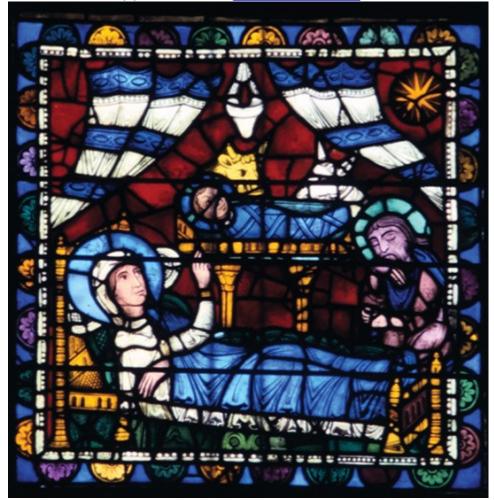
The Nativity, stained glass, Chartres Cathedral, France, 1194-1260

Art selection and commentary by <u>Heidi J. Hornik</u> and <u>Mikeal C. Parsons</u> This artwork appears in the January 2, 2019 issue.



A section of the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Chartres, France, contains 30 stainedglass scenes of the infancy of Christ, including this one of the Nativity. The oddshaped pieces of the scene required the hand of a master to assemble them into something decorous and useful to the worshiper. The Chartres windows were created to teach biblical stories and convey spiritual messages at a time when most parishioners were illiterate. Mary lies on a bed while Joseph, with eyes closed, sits at her feet. The Christ Child, swaddled in a blue cloth that matches his mother's garb, is in a cradle, which is simultaneously an altar, foreshadowing Christ's sacrificial offering on the cross.