

# Windows through time

There are some things you can look for to tell you the date of stained glass windows. The colours used and the scenes the artists created give us clues.

## *How does colour help us?*

The earlier windows have lots of colour. There is often a lot of greens and yellows. A way to paint gold or yellow onto glass was discovered in around 1330. Artists then used this technique a lot, perhaps to show off. Windows from the 1400s have more clear glass in them, to let more light into the building. The colours used are less intense.



A scene from Corporal Acts of Mercy

## *What about the images?*

The windows that have small crowded scenes in them are usually from the 1300s. The Lady Chapel Window (5) is one of these. The later windows tend to have tall individual figures in them, like in the St James Window (10).



Close up of the St James window

The Corporal Acts of Mercy Window (3) is in-between the two. It has crowded scenes, probably to be able to show the story. The glass is lighter and the figures more lightly coloured.



# Artistic talent

Compare the skills of the artists who created our windows and those who repaired them. The techniques they used tell us when the windows were made or restored.



Look closely at the gold fleurs-de-lys in the blue glass of the Coat of Arms Window (1). The upper left set is surrounded by lead, the lower right set is inset directly into the blue glass.

The original artist carefully drilled out the blue glass and added the gold shapes to create the inset fleurs-de-lys. The more recent artist who restored this window wasn't able to do this. Or perhaps didn't want to take the risk!



'Visiting the prisoners' panel from the Corporal Acts of Mercy window.

The glass used in the Corporal Acts of Mercy Window (3) in the 1800s to replace missing pieces doesn't quite match the original colours. The artists copied what they could see, but by this time the glass had become darkened by smoke and pollution.

When the windows were cleaned in the 1970s, the original glass returned to its lighter colour, the later repairs stayed dark. You can also see this in the different coloured loaves of bread.

