

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LEVEL 4

AWARENESS/UNDERSTANDING OF PRAYERS AND BASIC CATHOLIC BELIEFS

TAB # 4	PAGE
Holy Water	1
Genuflection	1
Meaning of “Amen”	1
We Honor the Blessed Virgin Mary	1
The Mass and Its Parts	2
Knowledge About Our Infant Jesus Parish	3-6
Manners for Places of Worship	7
Ten Commandments	8
Two Great Commandments	8
The Liturgical Year	9
Liturgical Vestments	9
Liturgical Colors	10
The Apostle’s Creed	10-11
The Nicene Creed	11
The Rosary	12
Mysteries of the Rosary	13 - 14
The Stations of the Cross	15
The Beattitudes	16
The Theological Virtues of Faith, Hope, and Love	16
Acts of Faith, Hope and Love	16-17
The Cardinal or Moral Virtues	17
The Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy	17
Examination of Conscience	Apx. 1-2

AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING

HOLY WATER (MAKING THE SIGN OF THE CROSS WITH HOLY WATER)

Holy Water is water that has been blessed. It looks and smells just like plain water, but it is different. We sign ourselves with **Holy Water** to remind us of our Baptism. It brings us closer to God. Many Catholic families take small amounts of **Holy Water** for use in their homes. A font with **Holy Water** is placed near the door at church so that we may use it to make the **Sign of the Cross**.



GENUFLECTION

To REVERENCE means “to pay special respect.” We often use our bodies to show honor to Jesus and places that are holy. One acting is that we KNEEL on our right knee when we come close to the TABERNACLE when JESUS is present in the reserved EUCHARIST. When we KNEEL like this, we say that we **GENUFLECT**. We also genuflect before we take our seat in church. This is a way to say HELLO TO JESUS when we enter. When the priest comes into church at the beginning of Mass, he genuflects in front of the altar to pay special honor to this Sacred Place. Some people, who are physically unable to kneel, bow instead.

THE MEANING OF “AMEN”

Amen is a very special word. It is used often during Mass and generally when we end a prayer. It is a very old word that means “**YES**” or “**SO BE IT**”. It shows that we agree with everything that was just said in the prayer. When we respond “**Amen**” to the words “**Body of Christ**” just before we receive Holy Communion, we are saying: “**Yes, I believe this is really Jesus I am about to receive.**”



WE HONOR THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Mothers are special people. Jesus loved his mother Mary very much. We love her because she is Jesus’ mother and because she loved God so much. The Church even calls her our Blessed Mother. Just like we go to our mothers for help, we can go to Mary. She hears our prayers and asks Jesus to help us.

THE MASS AND ITS PARTS

I. Introductory Rite

We gather with our parish family to remember what Jesus said and did at the Last Supper and His death on the Cross to redeem us.

We welcome one another and make the Sign of the Cross. We ask God and one another for forgiveness.

We sing the Hymn of Praise: Glory to God in the Highest. The priest says the Opening Prayer.

The following are the **TWO MAIN PARTS** of the MASS

II. Liturgy of the Word

We listen to two readings from the Bible. We respond with a Psalm between the two readings.

We stand and sing Alleluia. The priest or deacon reads the Gospel.

The priest or deacon explains the readings and Gospel. We stand and say what we believe as Catholics.

We pray for the Church and all people.

III. Liturgy of the Eucharist

A. Preparation of the Gifts.

The priest or deacon prepares the altar. People bring gifts of bread and wine to the altar.

The offerings of the parish family are collected. The priest prepares our gifts.

We pray with the priest that God will accept our gifts.

B. The Eucharistic Prayer

The priest says a special prayer of Thanksgiving. We join the priest in singing "Holy, Holy, Holy"

We remember what Jesus said and did at the Last Supper and His death on the Cross to redeem us.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit and words and actions of the priest, the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus. The priest prays for all people and we say "Amen."

