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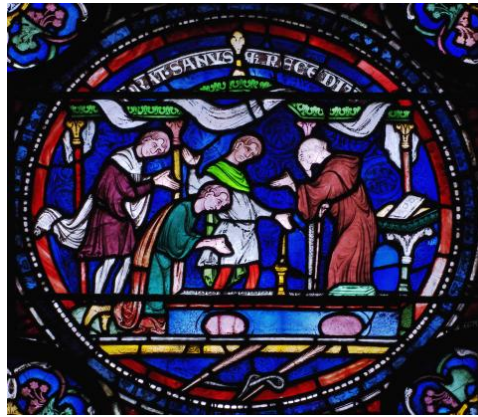
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Canterbury Cathedral, in England, boasts many beautiful medieval-era stained-glass windows. This image depicts the detail of a "Becket Window." Photo by [Tobias von der Haar](#), online via Flickr.

When Rome ruled Britain, [Christians in Canterbury](#) (a town about sixty miles southeast of London) worshiped in a church ultimately honoring St. Martin. The ancient historian, Venerable Bede, provides background:

There was on the east side of the city a church dedicated to the honor of St Martin, built whilst the Romans were still in the island, wherein the queen [Bertha, that is] ... used to pray. In this they first began to meet, to sing, to pray, to say mass, to preach, and to baptize, till the king, [Ethelbert] being converted to the faith, allowed them to preach openly, and build or repair churches in all places.
(Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation*, Book I, Chapter XXVI.)

Still standing, [St. Martin's Church](#) is England's oldest still in use. (It is also the oldest in the English-speaking world.) Nearby is [Canterbury Cathedral](#), known for its beauty and an [infamous murder](#).

Although the Cathedral, dating from medieval times, has been vandalized and intentionally damaged, it still has a few original stained-glass windows, including:

- [Adam delving](#) (digging), circa 1176 (the [oldest surviving window](#)).
- [Henry II](#) with Archbishop Thomas Becket (that is, the king with the churchman who troubled him).
- [Virgin Mary and King Josiah](#) (the only surviving medieval panels in the [Jesse Tree Window](#)).

Some of the windows, in the current cathedral, include rescued and reused medieval glass. (Experts, restoring windows during [medieval times](#), used ... urine ... as part of their repair mixtures.) Other windows, added (or [conserved](#)) throughout the centuries, reflect the style and color of later times:

- [Poor Man's Bible Window](#) (after reconstruction and restoration);
- [Thomas Becket Window](#) (made in the 1900s including some pieces of medieval glass);
- [Murder of Thomas Becket](#) (13th century rondels set in a [19th century restoration](#));
- [Peace Window](#) (created by Ervin Bossanyi in 1956).

A recent discovery, [during restoration work](#) at the Canterbury Cathedral, revealed the use of a "[space frame](#)," dating back to 1180. Before that revelation, experts had believed it was Alexander Graham Bell who'd devised the [space frame engineering solution](#). This find, however, shows a working space frame in place about 700 years before Bell's idea.

[Westminster Abbey](#), like [Canterbury Cathedral](#), is famous not just for itself (and its [stained glass](#)) but for important events which have occurred there:

- It was the scene, for example, of Princess Diana's funeral (during which Elton John famously sang [Goodbye England's Rose](#)).

- As the BBC live-broadcasted that event, the cameraman (at 5:25 in the video clip) focused on the abbey's beautiful stained-glass windows.

Italy, likewise, is home to famous churches with gorgeous glass art. It's the next stop on our virtual journey.

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/STAINED-GLASS-in-the-UK-Stained-Glass-Windows>

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/STAINED-GLASS-in-the-UK-Stained-Glass-Windows>

Media Stream



Canterbury - Statue of Bertha, Woottons Green

Image online, courtesy the [aclerkofoxford](#) blog

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Canterbury-Statue-of-Bertha-Woottons-Green>



Oldest Church in England - St. Martin's

Image online, courtesy the St. Martin's & St. Paul's Parrish Canterbury website.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Oldest-Church-in-England-St.-Martin-s>



Canterbury Cathedral - Looking North

Image online, courtesy the [ciaoadriano.com](#) website.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Canterbury-Cathedral-Looking-North>

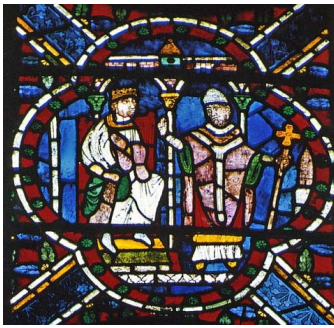


Canterbury Cathedral - Adam Delving, c. 1176

Image online, courtesy Jonathan Jones at [The Guardian](#) website.

