

Joyful Little Catholics



A Parent's Guide For

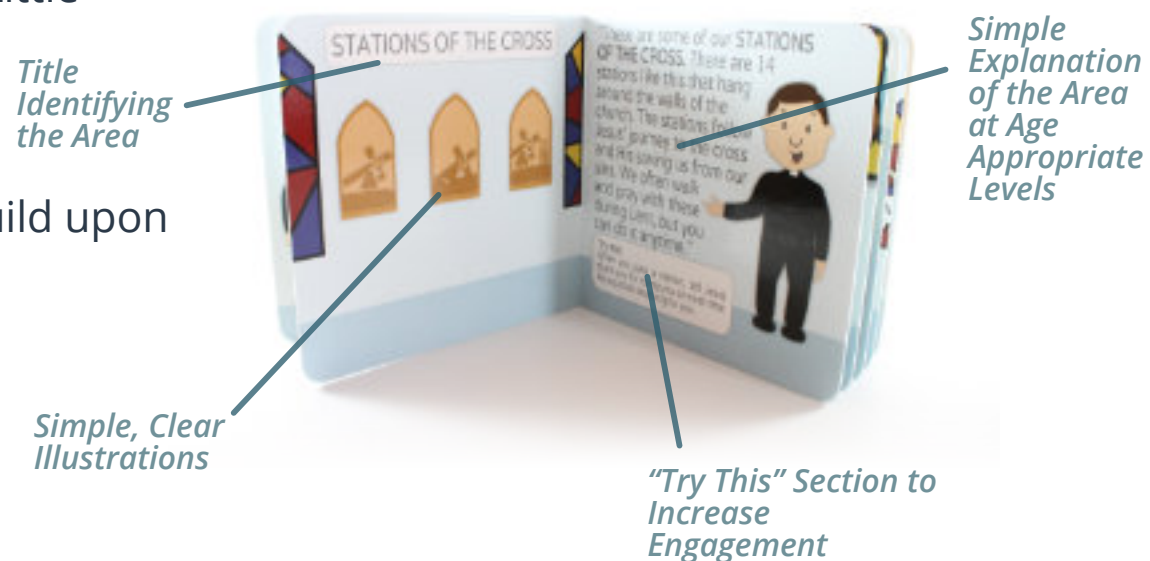


About...

WHAT IS MY FIRST CHURCH TOUR?

My First Church Tour is a simple board book created to help young children become more familiar with the physical church buildings in which they worship. It is the second step for a child in learning the basics of their faith and worship. It was created as a follow-up to our first book, *My First Catholic Words*. In *My First Catholic Words*, children begin their journey of familiarity with their Catholic faith by implementing a point and learn model of common Catholic objects and terms that are clearly illustrated and labeled. *My First Church Tour* builds upon that and takes it to the next step with a model that uses a show and explain model, giving a simple explanation of each image shown. This is meant to move a child from identification to contextualization at a level appropriate for young learners. Simultaneously, the hope is that it will begin conversations between parents and children on the important topics of church and faith as Catholics.

This book is meant to be used with little ones as early as they can look at books. It is a natural progression from *My First Catholic Words*, with common style and illustrations. The pictures help build a connection and familiarity with a child's experiences attending Mass and other events at their local parish. As a child grows, the explanations will help them move from familiarity to a basic understanding of the different aspects of a church building, and from understanding to interaction as they integrate the "try this" sections of the book. *My First Church Tour* is a great step on the journey of taking children from passive observers to active participants in their faith. At Joyful Little Catholics, we are committed to providing resources to build upon that journey.



WHY A PARENT'S GUIDE?

If you already have one of our other books and have looked at the parent guide, you may already know the answer to this question. If not, then this section is for you.