C. The Communion Rite

We say the Lord's Prayer. We share a sign of peace. The priest receives the Eucharist.

The priest invites us to share in the Eucharist. We say prayers of thanksgiving after Communion.

D. Concluding Rite

The priest blesses us. The priest or deacon tells us to go in peace and serve the Lord.

We go out to live as Jesus' followers.



THE INSIDE OF THE CHURCH/CHAPEL BUILDING

Become familiar with the principal parts of the physical building.

GATHERING SPACE (VESTIBULE): The area of the church you are in when you come through the main doors. The priest, deacon, altar servers, lector, and extraordinary ministers of the Holy Communion gather here before the start of Mass.

NAVE: The part of the church where the people sit; primary furniture includes pews and kneelers

SANCTUARY (PREDELLA): The area of the church where most of the liturgical activity takes place. It is usually elevated and consists of the altar, Ambo (lectern from which the Scripture readings and Gospel are proclaimed), and seating for the priest and deacon. A crucifix is displayed and candles are lit during mass.

TABERNACLE: The Blessed Sacrament is placed in the tabernacle after Communion at each Mass so that Jesus is always truly present in the reserved Eucharist. A sanctuary lamp is kept burning near the tabernacle to remind us that Jesus is present there.

DAILY MASS CHAPEL: The small room with an altar, ambo, chairs, and kneelers where Mass is celebrated on weekdays.

SACRISTY: A room where the bread, wine, vessels, vestments, and sacramentals are kept and prepared for Mass. The priest, deacon, and altar servers also prepare for Mass here.

RECONCILIATION ROOM: The room where the priest and penitent meet to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance/Confession).

BAPTISTRY: The area in the rear of the church (Nave) where the Baptismal font and immersion Baptismal are located. The special place (Ambry) where the holy oils (Oil of Catechumens used in Baptism, Chrism used in Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders, and Oil of the Sick used in Anointing of the Sick) are kept is nearby.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS: The fourteen Stations of the Cross portray scenes of the passion and death of Christ. These plaques, statues, crosses or symbols are hung along the walls of a Catholic Church and assist Catholics in prayerfully tracing the steps of Christ's passion. The Stations of the Cross can be prayed privately or with a group and are especially meaningful to Catholics during Lent.

HOLY WATER FONT: At the entrance near the Daily Mass Chapel is a receptacle that contains Holy Water. When Catholics enter the Church, they dip their fingertips into the bowl and make the Sign of the Cross as a reminder of their commitment to Christ at Baptism.

POOR BOX: From early times, it was customary to share one's material goods with the needy. In accordance with this tradition, a special receptacle for donations for the poor is usually near the entrance.

SAINT MARGARET CHURCH HISTORY (INFANT JESUS PARISH)



FATHER MCKEEVER

Never was the need for a new parish more sorely felt in the Woodbury area than in the late 1950's. Many new housing developments were being completed and a large percentage of these new Gloucester County residents were Catholic. It was decided that the existing facilities of St. Patrick's Parish in Woodbury and the Church of The Incarnation in Mantua could not absorb the influx. Since property had been purchased in Woodbury Heights, in parish, the Church of St. Margaret Mary, was conceived, and formally incorporated on January 21, 1960. The first trustees were Michael Reitenberger and William Murphy. Mr. Murphy remains a trustee to this day, joined now by Jack Kinnarney. The parish of St. Margaret Mary was established on June 10, 1961, by order of His Excellency, Archbishop Celestine J. Damiano, Bishop Diocese of Camden. There came to the parish in that first year a man all would come to know well, respect, and love over the course of his twelve-year pastorate. This was Father William L. McKeever, St. Margaret's first pastor.

ThIS first years at St. Maragret's were interesting ones indeed. When the parish was first established, temporary arrangements were made to hold Mass on Sundays in the Wood Theatre in Woodbury. After six months, however, these facilities were no longer available. Through the kindness of Monsignor Paul Fairbrother, pastor of St. Patrick's Church, Mass was then held for the parishioners in the cafeteria of St. Patrick's School in Woodbury.