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Canterbury-Cathedral-Adam-Delving-c.-1176>



Canterbury Cathedral - Henry II and Thomas Becket

Image online, courtesy the paradoxplace.com website.

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Canterbury-Cathedral-Henry-II-and-Thomas-Becket>

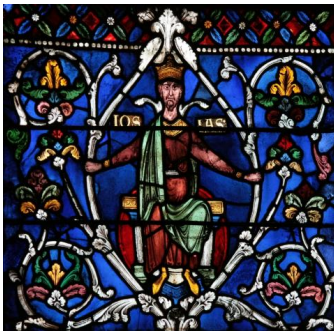


Canterbury Cathedral - Jesse Tree, Mary Panel

Image online, courtesy the canterbury-cathedral.org website.

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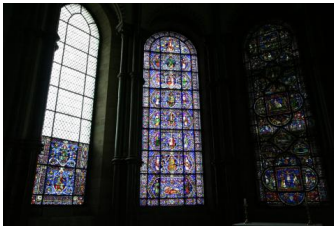


Canterbury Cathedral - Jesse Tree, Josiah Panel

Image online, courtesy the canterbury-cathedral.org website.

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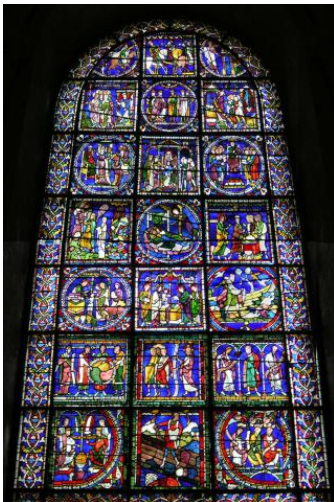


Canterbury Cathedral - Jesse Tree Window

Image online, courtesy the canerbury-cathedral.org website.

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Canterbury Cathedral - Poor Man's Bible Window

Image online, courtesy the canterbury-cathedral.org website.

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Canterbury Cathedral - Becket Window, North Ambulatory

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Image online, courtesy the canterbury-cathedral.org website.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Canterbury-Cathedral-Becket-Window-North-Ambulatory>



Canterbury Cathedral - Murder of Thomas Becket

Image online, courtesy canterbury-cathedral.org website.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Canterbury-Cathedral-Murder-of-Thomas-Becket>

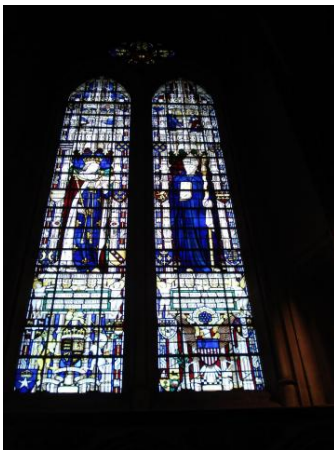


Canterbury Cathedral - Restored Stained-Glass Window

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

View this asset at:

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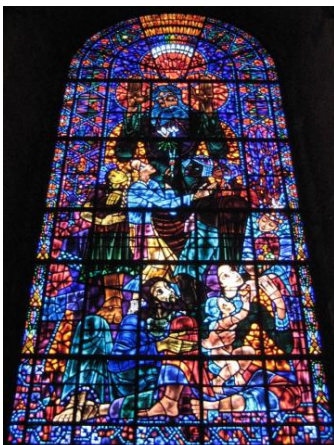


Westminster Abbey - Stained-Glass Windows

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Canterbury Cathedral - Peace Window

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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STAINED GLASS in the UK

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Westminster Abbey - Good-bye England's Rose

Clip online, courtesy the BBC.

View this asset at:

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Westminster Abbey - Princess Diana's Funeral

Clip online, courtesy the BBC.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Westminster-Abbey-Princess-Diana-s-Funeral>