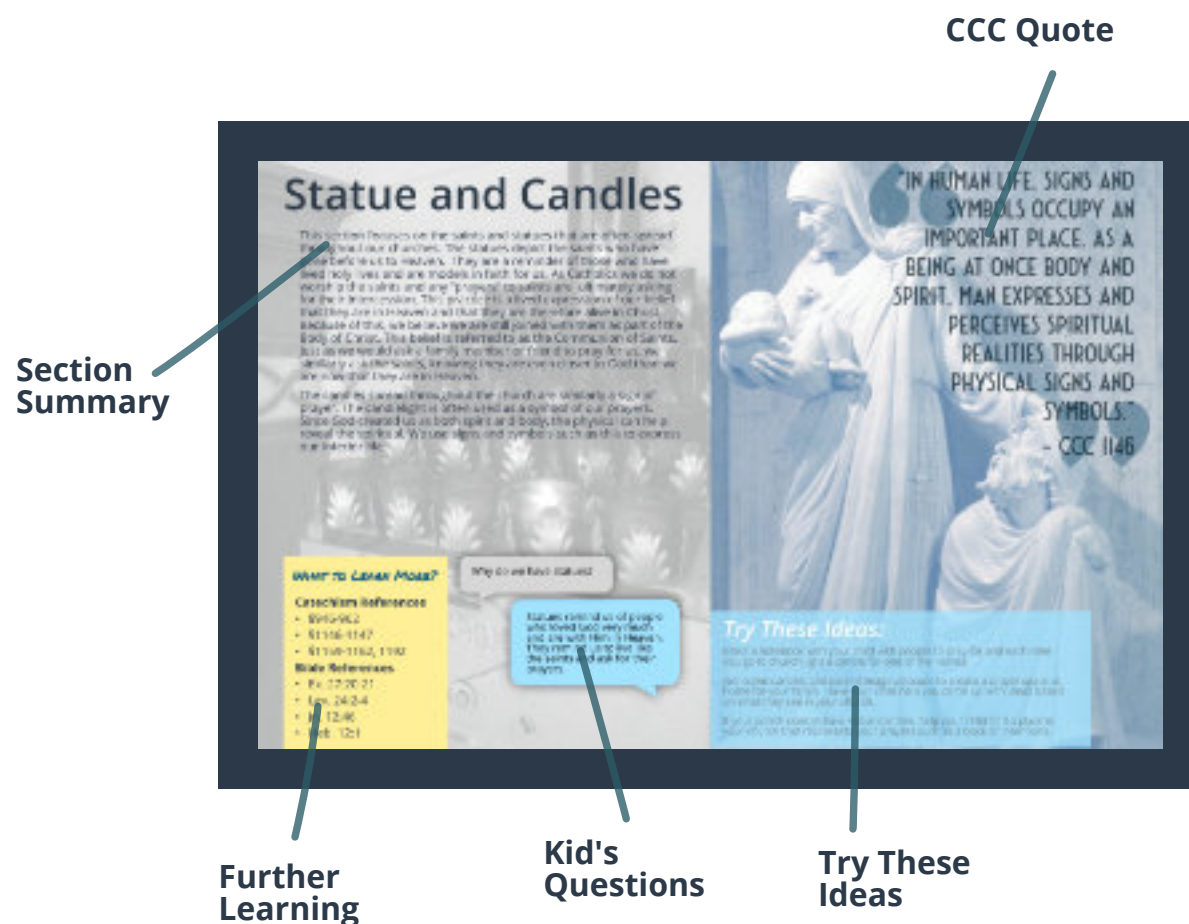
You may be asking yourself why we would make a parent's guide to go with a board book. Isn't the point of a board book that it is simple and easy for a child to understand? Why would something like that need a guide for parents?

If you are asking yourself that, you are right. Our children's books are simple and could be used as is, but we have a feeling you desire more. You don't just want a book to occupy your children each Sunday for part of Mass; but, more importantly, you want your children to be saints in Heaven one day! Helping form children into saints is hard work, and it takes all we have got. Our books are just a launching point, a tool in the hands of a loving parent. The real work comes in when we as parents help our children connect what they see in these books with life and an authentic relationship with Christ and His Church.

Now you may be feeling like you aren't up for the task, like you don't know enough, like someone else would be better. But let me tell you, you are the best and primary teacher for your child. You don't need to know it all. We will help support you in this guide. When it comes down to it though, what you need more than knowledge is a love for your child and God. Since you're picking up this guide we know you already have that. You don't need to know it all. It's okay to tell your child you don't know and to find out the answer together. So trust in the Holy Spirit, say a prayer, and dive in. Remember what Jesus told his disciples, "When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say. You will be given at that moment what you are to say. For it will not be you who speak but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you." – Matthew 10:19-20

USING THIS GUIDE

Aside from the introduction you have just read, this guide has two primary elements. First, there are a few practical ideas for how you may more effectively use the *My First Church Tour* book. Then, this guide walks you through each section of the book and gives a background for parents on each topic as well as ideas to try with your children relating to the section. Interspersed throughout are questions they might ask and simple answers. In this part, each section includes an applicable quote from the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) as well as additional relevant citations in the Catechism and Scripture. We hope you find this beneficial for your own formation. If you do not own a Catechism or the Bible, both can be found digitally on the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' website (usccb.org).



Get Practical

1) Just get the book in your child's hands. Like any other book, let your child read it and play with it. The more it is treated like a normal book, the more they will realize that their Catholic faith is a normal part of their life. It is a great book to bring to Mass with you for your little ones as well.

2) Read the book to your child at home. Take time and read the words and point to the pictures with your child at home. Work it into whatever book routine you might have.

3) Walk around your church with the book. This has been one of our favorite things to do with our children. Come to Mass early or stay after. We have also done this while waiting in line for Confession. Walk through the church and have your children point out the areas from each page where they see them in your church and even specific objects from the area. It becomes like a fun scavenger hunt. As the children get a little older you can begin letting them name the areas and objects and you can begin asking them questions about it (E.g. - When have you seen that object used? What happens there?)