GROUND BREAKING CEREMONY

In June of 1962 groundbreaking took place for the construction of the first building of the parish complex. This building was to consist of a multi-purpose hall and eight classrooms. Less than a year later, the work had been completed.

On Saturday night, February 18, 1963, the first parish social was held in the new hall. A benefit performance was given by the Woodbury Chapter of the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Signing in America. No sidewalks had as yet been constructed and wooden planks were laid in the mud to gain access to the new building. The day following the social, Sunday Mass was said for the first time in the newly constructed hall at Third and Beech. It was a triumphant moment, coming as it did after almost two years of Masses in a theatre and a cafeteria. Among those present that day were the first named associate pastors of St. Margaret's, Reverend Michael Doyle and Reverend Louis Battisti.

*In September of 1961, three months after the establishment of St. Margaret's Parish, Archbishop Damiano paved the way for three nuns belonging to the order of St. Francis of the Infant Jesus from Assisi, Italy, to come and establish their first American Mission in the Camden Diocese. Today, a beautiful twenty-four-room convent with chapel stands on the church property, a true tribute to the work done by the priests and parishioners of St. Margaret's. The convent serves not only as quarters for the teaching nuns, but also as a Mother House of the Sisters and any vocations that they receive.

*Despite its spiritual rewards, the act of creating and expanding the parish complex placed a heavy financial responsibility upon the parishioners. In an attempt to reduce the large parish debt, Father McKeever authorized the Finance Committee to engage the services of a professional fundraising corporation to promote and run an increased giving campaign. On February 23, 1971, the first meeting was held. One hundred and sixty volunteers attended, and the goal of cutting the parish debt in half within a four-year period was decided upon. It was felt that this could be accomplished by increasing each family's weekly offering by one dollar. This donation was collected by volunteers.

*Father McKeever remained our pastor until August, 1973, at which time he left to assume his new duties as pastor of Our Lady of Peace Parish in Pitman, New Jersey. St. Margaret parishioners gave him a farewell reception on August 16, 1973. It was a sad time because they were losing their first pastor, one who had always expressed great personal concern for his parishioners' individual, as well as their collective, needs.

Chapel in 1962. *As much as St. Margaret's hated to see Father McKeever leave, his departure did pave the way for another strong personality under whose leadership this parish has met-and will continue to meet-prosperity. Monsignor David F. Budney arrived in August, 1973, leaving his pastorate at St. Michael's Parish in Cedarville.

*The people wanted and needed a new house of worship, so Monsignor Budney met with the parishioners in the early part of 1976 to discuss the idea. Meetings were held with Greenfield Village and early part of 1976 to discuss the idea. Meetings were held with Greenfield Village and Greenfield Heights parishioners on January 29, 1976; with Oak Valley parishioners on the fifth of February, and with those of Woodbury Heights on February 12th. One of the first positive things to evolve was the formation of a building committee, which held its first meeting on February 18th of that year.

The following steps were decided upon that evening:

*First, the property adjacent to the school and hall would be sold to raise needed capital. In conjunction with the selling of the property, a major fund-raising campaign was instituted that would be run by a professional organization. Also, boundary changes were decided upon and, finally, regionalization of the school was sought. Under Monsignor Budney's guidance, and complemented by the able assistance of the trustees and committee of chairmen formed from among the men and women of the parish, the building-fund drive was started in the early part of 1977 with the hope of realizing three hundred thousand dollars for the construction of a church. The drive consisted of three phases; advanced gift phase, memorial phase, and general phase.

