

PRAYER WALK around the CHURCH

In this prayer walk we are going to visit areas of our parish church and reflect on what they means for us and how they draw us more fully into the presence of God

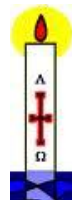


1st PRAYER STATION – THE FONT

One of the first things we see when we enter a Catholic church is a pool of water. Baptism is our "door" to the Church. Ideally it stands at the door of the Church, it reminds us that every time we come to Eucharist they come through baptism. We dip our hand in the water and mark ourselves anew with that sign in which they were baptized—the sign of the cross.

Now stand before the font and dip you hand in the water and sign your neighbor on the forehead with the sign of the cross as you say these words:

*I SIGN YOU WITH THE SIGN of the CROSS
And CLAIM YOU FOR CHRIST our SAVIOUR*



2nd PRAYER STATION – PASCHAL CANDLE

At the Easter Vigil this candle is placed in the water we pray: May all who are buried with Christ in the death of baptism rise also with him to newness of life.

Now light the candle you have been given from the paschal candle, when everyone's candle is lit stand in a circle and repeat these words:

RECEIVE THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

3rd PRAYER STATION – THE ASSEMBLY AREA

Entering the church proper, the **nave** (from the Latin word for "boat"), we find ourselves in a large room. This space becomes alive when people are gathered for prayer. Take a seat and spend some time in silence with your eyes closed and pray for those who gather here every Sunday.....



4th PRAYER STATION – THE ALTAR

The **altar** is the holy table upon which we celebrate the Eucharist. On this altar we celebrate the paschal banquet in which Christ is eaten, the heart is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory given to us. Each altar has five crosses representing the five wounds of Christ, every time we gather we reverence this and the priest kisses.

*Gather in a circle around the altar
and take time to reverence Christ by kissing the altar*

5th PRAYER STATION – THE LECTERN

The **lectern** (Latin *legere*, "to read") is the sacred space from which we proclaim the Word of God and upon which is placed the **lectionary**, the book of readings from Sacred Scripture. Preaching can be done from the lectern, the chair or elsewhere.

Now gather around the lectern and stand attentively as you listen to God's word being proclaimed...



6th STATION - THE TABERNACLE

This space is carefully designed and appointed can give proper attention to the reserved sacrament. Often a red votive candle or **sanctuary lamp** burning before the tabernacle, has traditionally served Catholics as the sign that the consecrated bread is present there. From the beginning some of the community who were sick could not gather for the eucharist, this was and still is the primary purpose for reserving the sacrament – taking communion to the sick.

*Stand before the tabernacle and genuflect or bow
Then pray for anyone in the parish who is sick or housebound*



7th STATION – THE CROSS

We will also find in this area a **cross** or **crucifix**. In the cross we see the basic symbol of any Christian liturgical celebration. For in the Paschal Mystery of Christ we find our own image as a Christian community.

*Stand in front of the cross and say this prayer out loud:
We adore you O Christ and we praise you
by your cross you have redeemed the world*

8th STATION - Around the walls of many churches you will find the **Way of the Cross**, pictures numbered from 1 to 14 of incidents in the last journey of Jesus from Pilate's house, where he was condemned to death, to his entombment. From an early date pilgrims to the Holy Land would visit these places (or stations) and follow in the footsteps of Jesus on his way to Calvary.



9th STATION – STATUES & PAINTINGS

The statues and paintings of the saints aided the devotion of the faithful at a time when many people could not read. The saints remind us of what it means to fully live out our baptism, we ask them to intercede for us and help us on our journey of faith.

Now gather around the statue of the patron saint of the parish and pray together:

Saints of God come to our aid

Come to meet us angels of the Lord