4) Compare and Contrast. Try to identify what aspects of the church in the book are the same and what are different from your own church. Make a list of the things that are different. Learn about different areas in your church that aren't included in the book (sacristy, choir loft...) and ask your priest or religious education director about their significance.

5) Ask Your Local Priest for a Tour. Schedule a time with your local priest or pastor to take a tour of your own parish. Have your child bring his/her book along and tell the priest the things they have already learned.

** The more you can connect what your child sees to their lived experience with your parish the better. Read through the parent's guide to learn more about the different objects and terms and don't be afraid to tell them more about each thing. Your words don't need to be perfect. Tell them it's okay to ask questions and if you don't know the answer ask your priest and find out together.

Joyful Little Catholics LLC

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Welcome

This first section begins My First Church Tour and is a simple introduction to what you can expect to find moving forward. Your child is introduced to Fr. John and welcomed to join him on a tour of Saint Andrew Parish. Although there is minimal content on this page, it is still an important opportunity to help a your child understand the purpose and importance of their own parish.

Catholic parishes are the center of the faith life of the local Catholic community. It is at the parish that families come together to celebrate the Mass and where children will receive the sacraments as they grow older. The most essential role of the parish can be seen when we look to the Eucharist. The Catholic Church states that the Eucharist is the “source and summit” of our faith. Similarly, as the parish is the ordinary place to receive the Eucharist, it is here our faith life is led as if to a summit to receive Jesus sacramentally into ourselves in the Eucharist, and from here we are sent out by that source to make disciples and share God’s love.

The community we find in a parish is also essential to help us live out our Catholic call. We are not in this journey alone, but rather are called to walk with others, to support each other, and to seek help from one another when we need it. This community is not meant to be exclusive or closed in upon itself, but rather companions seeking God’s will together and going out into the world to bring others into closer relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church.

Parishes are often named after saints as a model for the members of a parish. The church will look to their patron saint as an example of living out holiness and will ask the for the intercession of that saint.

Try These Ideas:

Teach your child the name of your parish and priests if they don't already know them.

Walk around the outside of your church and find your patron saint and parish sign. Look for other things that are special to your parish.

Take a tour of other local Catholic churches. Have your child identify what is similar and different about each.

Find a story about your parish’s patron saint (or parish name) and read it to your child.

“THE PARISH IS THE EUCHARISTIC COMMUNITY AND THE HEART OF THE LITURGICAL LIFE OF CHRISTIAN FAMILIES; IT IS A PRIVILEGED PLACE FOR THE CATECHESIS OF CHILDREN AND PARENTS.”
- CCC 2226

Why do churches look different from other buildings?

Churches are designed to stand out from other buildings so they are some place special. They often are tall or have steeples to draw our eyes and hearts upwards to God.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Catechism References