*Groundbreaking for the new church, attended by His Excellency, the Most Reverend George Guilfoyle, Bishop of Camden Diocese, took place on Sunday, March 20, 1977, during the kick-off of the general phase of the drive. Charged with the construction of the new church was the firm of John Raffa and Sons. The architect was Lawrence P. Polillo, and the stained-glass windows were executed by Kenneth A. Crocker. The initial campaign goal of three hundred thousand dollars was not only met, but was exceeded by fifty thousand dollars. In addition to being successful monetarily, the drive also acted as a revitalizing agent for the spirit of the parish.

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

- 1961-Parish established
- 1962-Rectory purchased
- 1963-School and Hall opened
- 1966-Convent dedicated and four new classrooms opened
- 1970-4 additional classrooms opened
- 1977-Groundbreaking for church
- 1978-Dedication of new church
- 1988-Fire destroyed church and chapel
- 1989-Refurbished church opened
- 1991-Thirtieth Anniversary celebrated

-2010-MERGED TO FORM INFANT JESUS PARISH



SAINT JOHN VIANNEY CHURCH



HISTORY OF SAINT JOHN VIANNEY PARISH

St. John Vianney Parish began in 1914 when Mass was celebrated in a private home. Masses were moved in 1929 to a newly constructed church known as "St. Agnes Parish" which became a mission of St. Teresa Parish in Rummeneede. In 1936 the church fell prey to fire and was destroyed. Construction of the present day church was completed in 1939 under the leadership of Fr. Joseph Fritz, the pastor of St. Teresa Parish. Only July 13, 1946, Bishop Eustace established St. Agnes Parish naming Father Martin D. McMahon as the first pastor. As of 1955 St. Agnes Parish was the only Catholic Church in Washington, Gloucester, and Deptford Townships. In February, 1971, St. Agnes Parish moved to its new home on Coles Road. Also in February 1971 Bishop Guilfoyle established the new parish of St. John Vianney. The first pastor, Fr. Walter Reilly, revitalized the parish under the patronage of St. John Vianney and had the present rectory built. Father Reilly left in 1975 followed by Msgr. John B. Lubicky who retired in 1993. Pastor Msgr. James J. Rynne (1993-2004) over the years made numerous improvements to the church. Current pastor, Fr. Timothy E. Byerley had the Grotto built, renovated the church and rectory.

This 1924 photo shows the old St. Agnes Church located on Good Intent Rd. in Blackwood. This was built shortly before 1920. The church was destroyed by fire in 1937. The present frame building, now known as St. John Vianney was built on the same grounds in 1938.



CHURCH MANNERS

1. Come to Mass on time, dressed appropriately.
2. Enter the church in silence and with respect.
3. Dip your finger in Holy Water and make the Sign of the Cross carefully.
4. When you reach the pew where you will sit genuflect to Jesus in the Tabernacle to show that He is King of your heart. God is to be adored. Genuflecting is a sign of adoration. Genuflecting says to God: "I know You are present here and now."
5. Kneel in your pew and fold your hands and pray.
6. Participate in and pray the Holy Mass or whatever celebration you have come to Church for. An aid for praying the Holy Mass is to use the missal and follow along with the priest. If you get uncomfortable or tired at Church or Mass-look up at Jesus and keep trying to be good.
7. When it is time to leave:
 - a. Always wait until the priest has given the final blessing and has left. It is **very** rude to leave before that.
 - b. As you leave the pew you are sitting in, genuflect facing the tabernacle. Remember that Jesus is always with you.
 - c. Go quietly out the door.
 - d. If you go out through the Gathering Space, greet the priest and deacon.
8. Stay a while after Mass and make a good thanksgiving.
9. You can make a visit to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

Pick 3 things you will work on this year. Circle them. Close your eyes and picture yourself doing these things.



THE TWO GREAT COMMANDMENTS that contain the whole Law of God are:

1. You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. (This commandment relates to the first three of the Ten Commandments).
2. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. (This commandment relates to the last seven of the Ten Commandments).

