

# What do I See at Church?

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A Sticker-Sheet Treasure Map of Sights Around My Parish Home

A Catholic church is a sacred place where everything in it has a special meaning that can help you get to know Jesus better. You can feel right at home in any Catholic church, anywhere in the world, when you learn about what you see in any church. That's what this sticker sheet is for. Think of it as a little tour of God's house. Each time you see or learn about one of the sights below, place the matching sticker from the sticker sheet in its place on the church "map." Learn more about those sights in the boxes below. See if you can collect all 13 items on your way to learning more about God's house and your parish home. So let's get started and have some fun!

### Doors

A church's doors are important because once you go through them, you are in God's house. It's time to stop and think about God and how much you love him. It's time to join your Church family and praise God. People who help at Mass gather near the doors. They might be ushers or greeters. What types of helpers stand near the doors of your church?

### Holy Water Font & Baptismal Font

We dip our fingers in holy water when we come into church as a reminder of a time when we were washed clean: our baptism. We remember that in baptism, we became part of God's family. As we make the Sign of the Cross, we remember that it is through Jesus' death on the cross that our sins are washed away.

### Pews & Kneelers

Many years ago, people stood through the whole Mass. Today we sit on a seat called a pew. We still stand when the gospel is read to show our joy for Jesus' good news. But during the holiest part of the Mass, when bread and wine become Jesus' Body and Blood, we kneel to show our love for Jesus. And kneelers keep our knees comfy.

### Confessionals

You might also see along the walls of church more doors. If you've made your First Reconciliation, you know these doors lead to confessionals, or little rooms where we confess our sins to Jesus, who is there with us in the

### Prayerful Art

There are lots of stories in a Catholic church; many of them are found in stained glass windows that show scenes from the Bible. A statue of Mary or a saint reminds us of the faithful lives people have led, inspiring us to be like them. Creating paintings and pictures of holy people is a way of showing our love for God.

### The Altar

At the Last Supper, Jesus gathered with his friends at a table to share a meal. In a church, the altar is a special, holy table where the priest will celebrate the Eucharist. At the altar at Mass, the priest repeats Jesus' words and does what Jesus did at the Last Supper. This is called the consecration. The bread and wine on the altar become Jesus' Body and Blood.

### Vestments

The priest wears special clothes called vestments at Mass because this is a very special occasion. Vestments show us that the priest is doing an important and sacred job: He is acting in the person of Jesus himself. So vestments are a way of honoring Jesus, who is present with us at Mass. The colors of the vestments tell you what season or feast we're celebrating.

### Bread & Wine

During the consecration of the bread and wine, the priest prays the Eucharistic Prayer that tells the story of the Last Supper. In some churches, altar servers ring bells at certain times during the consecration. Are bells rung at your church? If so, look carefully at what the priest is doing when the bells are rung. It's pretty important!

### Hymnals & Missal

Jesus invites us to a celebration at every Mass. So we don't just sit in the pew, but sing, stand, pray, listen and watch what's happening on the altar. You can find all the prayers and readings in a booklet called a missal. Hymnals, or music books, contain words to the songs. What's your favorite song to sing at church?

### Crucifix

We're reminded of Jesus' sacrifice when we look at the crucifix on the altar. We see Jesus' suffering and we're reminded that he died because he loves us so much. And because Jesus has risen from the dead, he's saved all of us from sin and death. That's something to celebrate!