- §752
- §832-835
- §1180
- §2179

Bible References

- Mt. 18:10
- Eph. 2:19-22
- Eph. 4:14-16

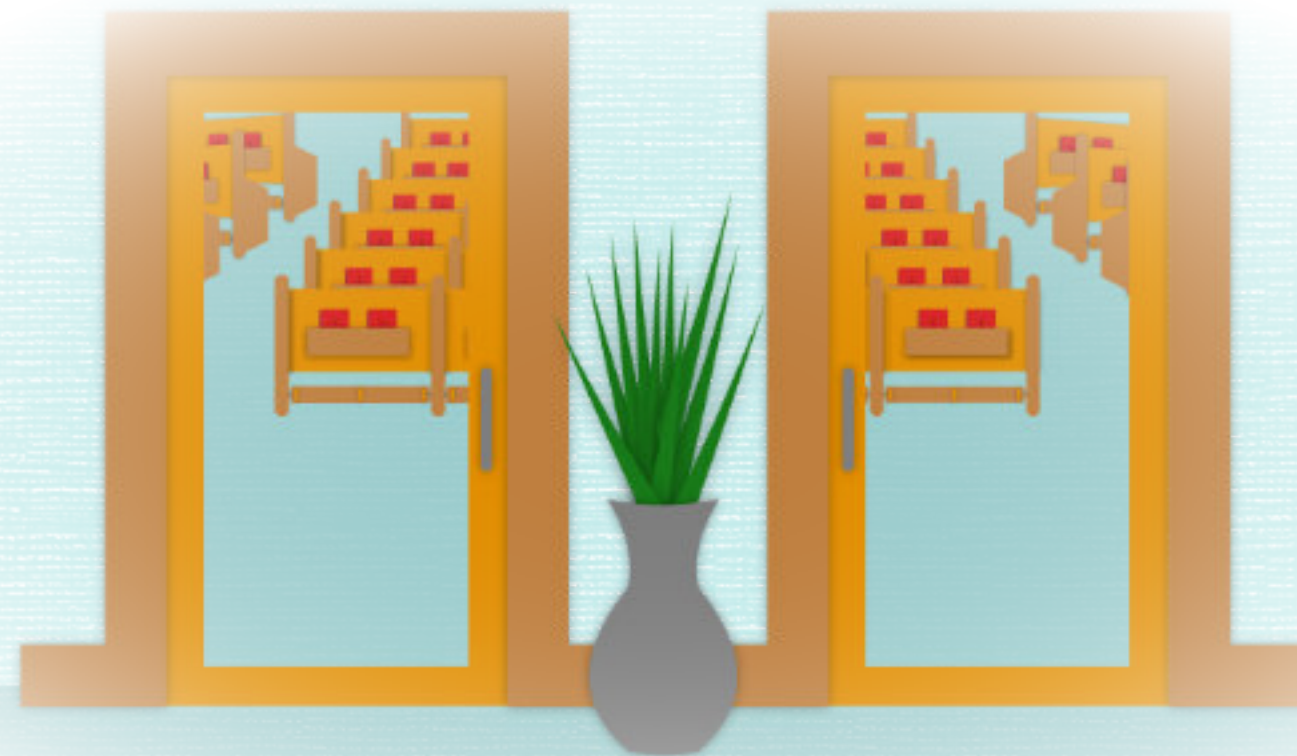
Gathering Space

Not all parishes have a gathering space, but it is becoming more and more common in modern parishes. Because a parish is a community, having a location that is separate from the worship space where people can gather, talk, and spend time before and after Mass is beneficial.

Other parishes may have a similar area that they call a Vestibule or Narthex. These names may be used in some areas interchangeably, but also may describe an entry area with a slightly different function, such as the location of the baptismal font.

A gathering space is a place of transition. As you enter the gathering space, you exit the world and prepare to enter a holy place, a place set aside for worship. So, in the gathering space, we not only take time to grow as a community, but also to lay aside the worries of the world and open our hearts to give God worship.

“...TO ENTER INTO THE HOUSE OF GOD, WE MUST CROSS A THRESHOLD, WHICH SYMBOLIZES PASSING FROM THE WORLD WOUNDED BY SIN TO THE WORLD OF THE NEW LIFE TO WHICH ALL MEN ARE CALLED...” - CCC 1186



What is the point of a gathering space?

A gathering space gives us somewhere to get to know the rest of our parish community, while keeping the worship space a place of prayer.

Try These Ideas:

Arrive early or stay late after Mass and help your child to meet a new friend in the gathering space.

If your parish doesn't have a gathering space, talk to your child about where you meet and welcome other people at church

Church

This section highlights the main body of the church, or the worship space. We primarily come together as a community here to celebrate Mass each Sunday.

Sunday is a day of obligation for attending Mass. It is significant because each week it is a mini-Easter, a chance to recall Jesus' resurrection. We recognize it as the "eighth" day of creation, where through Christ rising, death is conquered and we are raised to new life in Christ. Its celebration replaces that of the Jewish Sabbath and fulfills the intention of the 3rd Commandment.

As mentioned in the book, the Mass is a special meal where Jesus becomes present in the Eucharist. In addition to being a meal, it is also Jesus' sacrifice on the Cross made present to us. The Eucharist will be covered more in other sections of this guide.

The interior of a church is designed through its adornments and architecture to lift people's minds and hearts to God. Just like each person, each church is unique in its own special way. It takes on the character of its people and culture and is a sign of God's love.

Try These Ideas:

Arrive early to church and sit in the pew taking special care to help your child watch the community arrive and see how others pray before or after Mass.

Have your child help you come up with a list of ideas of how to act in church to remember it is a special place.

Make it a regular event to stop into church sometime during the week to pray. This can help your child recognize that a physical church can provide an environment that facilitates prayer.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Catechism References

- §1076-1199
- §2174-2183
- §2691

Bible References

- Ex. 20:8-10

Why do we need a church?
Can't we just pray at home?

We can pray at home and we should, but our faith in Jesus makes us part of a community. The Mass also is a community prayer and offering with the Body of Christ.

"A CHURCH, 'A HOUSE OF PRAYER IN WHICH THE EUCHARIST IS CELEBRATED AND RESERVED, WHERE THE FAITHFUL ASSEMBLE'...IN THIS "HOUSE OF GOD" THE TRUTH AND THE HARMONY OF THE SIGNS THAT MAKE IT UP SHOULD SHOW CHRIST TO BE PRESENT AND ACTIVE IN THIS PLACE."

- CCC 1181

Baptismal Font

This section focuses on the Baptismal Font. Through Baptism we are washed of the stain of Original Sin and brought to life in Christ. We become adopted children of God and are made members of the Church. This is the first of the 3 Sacraments of Initiation, which include Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. Baptism is unique because it is necessary to receive it first to open the other sacraments to us.

It is often easy for baptism to be seen as solely a ritualistic event done with young children; however, it is infinitely more important and is not just symbolic. The symbols of Baptism (water, anointing, candle light...) represent the reality that is taking place as we are truly washed from sin.