THE LITURGICAL YEAR (THE CHURCH YEAR)

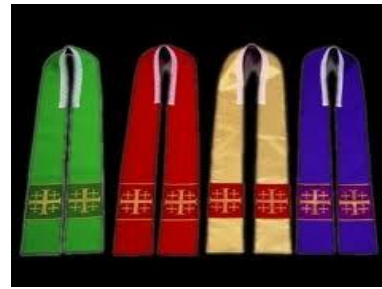
The Church year, or liturgical year, is an annual cycle of seasons and celebrations in which Catholics honor and celebrate the mystery of Christ and the special events of His life.

THE SEASONS OF THE CHURCH YEAR ARE: Advent Christmas Ordinary Time
Lent Easter Triduum Easter Season

LITURGICAL VESTMENTS: Vestments are special garments worn by priests, deacons, and other ministers during Mass and other rituals. Usually, the color of vestments is determined by the liturgical season or the nature of the ritual. Vestments developed from the clothing of the Romans in the first century after Christ. The earliest priests dressed in everyday clothing. Later, Roman styles changed, but the priests continued to wear their conservative dress. By the 9th century, certain clothing was prescribed for wear at Mass by Pope Leo IV. By the 13th century, vestments became highly decorated, weighty and cumbersome. Modern vestments are made of light fabrics with simplified designs.



ALB: From the Latin word “albus,” meaning “white,” it is a long white tunic worn by the Romans and Greeks until about 400 A.D., it is the symbol of purity



STOLE: From the Latin word “stolus,” meaning “scarf,” the stole was used in Rome as a symbol of authority, it represents God-given authority to carry out the tasks of ordination. On priests, the stole is worn over the right shoulder and crossing to the left side of the body.



CHASUBLE: From the Latin word “chasuble,” meaning “little house,” all-weather cloak in Roman times, with only an opening for the head and a little hood. In later years, it was heavily decorated and became very cumbersome, so the sides were cut out. Modern chasubles reflect the liturgical color of the season or feast being celebrated.



DALMATIC: A sleeved outer garment, fashioned after the chasuble. It was originally patterned after the royal vest of Dalmatia, once worn by kings at solemn ceremonies.

LITURGICAL COLORS

Gold: Color of Celebration, used on great feast days such as Christmas.

Green: Color of Hope, used during Ordinary Time.

Purple: Color of Penitence, used during Advent and Lent.

Red: Color of Fire or Blood, used Passion Sunday, Good Friday, Feasts of Martyrs and Feasts of the Holy Spirit, such as Pentecost.

Rose: Color of Joy, sometimes worn on Gaudete Sunday in Advent and Laetare Sunday in Lent. It signals the approaching end of a season of penitence.

White: Color of Purity, used on special Feasts and in Masses of Christian Burial for the dead.

THE APOSTLES' CREED AND NICENE CREED



The word “creed” comes from a Latin word and means “I believe.” The Apostles’ Creed and the Nicene Creed are summaries of all that Catholics believe as divinely revealed truth. The Apostles’ Creed is a personal profession of faith used since the early centuries; catechumens were required to learn and recite it before being baptized. The Nicene Creed, which we recite together at Mass, takes its name from the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D.

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended to the dead.

On the third day He rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

NEW TRANSLATION-NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; Through him all things were made.

For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.

I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.

Amen.



HISTORY OF THE ROSARY

The history of the Rosary is very interesting. The Rosary was originally a way to pray for the people who could not read. Because they were unable to read the 150 Psalms in the Bible, people would say 150 Our Fathers or Hail Marys and used a chain with beads to keep track of the number of prayers said.

St. Dominic helped to popularize the Rosary as a private devotion through his preaching. In 1214, St. Dominic prayed in a forest near Toulouse for three days and nights. He had been discouraged with the slow progress of his work. Our Lady appeared to him with a beautiful wreath of roses. She asked St. Dominic to pray the Rosary every day to reform the world and to teach the people to say the rosary. He returned to the cathedral and began to preach about the Rosary.

