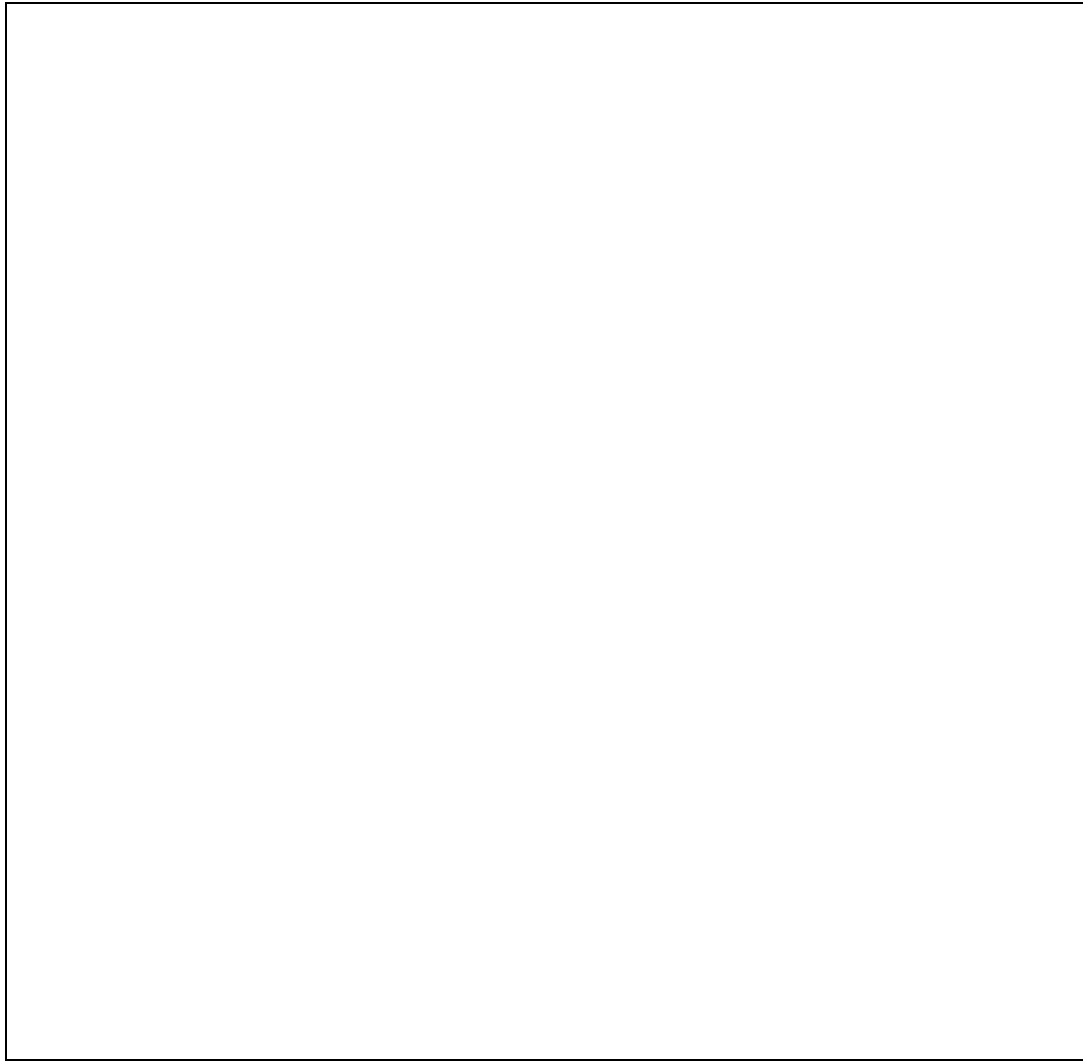


# Welcome to our Church

*Insert  
Picture*

A special guide to our  
Church and the people  
who celebrate here



This is a book that will take you on a trip around our Church. It will help you to understand the special places in our Church. It will help you to find out about the special people in our Church and it will help you understand the special celebrations we have each year and why the Church looks different at certain times of the year.

# Special Places in Our Church

## The Sanctuary

This is the special place where the priest leads the celebrations. There are special things on the sanctuary.

The Sanctuary is a special part of the Church. The priest presides over our celebrations here. There are many different things on the sanctuary.

# The Altar

This is the table where the priest blesses the bread and wine.

The altar is a table. The Priest places the bread and wine on it at the offertory and then blesses the bread and wine here at the consecration.

# The Tabernacle

This is a place where Jesus is present in a special way.

The Tabernacle is the place where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved.

# The Sanctuary Lamp

This is lit to remind us that Jesus is present in the Tabernacle.

The sanctuary lamp is lit to remind us that Jesus is present in the Eucharist, which is being reserved or kept inside the Tabernacle.

## The Lectern

This is a special place for holding the book, the Word of God.

The Lectern is a special stand for holding the Lectionary. The priest and other readers will read the Word of God from here. It is often the place the priest chooses to stand to explain the Word in the Homily.

# The Crucifix

This is to remind us that Jesus loves us very much and died on Good Friday.

The crucifix is to remind us that Jesus loves us very much and died on Good Friday and rose again on Easter Sunday. Sometimes a crucifix has a special role in services such as the one held on Good Friday

# Candles

Candles are lit to remind us that God is present.