When entering and exiting the church, it is common to bless yourself with holy water. When doing this blessing we are recalling our Baptism, as well as putting on Christ through the sign of His cross, and asking for blessing through the Trinity as we recall each person of the Trinity. This small, seemingly routine, action is in fact is a powerful and packed moment of prayer.

“THE GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD BEGINS WITH BAPTISM; A CHURCH MUST HAVE A PLACE FOR THE CELEBRATION OF BAPTISM (BAPTISTRY) AND FOR FOSTERING REMEMBRANCE OF THE BAPTISMAL PROMISES (HOLY WATER FONT).” - CCC 1185

Why are babies baptized?

Baptism makes us part of the Church. In baptism we are washed of the stain of Original Sin and made part of God's family. Since it is so important, parents want it for their children as soon as possible and often get them baptized as babies.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Catechism References

- §1182
- §1185
- §1212-1284

Bible References

- Acts 2:38
- Jn. 3:1-5
- Num. 5:17

Try These Ideas:

- Show your child pictures or video of their baptism as well as any special items connected to their baptism (garment, candle...).
- Put your child's baptismal anniversary date on your calendar and celebrate it each year in some special way. If you don't remember the date, you can reach out to the parish where your child was baptized.
- If your parish has a regular communal baptism time/day take your child so that they can see a baptism up-close and personal.

Confessional

This section focuses on the Confessional. For many Catholics, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, or Confession, is simultaneously familiar and foreign. The idea of Reconciliation is common in our faith and is regularly depicted in TV shows and movies; however the experience of Reconciliation for many is minimal. The reality is that it is a shame, because Confession is an immensely grace filled experience and something we should not shy away from. If you personally haven't gone to Reconciliation in a long time and are afraid, we encourage you to read on and find a time to go soon.

Confession is one of two sacraments of healing, the other being the Anointing of the Sick. In Reconciliation, the priest is present in the person of Christ. When the priest absolves someone of their sins, Jesus is speaking and acting through him by the grace of the Holy Spirit. We are called to confess to a priest first and foremost because it is what Jesus set up for His Church. In the Gospel of John 20:21-23, Jesus gives the Apostles the power to forgive sins, and this has passed down to our bishops and priests today.

We can also see a secondary reason for God's wisdom in making it this way when we look at our own human nature. It takes greater humility and fuller repentance to be willing to speak your sins aloud to another person. In doing this, God helps us on our path to full reconciliation and healing.

Although it takes great humility and can be accompanied with fear and hesitation, at its heart, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is a joyful and healing experience. Jesus gives us a glimpse of this in the story of the Prodigal Son, who, after treating his father as if he was dead and sinning greatly, returned to seek forgiveness and was embraced and thrown a feast. We can imagine that every time we walk into the Confessional with a contrite heart all the saints and angels are celebrating as the Heavenly Father embraces us.

Try These Ideas:

Read or tell your child the story of the Prodigal Son (Lk. 15:11-32) and explain to them how it is like Confession.

Model for your child regularly visiting the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Take your child with you and explain what you are doing. Make it a joyful experience and add in something special like donuts after.

"A CHURCH...MUST LEND ITSELF TO THE EXPRESSION OF REPENTANCE AND THE RECEPTION OF FORGIVENESS, WHICH REQUIRES AN APPROPRIATE PLACE TO RECEIVE PENITENTS." – CCC 1185



What are the lights for on the Confessional?

The lights are used to help those waiting. They often use different colors to show that a priest is available and whether or not someone is currently going to Confession.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Catechism References

- §1185
- §1420-1498

Bible References

- Lk. 15:11-32
- Jas. 5:14-16
- Jn. 20:21-23

Stations of the Cross

The Stations of the Cross is a devotion that dates back as early as the 4th century. Over the history of the Church, devotion and meditation on Christ's passion has developed and grown having had different numbers of stations. In 1731, Pope Clement XII set the current number of 14 and allowed all churches to have stations. Stations of the Cross are a great way to reflect upon Jesus' sacrifice. There are prayers commonly prayed along with each station, but can also simply be used as a means of meditation. Many parishes provide communal opportunities to pray the Stations, especially on Fridays during Lent.

