Connecting Art and Faith

By Joanna Reiling Lindell

Art has a way of transporting us places. French artist Charles Méryon’s lovely view of the apse of Notre Dame Cathedral brings us along the banks of the river Seine in Paris. Here, the grand scale of the cathedral is unavoidable, indeed, emphasized by the activity of boats and horses, and people conducting business on the riverbank. Cathedrals and churches have inspired countless artists to create detailed renderings of the intricate and towering monuments built to worship God in their own communities, and those they visit. These structures were constructed through time as emblems of humanity’s faith and hopes that soar skyward. Architectural buildings can be the central focus of a work of art, and so can the people and surroundings of the structures. Seeing people cross the bridge toward the place of worship, with birds swirling in the sky above the towers, enlivens the scene. This monument is a part of city life, and daily life, not simply an enormous, awe-inspiring structure.

Charles Méryon (French, 1821–1860)

*L’Abside de Notre-Dame* (The Apse of Notre-Dame, Paris)

Etching with engraving and drypoint, c. 1854

Thrivent Collection of Religious Art

Joanna Reiling Lindell is the director and curator of the Thrivent Collection of Religious Art (thriventcollection.com).

Reflecting

How have the people and activities in your own community inspired you?

Generosity in Action

Love of Sewing
Scottsdale, Arizona

Thrivent member Norma Schwartz led a Thrivent Action Team to get supplies for the Resurrection Lutheran Church quilters. In 10 years, the group made more than 2,700 quilts for local shelters and international relief organizations! During COVID-19, many in the group are sewing face masks at home and dropping them off in a bag on parishioners’ doors.

Spreading Goodwill
Powell, Wyoming

Thrivent member Linda Fischer led a Thrivent Action Team that filled bags with items like toilet paper, shampoo, detergent, toothpaste and other surprises for people who receive Meals on Wheels. In late March, the group wore gloves and masks, and sanitized all items before filling the bags for the quarterly delivery. They followed the drivers delivering meals and left the bags at their doors.