THE SYMBOLISM OF THE ROSARY



The Rosary was also called the *Angelic Psalter* or the *Psalter of Mary* because the ten Hail Marys of all fifteen of its original mysteries correspond to the number of the Psalms of David in the Bible. Until 2002, there were only fifteen mysteries of the Rosary: the Joyful, Sorrowful, and Glorious Mysteries, taken from events in the lives of Jesus and the Blessed Mother. In that year, Pope John Paul II introduced the Luminous Mysteries, taken from the public ministry of Jesus. Each mystery has a scriptural basis except the last two Glorious Mysteries.

The Rosary takes its name from a popular title for Mary: "Mystical Rose." The word Rosary means wreath or crown of roses. Each time people say the Rosary devoutly, they place a crown of roses on the heads of Jesus and Mary. The Hail Mary is comprised of the angelic greeting, Elizabeth's greeting to Mary, and the petition "Holy Mary, Mother of God..." added during the Middle Ages.

The first three Hail Marys on the short rope are for Faith, Hope, and Love.

The Rosary can be prayed anywhere: in the car, on a long trip, in bed at night, in Church before Mass, while waiting for someone, as a family on special occasions. Keep one in your pocket. You will be amazed at how useful it can be.

MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY

The Joyful Mysteries

(Said on Mondays and Saturdays, the Sundays of Advent, and Sundays from Epiphany until Lent)



1. The Annunciation
(Humility)



2. The Visitation
(Fraternal Charity)



3. The Nativity
(Love of God)



4. The Presentation
(Spirit of Sacrifice)



5. Finding in the Temple
(Zeal)

The Luminous Mysteries

(Said on Thursdays)



1. The Baptism of the Lord
(Sacrament of Baptism)



2. The Wedding of Cana
(Fidelity)



3. The Proclamation of the Kingdom
(Desire for Holiness)



4. The Transfiguration
(Spiritual Courage)



5. The Institution of the Eucharist
(Love of Our Eucharistic Lord)

The Sorrowful Mysteries

(Said on Tuesdays, Fridays throughout the year;
and daily from Ash Wednesday until Easter Sunday)



1. Agony in the Garden (True Repentance)



2. Scourging at the Pillar (Mortification)



3. Crowning with Thorns (Moral Courage)



4. Carrying the Cross (Patience)



5. The Crucifixion (Final Perseverance)

The Glorious Mysteries

(Said on Wednesdays and the Sundays from Easter until Advent)



1. The Resurrection (Faith)



2. The Ascension (Hope)



3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit (Zeal)