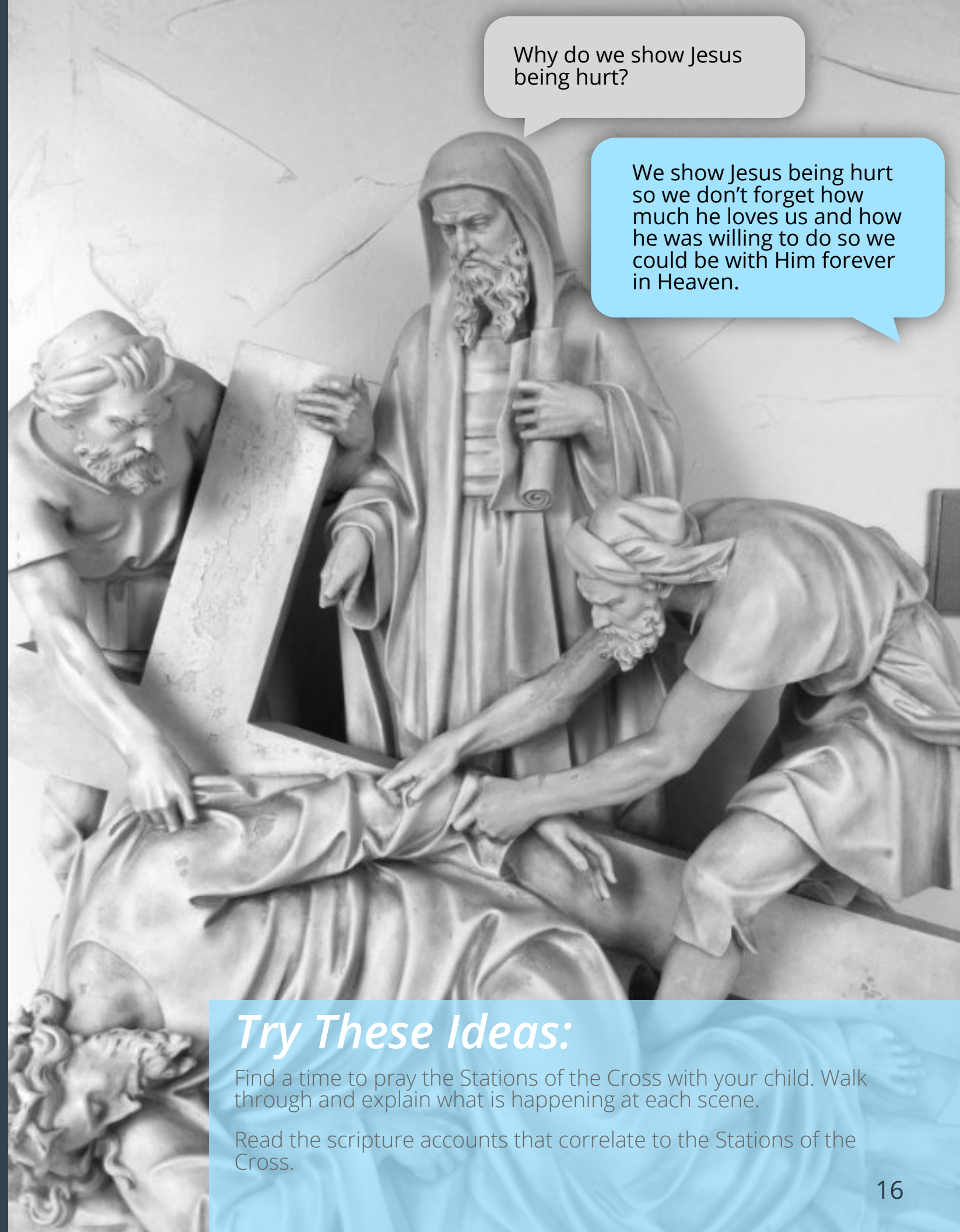
The 14 Stations of the Cross are listed below:

1. Jesus is Condemned to Death (Mk. 15:1-5)
2. Jesus Takes Up the Cross (Jn. 19:13-17)
3. Jesus Falls for the 1st Time
4. Jesus Meets His Mother
5. Simon of Cyrene Helps Carry the Cross (Mk. 15:21)
6. Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus
7. Jesus Falls a 2nd Time
8. Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem (Lk. 23:27-31)
9. Jesus Falls a 3rd Time
10. Jesus is Stripped of His Clothes (Jn. 19:23-24)
11. Jesus is Crucified (Lk. 23:33-34)
12. Jesus Dies on the Cross (Lk. 23:44-46)
13. Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross
14. Jesus is Laid in the Tomb (Mt. 27:57-60)

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Catechism References

- §1674-1675



Why do we show Jesus being hurt?

We show Jesus being hurt so we don't forget how much he loves us and how he was willing to do so we could be with Him forever in Heaven.

Try These Ideas:

Find a time to pray the Stations of the Cross with your child. Walk through and explain what is happening at each scene.

Read the scripture accounts that correlate to the Stations of the Cross.

Statue and Candles

This section focuses on the saints and statues that are often spread throughout our churches. The statues depict the saints who have gone before us to Heaven. They are a reminder of those who have lived holy lives and are models in faith for us. As Catholics we do not worship the saints and any “prayers” to saints are ultimately asking for their intercession. This practice is a lived expression of our belief that they are in Heaven and that they are therefore alive in Christ. Because of this, we believe we are still joined with them as part of the Body of Christ. This belief is referred to as the Communion of Saints. Just as we would ask a family member or friend to pray for us, we similarly ask the saints, knowing they are even closer to God than we are now that they are in Heaven.

