I asked Stromberg his advice and guidance in suggesting ways that we could create a more enhanced ambiance. He asked if we had ever considered installing stained glass windows. My answer was if I were building a church I would definitely want stained glass windows installed,” said Brum.

## ABOUT THE STAINED GLASS

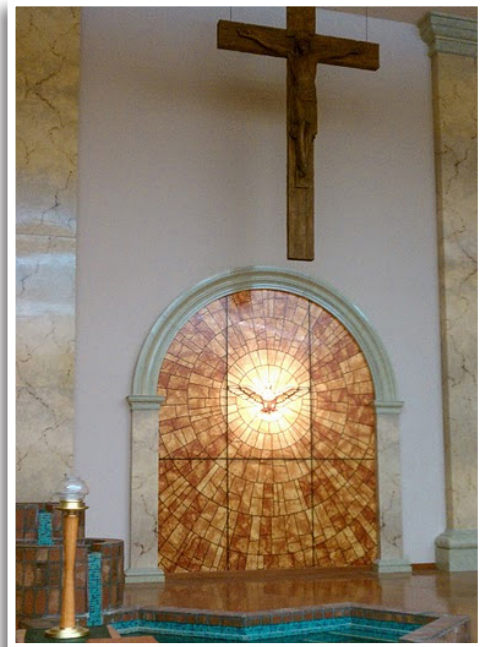
The artwork was a collaborative effort. In addition to Stromberg and Brum a committee

*Is he happy with the results?*  
*“Very much so.”*

of twelve from the church helped determine the images they wanted and then worked with the artist to get the images the way they wanted them. The artwork was revised multiple times during the process. “The most important thing is to try to understand what is in the client’s heart,” said Stromberg. “You listen, you propose, you revise. In the end, the art is a collaborative creation.”

Funding the stained glass was easy. “Once the idea was presented to the community we immediately had seven families that wanted to sponsor them,” said Brum. “They are all paid in full.”

Brum says the works have been well received by visitors and “overwhelmingly approved by the Parishioner.” “When I look at them I am enlightened by their symbolism. They inspire me to concentrate better on the Lord’s presence. In addition to this inspiration they also bring the awareness, meaning & importance of each Sacrament in our lives as Catholics.” Is he happy with the results? “Very much so. As an afterthought I now wish we had made them larger.”



The 14' x 12' Holy Spirit “window” is LED backlit stained glass panes. The Stained Glass Inc. LED system provides the lighting. Stained Glass Inc. supplied the entire unit (cast window surround, lighting system and stained glass art).

A smiling Monsignor Brum poses



"It was at that time that he told us about this new technology of stained glass windows in solid walls. When he suggested this idea, it was brought to the committee & then through much discussion turned into the seven stained glass windows that we now have representing the Seven Sacraments," said Monsignor Brum of the advice given by Stromberg.

When asked why he creates stained glass, Stromberg replied "What goes into our minds comes out in our lives, like a computer, 'garbage in, garbage out.' We are buried under an avalanche of secular images every day. Television, the internet, billboards and magazines fill our minds with images that appeal to the lowest of our instincts. When we are in church, if we are given nothing but blank walls to look at, the imagination uses them like a projection screen to wander freely. The purpose of sacred art and stained glass is to help us refocus on the things of God. It helps to clear our minds of the clutter, center our thoughts and keep our eyes focused and our minds on the sacred."

"Sometimes beauty can reach us in ways that words cannot," said Stromberg. "The stained glass is not really there as artwork to look at; it is there to look through. To see in a spiritual sense the meaning on the other side. While secular art says 'look at me', sacred art says 'look beyond me'."



*Holy Spirit Window*



*Monsignor Brum with the fiberglass crucifix for Holy Spirit Church. Also by Stromberg.*



*Monsignor Brum with three of the six arched windows designed for the back of the Holy Spirit Church.*