Candles are lit to remind us that God is present and that Jesus is the light of the world. Candles are found in different places in the Church. You might light a candle for a special intention.

Some of the times you might see candles are

- ❖ At the beginning and end of Mass when the altar servers process to and from the altar.
- ❖ During the reading of the gospel
- ❖ At special celebrations such as Baptism
- ❖ As part of the Advent wreath
- ❖ At Easter when a special candle called the Paschal Candle is lit.

# Baptismal Font

This is where somebody is baptised and welcomed into the Church family.

The Baptismal font is used when a person is baptised and welcomed into the Church family. During Baptism a person is blessed with Holy Water and this happens here, at the font. Baptism is the first sacrament that sets you off on a journey to become a Catholic. It is called a Sacrament of Initiation.

## Stations of the Cross

These are pictures that tell the story of how Jesus died.

The Stations of the Cross tell the story of Good Friday. They show how Jesus was tried and condemned to death, how he journeyed to Calvary and how he died on the cross.

## The Organ and the place for the Choir

An organ is a musical instrument. People play the organ to go with the singing at Mass and other services. The choir are a group of people who practise singing together.

Music is a way to pray. We sing in lots of different ways in Church. Sometimes a person will play the organ and a group of people will lead the singing. Sometimes they sing in parts. The music for Mass and other services is very carefully chosen.

# **We have things in our Church that are special to us in our parish.**

## **Statues**

*(This will vary according to Churches. Most churches will have a statue of Mary.  
Other text may need to be added to explain the statues in your Church)*

This is a statue of Mary, the mother of Jesus.

This is a statue of Mary, the mother of Jesus.  
We remember Mary at special times of the year.  
Two particular months for Mary are May and  
October.



## **Stained glass windows**

*(Individual text may need to be added to explain the windows in your Church)*

These make our Church look beautiful.

Stained glass windows look attractive and so they help us to remember the beauty and the glory of God.

# Special People in Our Church

## Our Parish Priest

Father ..... is our parish priest. He leads a lot of our celebrations.

A priest has a very special role. He has received the sacrament of ordination. He is the spiritual leader of our community.

## Our Assistant Priest / Deacon

Father ..... is also a priest in our parish. He helps Father ..... He is the leader of a lot of our celebrations.

Father ..... is an assistant priest in our parish. He assists the parish priest. All priests have received the sacrament of ordination and have a special role in helping people.

# Altar Servers

These are people who help the priest during a service.

Altar servers have special jobs to do to help the priest during celebrations. You can become an altar server after you have made your first communion.

# Readers

These people will proclaim the Word of God.

During Mass a reader will usually read from the Old and the New Testament. They will also read the Prayers of the Faithful (Bidding Prayers)

## Ministers of Communion

These people give out holy communion during Mass.

Eucharistic Ministers help distribute the eucharist at Mass. They take communion to the sick people in the parish who cannot come to Mass and they sometimes lead Eucharistic services.

# Welcomers

These people greet us as we come into Church.

Welcomers greet us as we enter the Church and make sure we have what we need for Mass. Their job is to make us feel welcome and that we are part of a family.

# Special Times and Special Celebrations

## Baptisms

Here is a photograph of a Baptism. Have you ever been to one? What were you celebrating?

# First Communion

Here is a photograph of a First Holy Communion.  
Have you ever been to one? Do you know what happens?

Some of you will have made your First Communion.  
Can you talk about that special day?

# Wedding

Here is a photograph of a wedding. Have you ever been to one? What were you celebrating?

There are other celebrations you might attend in Church. One is a funeral where we are celebrating the life of somebody who has died. Can you think of any others?

# Advent

*(You may wish to include a Jesse tree, advent wreath or a celebration particular to your parish or school here)*

Advent is a time of waiting. We are getting ready to celebrate the birthday of Jesus. The Church is different at this time of the year because all the colours are purple and there will be an advent wreath.

# Christmas

This is the time we celebrate the birthday of Jesus. The colours in the Church change to white. We sing special songs and we have a crib.

# Lent

This is the time when we get ready for Easter. The Church is different because the flowers are taken out and the statues are sometimes covered. The colours change to purple.

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. Ashes, made from the palms from last year's Palm Sunday, are put on people's foreheads in the sign of a cross. Lent is a time when we think about ourselves and the people we are choosing to be. It is also a time when we think of others and how we can help them.

# Easter

Easter is a joyful time in Church. The colours change to white and we have lots of flowers and happy songs. We are celebrating the time when Jesus rose from the dead.

## Guide to the Illustrated book of our Church

The idea of this book is to help primary school children become familiar with their own Church and, because of this, to recognise key things in other churches. The basic text is provided but the book should be completed by adding photographs of your own Church and any extra text that you need.

The completed book can then be printed and bound to create a unique resource for your school.

Another way of using the resource would be to print the pages and enlarge them to A3. They could then be laminated and you would have a class book.

There are many areas where you could add pages of your own, for example, you may wish to include individual pages for the four main days at Easter or you may have a special service every year which could be included. Many of your children may attend clubs or groups in the Parish and you may want to extend the book to show these.

Special thanks to Pat Ainge of the Diocese of Leeds and friends for this booklet.