

The St. Paul's Communion Chalice

This chalice was the creation of Jessica Stammen, a senior at Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, who served as artist-in-residence at St. Paul's Episcopal Chapel in New York City. She came to me with her ideas, design, and I modeled the chalice in clay under her direction. The hands cradling the chalice are hers. She tells the story of the chalice in her own words:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me...to give beauty for ashes...to renew the ruined cities." These words of the Old Testament prophet Isaiah (61: 1-4) inspired the concept and design of the communion chalice created for St. Paul's Chapel, a small 235-year-old church purposefully became a full-service haven offering food, medical supplies, and rest to the workers at Ground Zero during the nine-month relief effort.

The chalice functions as a memorial on three levels: it commemorates those who gave their time, talents, and energy in service at St. Paul's and Ground Zero; and – as the vessel that holds the blood of Christ during the communion celebration – it calls to mind His life's sacrifice and the hope of His resurrection. In this chalice the transformation is more acute; its case is cut from an I-beam salvage from the destruction of the North Tower and from it rises the stem and cup sculpted and cast in bronze – "beauty for ashes." Raw steel is the soil for new life, and tree roots tell the story of the one tree that, shielding St. Paul's from the force of the falling North Tower, sacrificed its life to save the church from any damage. From a twin trunk rise the twin towers, cupped by the grace of God at the point where they were hit, serving those who share the cup hope of life from death."

Each of the seven chalices is distinguished by a unique patina. The chalices can be found in the following collections: St. Paul's Chapel, The cathedral of St. John the Divine, The New York Historical Society, Massimo and Chiara Ferragamo (all in New York City,) and the parish of Maiano in Florence, Italy. The seventh chalice is traveling the country.



Forest Hart
Wildlife in Bronze
105 Raven Road
Monroe, Maine 04951

Phone: 207-525-4437
Fax: 207-525-8584
www.foresthart.com