

# Northampton Catholic Cathedral: Stained glass Repairs (1 of 1 project funded)

Awarded £35,000 in July 2014

## The need

Five fine stained-glass windows in the west end apse by Hardman & Co. of Birmingham dated from the 1860s and needed urgent repairs. The lead matrix holding the glass needed replacing and the weatherproofing cement had become friable, allowing water penetration, and buckling in some places was so severe that the glass was cracking. Leaded windows of this period, depending on the manufacture and quality of lead and cement used, have a structural life span of about 100-150 years.

## Outcomes

The works have restored the stained-glass windows to their original glory. Aesthetically the windows look much better as the damaged panels have been repaired and the colours are much more vibrant after the glass been cleaned.

## Economic impact

The work helped to support two full time jobs within the traditional method of stained glass making. The use of local stained-glass specialists ensured that local jobs within these traditional methods were supported.

## Works completed and timescale

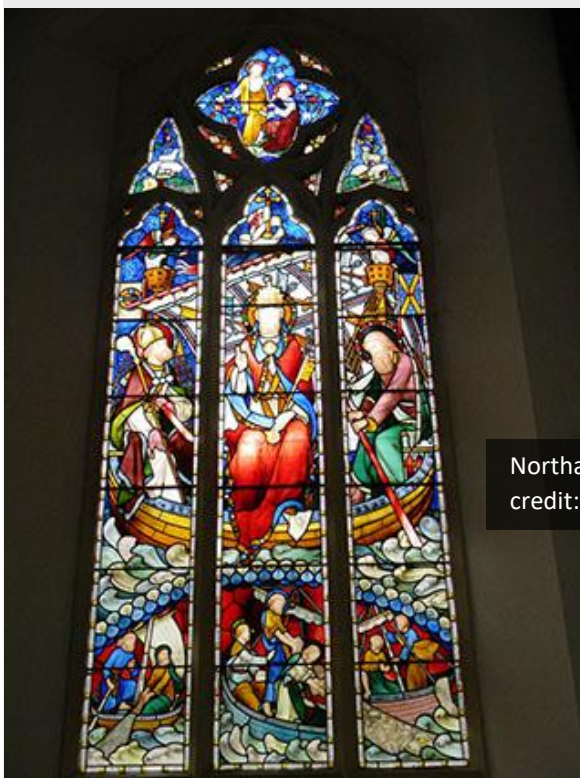
The stained-glass repair works are fully complete and involved firstly, carefully removing each panel and cleaning with de-ionised water. Cracked and damaged sections were then identified and repaired using copper foil and resin bond. Panels which were beyond repair were replicated using hand painted and kiln firing techniques to emulate the original design as close as possible. Final works included re-leading and cement sealing of tracery panels. In accordance with the grant offer, a full specification by an architect accredited in building conservation a glazing survey were prepared, and glazing works were carried out by an accredited glass conservator.



Northampton Cathedral. Photo credit: John Armagh.

## The Cathedral

Northampton is one of AW Pugin's Catholic cathedrals and was started in the 1860s, his most prolific decade. However only the nave was built with a lofty clerestory in Gothic style. The cathedral was enlarged between 1954-60, made cruciform and acquired a tower, all in Early English-inspired style by Alfred Herbert. Prior to the First World War fund becoming available, the cathedral had recently completed repairs to the roof, stonework and lighting, and had no further funds available for the windows work.



Northampton Cathedral stained glass window. Photo credit: grant application.