

## **St Mary's Catholic Church, East Malvern**

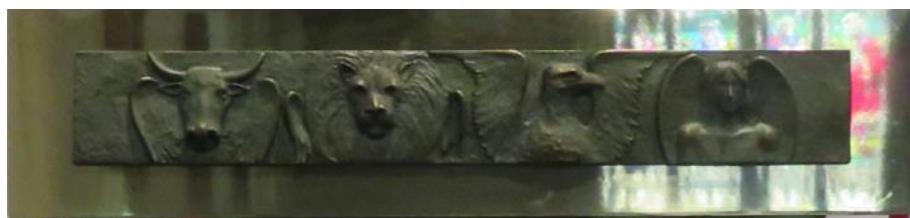
*Commissioner: Monsignor Stuart Hall*

*Artist: Bart Sanciolo, Sculptor*

### **Pulpit Project**

- a. New Lectern in Polished Brass with sculpted bronze relief of The Gospel Writers
- b. Three further bronze reliefs depicting  
The Assumption of Mary  
The Annunciation  
The Madonna

### **The Evangelists – Lectern Relief**



In this sculpted panel the artist considered a number of alternatives based on the traditional symbology associated with The Gospel Writers, namely; Luke – Winged Ox, Mark – Winged Lion, John – Eagle and Matthew – Winged Man

As a design priority the artist was interested in providing a recognisable image that included detailed renditions of each associated symbol, presenting the totality of the most important Evangelists not as generic religious imagery but as integral to the ‘spreading of The Word’ in terms of authorship and context. The Evangelists are ever present with the church through the symbology that has been associated and portrayed by countless notable artists throughout history.

In the Gospel Writers’ own symbology we are reminded of a set of contexts that can enlighten our interpretation and understanding of their Gospel. The association of the Ox with Luke can bring to mind the context of agriculture and peasant, an uncomplicated life on the land. The Lion and Courage represent the true virtues of the strength of one’s beliefs. John and The Eagle remind us of the concept of ‘soaring above’ all, being in control from afar and of course the ancient Roman symbology of the Eagle to symbolise The Empire. Finally, Matthew and the Winged Man – not merely a man, but a man who can move swiftly and rise to new levels and closer to God through prayer and adoration.

The common aspect of each is of course that each entity is ‘winged’. Historically the concept of winged creatures predates Christianity. Certainly one can easily trace the imagery from ancient Egypt, Greece, Babylonia, India and China where throughout history, artists have interpreted and applied the concept of ‘Flight’ and ‘Freedom’ when exploring Religion and Spirituality.

## **The Assumption of Mary**



The Assumption presents us with the movement of Mary as the chosen mother of Jesus from the earthly state to the Divine realms of Paradise where she can be with God the Father and Jesus, her son. In this panel, the artist was interested in providing a visual synthesis of a pure human being transformed by her Faith and translocated from the finite dimensions of humanity to the unbounded reality of Heaven. This Assumption into Heaven is both guarded and guided by the angels that accompany her and that remain the link between earth and Heaven. The stance of Mary in this panel reminds us of the ‘cross’ as the final sacrifice of Jesus and the essence of Mary’s commitment to the Faith.

## **The Annunciation**



The Annunciation is central in the concept of Catholic Faith. Mary appears in the instant of Gabriel’s presence at the moment of his great proposal to Mary. He is at once impartial and unforceful, leaving Mary to make up her own mind; granting Mary the free choice. In his hand he holds a lily which through her acceptance will later become the symbol of Mary and of the Marian Tradition. The composition is designed to provide a gentle and upward movement of the viewer’s eye and leads us to perceive that prayer through Mary will lead to God and Salvation.

## The Madonna and Child



The representation of Mary and the child Jesus has been portrayed countless times by artists throughout history. The artist has chosen this third and last relief, to present Mary as Mother of Jesus to illustrate motherhood and communicate the loving relationship between a mother and her child. The tenderness of the relationship is revealed by the sheltering of her child in her cloak, while the child Jesus moves his hand to touch her face. Simultaneously, the composition is held-together by the mandala shape of her cloak - to instigate a sense of spirituality, meditation and contemplation. The quietness and isolation of this moment, is expressed through the plain, slightly textured background which unifies the whole composition and invites us to prayer.

Bart Sanciolo  
10 Windsor Ave  
Mount Waverley  
3149  
Mob. 0418698124  
[www.bartsanciolo.com](http://www.bartsanciolo.com)  
@bart\_sanciolo\_art

