- 10. SIMON the Zealot a Canaanite who was a member of the military group of Jewish patriots who came into conflict with the Romans. His emblem is a cross shaped like a sword because at the cross he witnessed the liberation not only of the Jews but of all mankind from the bondage of sin.

 By tradition after Pentecost, he first preached in Egypt and then joined Jude to go to Persias where both suffered martyrdom at Sufianor being hewed to death by heathen priests with a falchion.
- 11. JUDAS ISCARIOT probably came from Kerioth. He was a Southener among Northeners, treasurer of the disciple purse, but a crafty man among simple men. He seems to have been an outsider and may have been motivated by a sense of alienation and jealousy. It is possible he believed Jesus as Messiah would lead a military revolt and felt betrayed. He sold Jesus for the price of a slave. Not for him the repentance of Peter or the renewal of life at Pentecost, but the realisation that he was wrong caused him to hang himself.

The black dove portrays the evil spirit and the white one the opportunity he realised too late.

12. THOMAS was notorious for his doubts and depressions. Loyalty to the man Jesus caused him to doubt his resurrection. All was resolved when he saw and touched Jesus. After Pentecost his missionary work was among Parthians but other sources place it in India where he evangalised Syrian Christians of Malaber. He was killed with a spear and buried at Mylapore. Because of his earlier spiritual blindness he is the patron saint of blind people and, as he is said to have built a palace for an Indian King, he represents architects and builders.

Please give quiet thanks for the example of these men and of the countless millions since then when lives were changed by Jesus and of the devotion of those who have expressed in flowers the lives of the first disciples and given a small insight into the influence of love and truth on their lives.

Peace I leave with you,
My peace I give unto you.

St. John 14,27

St Nicholas Church, Willoughby. 24th - 25th July 1993

JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES

In our Church of St. Nicholas portrayed in flowers, are the lives of twelve ordinary men who became extraordinary through their association with Jesus. They followed where He led and many of them died for their faith in Him. They had their failings, but they overcame their weaknesses empowered by the Holy Spirit, to become living examples of the Christ.

Let us thank God for their devotion and example and for the proof that God, through Jesus and the Holy Spirit, can change our lives and, like the disciples, believe, "We are certain now that you know everything and do not need to be questioned; because of this we believe that you have come from God". St.John 16,30.

Each arrangement has ivy to portray friendship and fidelity and a white dove as the emblem of the Holy Spirit. The crown of thorns below the candelabra is a symbol of God's promise of eternal life.

The colours used; white for purity and holiness; gold and yellow for the Saints; violet for love and truth; green for triumph of life over death; red for violence and hatred; black for evil and death; blue for the unveiling of truth and brown for hopeless cases.

- 1. MATTHEW, the son of Alphaeus, a tax gatherer, a Jew in Roman employ was hated and despised by his own people. By tradition he is the author of the first gospel which was written in correct concise style to a mainly Jewish Christian audience. The emblems used in the arrangement are money bags to represent his former profession; an angel with quill pen and ink to portray his writing of the gospel; and a spear for martyrdom. One legend says that he preached for fifteen years in Judea after the Ascension and that he took the gospel to Ethiopia where he was murdered.
- 2. JAMES 'the Little' was a son of Alphaeus and a kinsman to Jesus, traditionally the brother of Matthew whose mother Mary ministered to Jesus at the Cross. He is often referred to as the first Bishop of Jerusalem and was supposedly beaten to death by a fullers club after being sentenced by the Sanhedrin in A.D.62 to be stoned. The Epistle of St. James is sometimes attributed to him and it deals with the faulty social behaviour and unchristian attitudes of one person to another.

 His feast day is May 1st, a festival of flowers and gladness.

3. PHILIP, a citizen of Bethsaida brought Nathanial to Jesus with the typical words of a missionary, "Come and See". He had a quick mind, soon calculating the cost of feeding the 5,000, but the gospels reveal he was bound by the limit of his five senses. By tradition he preached in Phyrgia and died at Hietapolis. The long cross represents the myth that he drove away a noxious dragon at the Temple of Mars.

The owl stands for the life he spent in Greece.

JESUS CHRIST. The Light - Life of the World

The purity of his life shines through the white Altar flowers.

The disciples knew him as we do, as our Lord and Saviour.

It is through Him we have access to the Father in the one Spirit.

- 4. PETER, Simon son of Jonas, lived in Bethsaida with his wife and brother Andrew. He was a fisherman probably in partnership with Zebedee, James and John. Jesus named him Cephas, the Aramatic equivalent of Petros, a rock. He was with Jesus at the Transfiguration, the raising of Jairus' daughter and the Agony in the Garden and intensley loyal until the moment of crisis. All the qualities and failings of the impulsive, impetuous rough, self-assured man made him everyone's disciple. All these strengths and weaknesses we can see in ourselves. Yet he who denied his Master became the leader of the Early Church. Tradition tells that he confuted Simon Magnus, a magician at Nero's Court and in A.D. 65 he was crucified, head downwards as he said he was not worthy to suffer the same death as Jesus. The keys portray him as a heavenly doorkeeper, the cockerel for his denial and the sheep for his mission "Feed my Sheep".
- 5. BARTHOLOMEW (Nathanial) was a countryman, a peasant from Cana in Galilee. It was with a simple man's sense of wonder that he recognised Jesus as the promised Messiah even though he came from the despised neighbouring town of Nazareth. His mind was tuned to the changing seasons of the year. By tradition he became an Apostle in India and Armenia where he is said to have been flayed alive before being beheaded at Derbend on the Caspian Sea in A.D 44. His emblem is a flaying knife and he is regarded as the patron saint of farmers.

- 6. JUDE, the brother of James 'the Little' and so is a brother of Jesus. After Pentecost, by Western tradition he joined Simon in preaching the Gospel in Persia where both were martyred. He is the author of the Epistle of Jude where he exhorts a constancy in faith and warns against false disciples and teachers. His usual emblem is a club, otherwise a ship because as cousin of Zebedee he was probably a fisherman. Traditionally Jude is the patron saint of hopeless causes.
- 7. ANDREW a fisherman of Bethsaida, brother of Peter, lived in Capernaum. He was a disciple of John the Baptist who pointed out Jesus to him. Andrew was the first missionary since he brought his brother and others to Jesus. His emblems are a Saltire Cross and fishing net. Ancient writings link him with Greece, Scythia and Epirus. He was crucified at Patrae in Achaia on the "St. Andrews Cross" saying he was unworthy to be crucified on one the same shape as the Lords.

 November 30th, his feast day is a time for prayer, learning and giving for the world mission of the Church.
- 8. JAMES was the older brother of John, son of Zebedee and a fisherman. As his mother was Salome, Mary's sister, he was Jesus' cousin. With John they were nicknamed Boanerges, Sons of Thunder. He was the first of the disciples to be killed for his faith, slain by the sword at Jerusalem by Herod Agrippa A.D.44. His emblems are a pilgrim's staff and hat, a scallop shell and gourd associated with the pilgrimage to Compostle.
- 9. JOHN the beloved disciple was the first to believe in the resurrection and is the only one to die naturally of old age. His gospel includes inspired meditation of the truths he had witnessed in Christ's life. He stressed the divinity of Christ who is both life and light and the importance of love (agape). His emblem is an eagle representing his mind's flight of fantasy. Included in the arrangement is a cup with a viper reminding us of his ministry in Ephesus where he met with a challenge of the High Priest. He is the patron saint of theologians. Purple and white represent his great age, love and truth.