The candles spread throughout the church are similarly a sign of prayer. The candlelight is often used as a symbol of our prayers. Since God created us as both spirit and body, the physical can help reveal the spiritual. We use signs and symbols such as this to express our interior life.

“IN HUMAN LIFE, SIGNS AND SYMBOLS OCCUPY AN IMPORTANT PLACE. AS A BEING AT ONCE BODY AND SPIRIT, MAN EXPRESSES AND PERCEIVES SPIRITUAL REALITIES THROUGH PHYSICAL SIGNS AND SYMBOLS.”

- CCC 1146

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Catechism References

- §946-962
- §1146-1147
- §1159-1162, 1192

Bible References

- Ex. 27:20-21
- Lev. 24:2-4
- Jn. 12:46
- Heb. 12:1

Why do we have statues?

Statues remind us of people who loved God very much and are with Him in Heaven. They remind us to live like the saints and ask for their prayers.

Try These Ideas:

Make a notebook with your child with people to pray for and each time you go to church light a candle for one of the names.

Get some candles and sacred images/statues to create a prayer space at home for your family. Have your child help you come up with ideas based on what they see in your church.

If your parish doesn't have votive candles, help your child find a place in your church that represents your prayers such as a book of intentions.

Pews

This section focuses on the pews. The pews are the main area where the faithful remain for the majority of Mass. They are designed to help facilitate our worship, providing a space to sit, stand, and kneel, as well as hold books for singing hymns and following along with the prayers of the Mass.

As mentioned in the last section about statues and candles, physical expressions can represent spiritual realities. This same principle is abundantly active in our liturgy and worship. Our physical posture and our voices help elevate and express different realities taking place during Mass and within our prayers. Singing can represent praying with our whole being. Standing can show a sign of respect. Sitting can embody reflection and meditation. Kneeling can show a sign of worship. This reality is most explicitly on display from the beginning of the Eucharistic Prayer when we begin kneeling as Jesus becomes present in the Eucharist and continue to kneel until the remaining Eucharist is placed in the Tabernacle, with the exception only of the Our Father, Sign of Peace, and reception of Communion.

These gestures and movements can help us enter more fully into the worship we are bringing to God within the Mass.

Try These Ideas:

Try sitting in different pews with your child for Mass for a few weeks. Ask them afterwards what their experience was like and if there was an area that helped them focus more.

Make a list of some of the hymns sung regularly at Mass and some of the liturgical songs. Find the songs online and listen to them at home with your child to encourage them to sing along at Mass.

“THE LITURGICAL ACTIONS SIGNIFY WHAT THE WORD OF GOD EXPRESSES: BOTH HIS FREE INITIATIVE AND HIS PEOPLE’S RESPONSE OF FAITH.” – CCC 1153

Why do we sing at Mass?

We sing at Mass as a way to worship God and express our prayers. By singing together our voices represent our different gifts working together to praise God.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Catechism References

- §1153
- §1156-1158
- §1191

Bible References

- Ps. 95:1-7
- Ps. 150:1-6
- Rev. 4:8

Sanctuary

This section focuses on the sanctuary. The sanctuary is an area set apart within the worship space where the sacrifice of Jesus is made present to us. Here the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus, the Word of God is proclaimed, and we encounter Jesus. The sanctuary is often raised up above the rest of the worship space. The priest and deacon sit and carry out their duties during the Mass from the sanctuary. In many churches, the tabernacle is also situated within the sanctuary.

The sanctuary finds its biblical precursor in the Holy of Holies within the Temple in Jerusalem, the innermost part of the temple, set apart for the presence of God. The Holy of Holies was meant to be an analogy to Heaven, where we will be in God's presence fully. Similarly, the sanctuary, as the place where we encounter Jesus in the Mass, can represent where we will be face to face with Jesus some day in Heaven.

Try These Ideas:

Have your child draw a picture of the sanctuary of a church. They can draw it to look like your church or imagine their own style. Be sure to include the altar, ambo, presider's chair, candles, and tabernacle. Look at pictures of famous sanctuaries around the world for inspiration.

Why do all the seats face the sanctuary?

