



## ST PAUL'S ANGLICAN CATHEDRAL MELBOURNE THE DECORATIVE FIVE POINTED STARS

The pentagram, pentangle, pentalpha is a very ancient symbol which had many meanings before it was adopted by the Church of Satan in the 1960s. Because it was a star it was taken as a helpful sign - a fixed source of light in the darkness of the night by which one could find one's way and keep on the right path.

Ancient Hebrews saw in it the five books of Moses (first five books of the Old Testament). In Christian times it represented the Star of Bethlehem, which guided the wise men to the infant Jesus.

As a friendly guide and a sign of welcome for travellers it was often fixed above the doorways of houses. This is the origin of the line in the song "I'll sing you One O etc", in which "Five is the symbol at your door".

It also represented the five wounds of Christ from his crucifixion - two in the hands, two in the feet and one in the side.

In Mediaeval times it was often taken as representing the five virtues required of a knight - generosity, courtesy, chastity, chivalry and piety.

Only in late mediaeval times did it become associated with evil, because of its resemblance to a goat when turned upside down.

In Renaissance times the pentagram, surrounded by a circle, was taken to represent man (head, two arms and two legs) at the centre of the universe and as a microcosm of the universe.

In the second half of the twentieth century the use of the pentagram as a symbol of evil, which could be traced back to late mediaeval times but had been largely forgotten by most people, was revived - first by those who began around 1950 to practise witchcraft (wicca), and later in the 1960s by the Church of Satan.

St Paul's Cathedral was built in the 1880s and the pentagrams in its windows and on the arches have nothing to do with the mediaeval or recent use of the symbol by witches and Satanists but represent Christ as the star and his five wounds which he suffered to bring life to all humanity. That is why, in the stars around the sanctuary of St Paul's, there is a cross at the end of each point.

