

OUR LADY OF FAIR HAVEN CATHEDRAL in ROSEAU STAINED GLASS WINDOW # 1 JESUS HANDS OVER THE KEYS TO St. PETER



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This window depicts the scene described in St. Matthew's Gospel:

"You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church and the gates of Hell will not prevail against it. I will entrust to you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you declare bound on earth shall be bound in heaven; whatever you declare loosed on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Mt 13: 19).

February 22 is the feast of Peter's primacy. It is called the feast of Cathedra Petri, the "Chair of Peter" the chair being the chair of one who teaches.

However Peter, the Apostle, was also a martyr (more about his martyrdom when we study the St. Peter window in the Sanctuary).

He, who was originally named Simon, was a fisherman from Bethsaida of Galilee.

In Dominica, we celebrate Peter, the FISHERMAN, fête Saint Pierre, which is celebrated on June 29 in Soufriere, Scott's Head, the Parish of St. Peter (Colihaut and Dublanc), Anse de Mai and other fishing villages.

You will notice that the themes of the original windows of the Cathedral are the patron saints of our 15, now 14 Catholic parishes.

In the churches in Soufriere and Colihaut you can admire large statues of Saint Peter with the two keys in his hands: gold and silver.

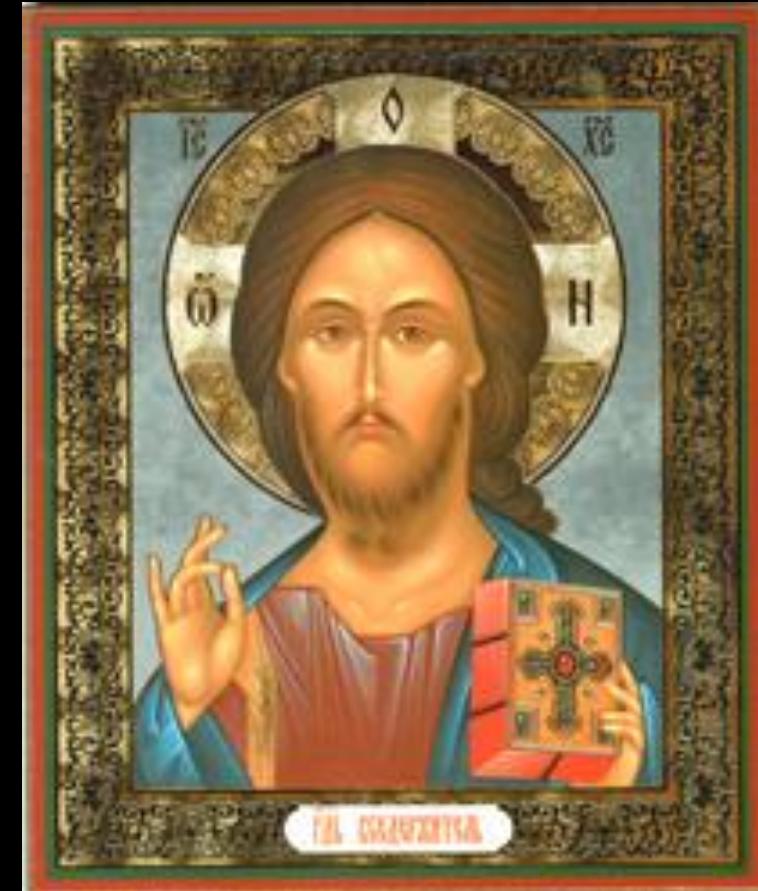
This detail of the window depicts Jesus Christ with a cruciform Halo surrounding His head, symbolizing redemption through crucifixion (the Red Cross within the white circle). This halo can be seen on the walls of the tower of the church in Soufriere, by the way. The word "halo" is derived from helias, the Greek word for sun, and specifically refers to the radiation surrounding the sun. It has come to mean the same thing as nimbus, the Latin word for cloud. The halo is a symbol of holiness, the super national, and the mystical. Whereas an aureole surrounds an entire figure, a halo surrounds the head of a figure.

Jesus Christ is here portrayed in the now-familiar way, bearded with long hair as a man in his thirties. "His beard is forked and his hair the colour of wine." This is based on the apocryphal description that was sent to the Roman Senate by a proconsul of Judea, after meeting Jesus. Emperor Constantine the Great caused images of Jesus to be made on the basis of this description from 313 on. Before that date, the earliest images of Jesus were as a young man, clean-shaven and with long curly hair.



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This detail shows Jesus holding the two keys and with his other hand giving a Blessing, very similar to the “Greek Blessing” in orthodox icons (see example). The colours of his garments seem to be the ones generally used during his life time depictions (except for the Transfiguration and after the Resurrection).



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Jesus Christ is on his bare feet, a sign of HUMILITY.

St. Peter is on his knees. He is depicted dressed in a tunic and pallium (cloak). His physical traits were defined in art from the fifth century on, based on a description by Eusebius of Caesarea : short, curly hair, a short beard; and wrinkled features. Among his attributes are the keys, a book, a rooster and sometimes a boat. The name Peter meaning in Latin “rock” or “stone”. His original name was Simon. Jesus changed his name to Kephos, the Aramaic equivalent of “rock”. He was martyred by crucifixion upside down. Some examples of the traditional depiction of Peter.