All the seats face the sanctuary because that is where Jesus becomes present and where we hear from the Bible. By all facing that way we are all focused on what is most important.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Catechism References

• §1182-1184

"BUT WHEN CHRIST CAME AS HIGH PRIEST OF THE GOOD THINGS THAT HAVE COME TO BE, PASSING THROUGH THE GREATER AND MORE PERFECT TABERNACLE NOT MADE BY HANDS, THAT IS, NOT BELONGING TO THIS CREATION, HE ENTERED ONCE FOR ALL INTO THE SANCTUARY, NOT WITH THE BLOOD OF GOATS AND CALVES BUT WITH HIS OWN BLOOD, THUS OBTAINING ETERNAL REDEMPTION."
- HEB. 9:11-12

Altar

This section focuses on the altar. The altar is central to the sanctuary and is the place where our offerings are taken and given to God. Our gifts of bread and wine are offered and blessed here. Through the words of Jesus, spoken at the Last Supper, the bread and wine are consecrated. By means of this consecration and the power of the Holy Spirit, the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus, present in a real way. The Church uses a special word for this change, called Transubstantiation. That means that although it may still appear to be bread, in a mysterious way, the substance is no longer bread, but rather Jesus. It is not just a symbol of Jesus, but is in fact Jesus present, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. Through our worthy reception of this sacrament, Christ unites himself with us. It is the source and summit of our faith, because our faith leads to this union with Jesus and our union with Him is the source of how we live out that faith.

The altar is meant to be seen as both a table and an altar of sacrifice because here we celebrate the Supper of the Lamb, and the sacrifice of Jesus is made present to us through the meal and offering.

The Eucharist that flows from the altar is one of the three Sacraments of Initiation, along with Baptism and Confirmation. It was prefigured in the Old Testament through the manna in the desert, and by Jesus in the multiplication of the loaves. It is our spiritual food, Jesus himself. Because of all of this, the altar has a privileged place within our churches and is central to our liturgical life.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Catechism References

- §1182
- §1322-1419

Bible References

- Mt. 26:17-30
- Mk. 14:22-24
- Lk. 22:19-20
- Jn. 6:22-59
- 1 Cor. 11:23-26

What is on the altar?

There are many things on the altar during Mass. There are linens to make sure to collect any small parts from the Eucharist. There is a chalice and paten with hosts. There is a Missal of prayers and much more.

Try These Ideas:

Have your child recreate an altar at home. Use a small table and a table cloth. Have them look at Mass to see what all is on the altar and find things around the house to make the imaginary altar.

“THE ALTAR, AROUND WHICH THE CHURCH IS GATHERED IN THE CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST, REPRESENTS THE TWO ASPECTS OF THE SAME MYSTERY: THE ALTAR OF THE SACRIFICE AND THE TABLE OF THE LORD. THIS IS ALL THE MORE SO SINCE THE CHRISTIAN ALTAR IS THE SYMBOL OF CHRIST HIMSELF, PRESENT IN THE MIDST OF THE ASSEMBLY OF HIS FAITHFUL, BOTH AS THE VICTIM OFFERED FOR OUR RECONCILIATION AND AS FOOD FROM HEAVEN WHO IS GIVING HIMSELF TO US.”

- CCC 1383

Tabernacle

The final section focuses on the Tabernacle. The Tabernacle is where the remaining Eucharist is reserved after Mass is ended. The Eucharist is reserved both to take to those who are sick or unable to attend Mass as well as to provide a place to come worship and spend time with Jesus in the Eucharist.

The practice of adoration of the Eucharist stems from the belief that Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist. Because of this belief, it is natural to be drawn to spend time and pray in front of the Eucharist. Many churches also provide opportunities to pray with the Eucharist exposed in a Monstrance. This practice, called Exposition, is often done on certain days or occasions, and requires continual presence of the faithful while the Eucharist is exposed. Some places have Perpetual Exposition which involves a dedicated space with the Eucharist Exposed 24x7 and individuals scheduled to be present at every hour.

- Providing opportunities for your child to pray in front of the Eucharist can be integral to forming an understanding of the Eucharist and greater appreciation for reception one day at their First Communion. By praying in front of the Eucharist, our actions are confirming our belief that the Eucharist is not just a symbol, but in fact Jesus.

“THE TABERNACLE SHOULD BE LOCATED IN AN ESPECIALLY WORTHY PLACE IN THE CHURCH AND SHOULD BE CONSTRUCTED IN SUCH A WAY THAT IT EMPHASIZES AND MANIFESTS THE TRUTH OF THE REAL PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.” - CCC 1379

How is Jesus in there?

Jesus is in there in the Eucharist, the bread that became Jesus at Mass. It is a special way He can be present to us here.

Try These Ideas:

Find an opportunity to take your child to adoration (even better make it a regular event). Remember that children's prayer time will look different than your own. Encourage them and remind them to tell Jesus they love Him and just spend time together.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Catechism References

- §1183
- §1373-1381

Keep it up...

We pray that this resource has been helpful to you both in using *My First Church Tour* with your child as well as giving you some deeper context on each area of the church represented within the book and the aspects of our faith that connect to them. This guide is in no way an exhaustive resource on all these aspects of our Catholic faith. We encourage you to continue not only your child's formation in these areas, but your own, too. One of the greatest aspects of the study of God and our faith is that there is always deeper treasure to mine. Because God is infinite and far beyond ourselves, the truths about Him and His Church are inexhaustible. Never forget this truth as you journey not just towards greater knowledge, but ultimately towards a deeper and more intimate relationship with God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

God Bless,

Joyful Little Catholics