

# Saint Thomas More Church

DARIEN, CONNECTICUT

Our Parish was established September 16, 1966.

*First Pastor:* Reverend Edward J. Howley, 1966-

*Dedication of Church Building:* October 27, 1973.

*Chairman, Parish Building Committee:* Mr. Philip F. Sparton.

*Parish Council Chairman, 1970-73:* Mr. Charles E. Hofmann.

*Chairman, Parish Building Fund:* Mr. Jackson E. Spears.

*Architect of Church Building:* Mr. Theodor Muller of Muller, London & Snyder, of Westport, Connecticut and New York City.

*Liturgical Art:* The well known international artist, Mr. V. K. Jonynas, of The Jonynas & Shepherd Art Studio in Hollis, New York, designed and executed the leaded glass windows and steeple panels; Sanctuary appointments and furniture; Stations of the Cross; and bas reliefs of the Holy Trinity, Life of Mary and St. Thomas More and Family.

*Stained Glass Windows:* Our theme in the windows is 'God's Message to Mankind in the Holy Bible'. Each window with a symbol represents a subject and message inspired by a Biblical passage. The windows in the nave are a unity and tell a continuing story from Genesis through Revelation. The theme, subjects and symbols used by Mr. Jonynas in his window designs were concepts developed by the Chairman of the Building Committee and approved by the Committee and our Pastor. The prints of our windows in this brochure were made from the original artist's sketches done in watercolors prior to execution of the windows.

*Bas Reliefs:* The words 'I AM' on the Holy Trinity bas relief were inspired by the passage in the Book of Exodus (3:13-14) where God spoke to Moses from the burning bush and told Moses His name. Their message on the bas relief in conjunction with the Alpha and Omega, the Resurrected Jesus and the Dove of the Holy Spirit suggests: I AM the Beginning and the End; I AM God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; and Believe in Me for I AM.

The bas relief in the Chapel of Our Blessed Lady presents the Life of Mary centered upon the Nativity as the Mother of God.

The bas relief in the St. Thomas More Shrine portrays the moment in time when St. Thomas More chose to follow his conscience and decided to resign as Lord Chancellor rather than recognize King Henry VIII as spiritual head of the Catholic church in England. This work was inspired by but is not identical to the portrait 'Thomas More and Family' painted in 1527 by Hans Holbein the Younger, which is the first known transalpine group picture in secular art and now in the National Portrait Gallery of London.

*Other Liturgical Symbols:* The circles forming the base of the Sanctuary altar suggest unity and eternity. The two half circles forming the base of the Baptismal Font suggest the breaking of bread and salvation. The four symbols on the front of the pulpit are ancient Christian symbols of the Four Evangelists that have been found to be in use as early as the fourth century. Set forth on the pulpit in the order of their Gospels in the New Testament they are: Top left, Matthew (Man); top right, Mark (Lion); bottom left, Luke (Ox); and bottom right, John (Eagle). By tradition they are all winged.