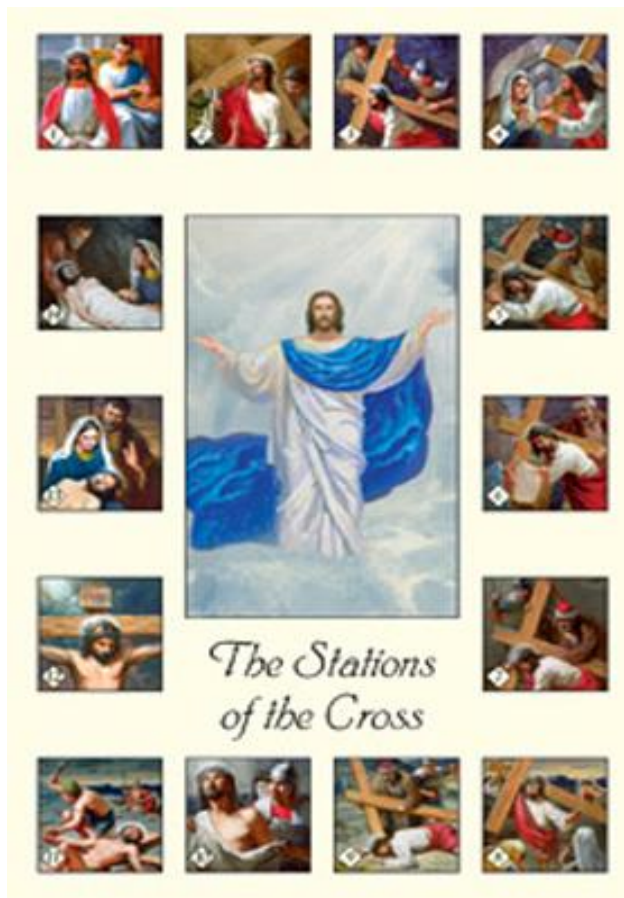


4. The Assumption (Happy Death)



5. The Coronation of B.V.M. (Love for Mary)

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

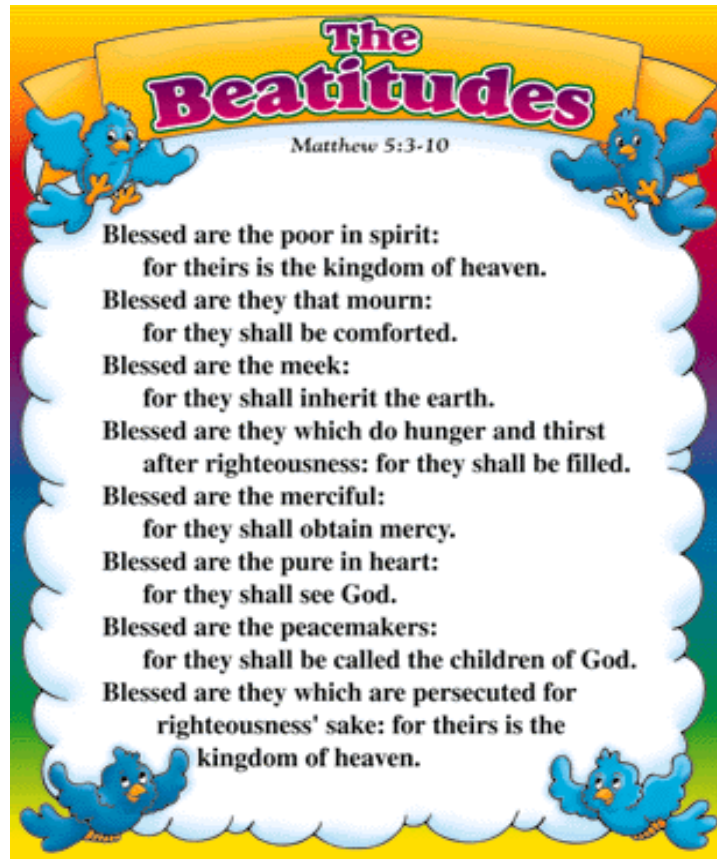


1. Jesus is condemned to death
2. The Cross is laid upon Him
3. Jesus falls for the first time
4. Mary meets Jesus
5. Simon of Cyrene is made to help Jesus bear the Cross
6. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus
7. Jesus falls for the second time
8. Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem
9. Jesus falls for the third time
10. Jesus is stripped of his garments
11. Jesus is crucified
12. Jesus dies on the Cross
13. Jesus is taken down from the Cross
14. Jesus is laid in the tomb.

The Stations of the Cross recall the places where Jesus suffered and died. The route of Jesus' passion and death is found in Jerusalem and has been named the Via Dolorosa; this is Latin for "the way of sorrows." Many Catholics travel to Jerusalem on a pilgrimage to retrace Jesus' steps as He suffered and died for us.

The Way begins near the site of the old Roman court where Jesus was condemned to die. It proceeds through the narrow streets where Jesus carried His cross, fell three times, came face-to-face with His grieving mother, met Simon from the city of Cyrene, Veronica, and the women of Jerusalem. You eventually find yourself at the base of a hill called *Golgotha*, "the place of the skulls," where Jesus hung upon a cross. You then go to the area where a tomb had been donated and where Jesus' body was laid to rest.

Most Catholic churches have pictures or statues that recall these sacred moments and the part they played in Jesus' passion.



