

**Gregory the Great:** This window was “dedicated to the memory of Margaret L. Bresnahan by her family.” A number of saints bear the name of Gregory, but only one is called “Great.” Born in Rome around 540, Gregory was the son of wealthy parents. By 574 he had transformed his Ro-man home into a monastery; later he established six more monasteries on estates his family owned in Sicily. Ordained by Pope Pelagius II, Gregory served as a papal nuncio to the Byzantine court, then returned to monastic life. He began missionary work in England but was summoned to Rome when the plague struck the Eternal City. When Pope Pelagius died, Gregory was elected pope and consecrated in 590. He brought about a number of reforms within Church government and was generous in his charitable work. He protected Jews from harassment, fed the hungry during a famine, and even persuaded Lombard invaders to leave intact the city of Rome. Under Pope Gregory I, England was converted to Christianity. He used the title “Servant of the Servants of God,” a title popes continue to use to this day. Known as an excellent preacher, Gregory I supervised the restoration of the city of Rome after the destruction the city had endured due to invasions and earthquakes. He wrote the *Dialogues*, a collection of essays on Italian saints, and *Liber Regulae Pastoralis*, on the duties of bishops. We are not sure to what extent he influenced Gregorian chant (which bears his name), but he did put his mark on the liturgy. Our Gregory wears the papal miter with its three levels or “crowns.” The crozier he carries has three crosses protruding from each side; the design of the crozier mirrors the design of the crown. Saint Gregory the Great’s feast day occurs on September 3.

