

The Assumption Painting in our Church

The painting of the Assumption, flanked by two angels behind the Altar on the Reredos (Back center wood Panel) was painted by **Hildreth Meiere** in the 1940's. Hildreth was born in 1892 and died in 1961. Before I became pastor, I was assigned to say Mass for the Poor Clare Nuns in their Monastery on 1954 Long Ridge Road in Stamford and Hildreth's daughter would often be present for Mass. Upon my appointment to Assumption, she stopped by one day to view the painting and gave me this information. I am pleased to share this with you, as we just have celebrated our parish feast day.



Hildreth, a distinguished Art Deco muralist, mosaicist, painter, and decorative artist, ranks with the very small number of women artists such as Violet Oakley and Georgia O'Keefe whose achievements gained the recognition of the established art world during the first half of the last century. Educated in New York's Convent of the Sacred Heart, Manhattanville, the Art Students League, the California School of Fine Arts (now San Francisco Art Institute), the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and in Florence, Italy, she became the country's leading practitioner of the art of mosaic, and one of America's most gifted embellishers of architectural environments. Her major commissions include the Nebraska State Capitol at Lincoln, and the National Academy of Sciences, the Municipal Center and the Resurrection Chapel of the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. In New York, her most famous designs are found in St. Patrick Cathedral, St. Bartholomew Episcopal Church, Temple Emanu-El, the banking room of the Bank of New York (formerly the Irving Trust Co.) on Wall Street. Her murals also appeared in Chicago's 1933 Century of Progress Fair, and the 1939-40 New York World's Fair. As accomplished ecclesiastical artist, she created numerous altar pieces and stained glass windows. During WWII, she supervised the creation of over 500 portable altar pieces for military chaplains of all denominations - 70 of which were her design.

In 1956, Hildreth was the first woman honored with **The Fine Arts Medal of the American Institute of Architects**. As we have just celebrated the Feast of the Assumption, it is appropriate and proper that we remember the Artist who created the magnificent painting of the Assumption on the beautiful wood panel behind our altar. We praise and thank Hildreth Meiere for her creativity. We honor her memory and pray she enjoys eternal rest and reward for her extraordinary artistic service and generosity to our Nation and Church, which indeed gives glory to God

Father Tom