THE THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES

The **Theological Virtues** are: Faith, Hope, and Love (charity). The Theological Virtues are called so because they come from God, and they are given to us at Baptism. They are a free gift that we can't earn or merit but, once God has given them to us, we need to respond to them in order to keep them active in us. We learn the Acts of Faith, Hope and Love in order to ask God to strengthen these virtues of Faith, Hope and Love in us.

AN ACT OF FAITH

O my God, I firmly believe that you are one God
 in three divine Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
 I believe that your divine Son became man and died for our sins,
 and that he will come to judge the living and the dead.
 I believe these and all the truths
 which the holy Catholic Church teaches,
 because You have revealed them who are eternal truth and wisdom,
 Who can neither deceive nor be deceived.
 In this faith I intend to live and die. Amen.

AN ACT OF HOPE

O my God, relying on your infinite goodness and promises,
I hope to obtain pardons of my sins,
the help of your grace, and life everlasting,
through the merits of Jesus Christ,
my Lord and Redeemer. Amen.

AN ACT OF LOVE

O my God, I love you above all things,
with my whole heart and soul,
because you are all good and worthy of all love.
I love my neighbor as myself for the love of you.
I forgive all who have injured me,
and I ask pardon of all whom I have injured. Amen.

THE CARDINAL OR MORAL VIRTUES

The Cardinal or moral virtues guide our minds and actions to lead a good life as we journey back to God who created us and loves us. They are: PRUDENCE, JUSTICE, FORTITUDE, AND TEMPERANCE.

SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY

Admonish (warn) the sinner.

Instruct (teach) the ignorant.

Counsel the doubtful.

Comfort the sorrowful.

Bear wrongs patiently.

Forgive all injuries.

Pray for the living and the dead.

CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY

Feed the hungry.

Give drink to the thirsty.

Clothe the naked.

Visit the imprisoned.

Shelter the homeless.

Visit the sick.

Bury the dead.

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE (Living God's Laws)

When we examine our conscience, we thank God for giving us the strength to make good choices. Reflecting on the choices we have made helps us to make choices that bring us closer to God. Take a few moments to think quietly and prayerfully about ways you follow each of the commandments.

First Commandment: I am the Lord, your God: you shall not have strange gods before Me.

- Do I try to love God above all things?
- Do I really believe in, trust, and love God?
- Do I pray to God sometime each day?
- How do I encourage others to trust in God?
- How do I take an active part in the worship of God, especially in the Mass and the other Sacraments?
- How do I try to learn more about the Catholic faith?

Second Commandment: You shall not take the name of the Lord, Your God, in vain.

- Do I respect God's name and the name of Jesus?
- How have I used God's name?
- Have I called on God and asked Him to be with me?
- How do I use the names of Mary and all the saints?
- Have I respected the names of my Family members, friends, and teachers?
- How do I act when I am in church?

Third Commandment: Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.

- How have I kept the Lord's Day holy?
- What do I do to participate in Mass every Sunday?
- On Sundays, in what ways have I: -rested and relaxed? -shared time with my family? -helped others? -remembered God? -praised and thanked God?

Fourth Commandment: Honor your father and your mother.

- Do I obey my parents in all that they ask of me?
- Have I thanked my parents or guardians for all that they do?
- Do I respect my brothers and sisters?
- Do I help them?
- Do I settle disagreements without fighting or arguing?
- Do I obey my grandparents and respect them?
- How have I shown respect for older people?
- Do I obey my teachers and others in authority?
- Do I obey police officers, crossing guards, firefighters, and other officials?
- Have I followed the laws of my town, state, and country?

Fifth Commandment: You shall not kill.

- Have I respected the dignity of all people?
- Have I shown by my actions that all people have the right to life?
- Have I lived each day in a healthy way?
- Have I done anything that could harm myself or others?
- Have I spoken out against violence and injustice?
- Have I lived in peace with my family and neighbors?

