

# First Holy Communion Church Tour

## St. Mary of the Visitation Parish

**Baptismal Font** – People (babies, children and adults!) are baptized here. Baptism makes you a member of God's family!!! Water is poured on the person as the words of Baptism are spoken. Not shown on this picture are **Holy Water Fonts** found at entrances to the Church. We dip our fingers in Holy Water and make the sign of the Cross as we enter Church to help us prepare to pray, and as a reminder of our own Baptism! Find a Holy Water Font – then draw it into the picture!

**Altar** – The special table where we offer Mass – the table of the Lord. We are fed with Jesus from this table. Before Jesus came, people would build an altar out of stone and then set gifts for God on it. We offer Jesus to God the Father on our altar at Mass, when the bread and wine are changed into Jesus' Body and Blood on the altar. There is a picture of the Last Supper of Jesus and the Apostles on our altar at St. Mary of the Visitation, reminding us that the first Mass ever was offered by Jesus at the Last Supper!

**Priest** – A priest is called by God to serve God's people and offer us God's life through the Sacraments. He preaches the Word of God to us! God gives priests the sacred power to change bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus at Mass, and to forgive our sins in the name of God in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

**Ambo** – At this stand or lectern, someone stands to proclaim readings from the Bible to the whole congregation assembled. Hearing the Word of God proclaimed happens during the first part of Mass.

**Presider's Chair/Priest's Chair** – This is where the priest sits as he presides over the liturgy, the worship that is being offered to God at Mass or other times of prayer or Sacraments.

**Tabernacle** – During Communion at Mass, people come forward to receive the Host, which used to be bread, but during Mass was transformed into Jesus Himself by God's power, even though we cannot see Him with our eyes. At the end of Communion, all the Hosts which were not received by the people are put into the Tabernacle, which is like a little Home for Jesus, who is present in the Host! We always go down on one knee when we pass by the Tabernacle, to greet Jesus in a special way. This is called "genuflect". We genuflect to show our respect and love to Jesus who is in the Tabernacle! We are quiet in Church so that we can pray and allow others to pray, because Jesus is present, truly present in the Tabernacle. We kneel and talk to Him.

**Sanctuary Lamp** – This is a candle, usually surrounded by red glass. It is located near the Tabernacle. When this candle is lit, which is almost all the time in a Catholic Church, it means that Jesus is present in the Tabernacle in the Host! So the red candle reminds us that He is truly with us there! At St. Mary of the Visitation, we also have a red light in our bell tower which is a reminder to everyone in Hespeler and all of Cambridge, that Jesus is truly present in our Church and an invitation for everyone to come to Him!

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**Pews** – This is the seating area for the congregation in the Church. They are usually made of wood and have kneelers attached as well because sometimes during Mass we kneel. Sitting, standing and kneeling are different ways we use our body to pray. We sit to show we are listening, listening to the Word of God. We stand to show respect and attentive prayer. We kneel to show we worship and adore God, especially as the priest changes the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus at the Consecration, at which time you usually hear the altar server ring the **bells**, and also kneel after Communion as we talk with Jesus in our hearts.

**Crucifix** – At the front of the Church there is a large Crucifix, which represents Jesus as he died on the Cross to save us from our sins. We know that Jesus is risen from the dead now and alive! However, we have a crucifix in our Church so that we will never forget the awesome and wonderful love that Jesus has for us, that He would even offer His life so that we could be with Him someday in Heaven!

**Mary Statue and Saint Statues**– We have statues and pictures in our Catholic Churches to remind us of the people who are with God in heaven now! A statue is like a 3-D picture! Just like you have pictures of people you love in your home, your room or your wallet, we have in our Church which is God’s House and our House (because we are God’s kids!) pictures of the Saints who are part of God’s family with us! Mary is our Heavenly Mother who takes care of us. The Saints are like our older brothers and sisters who pray for us, give us good example and who we can ask to help us on earth.

**Candles** – We have candles near or on our altar and in different places in the Church to remember that Jesus is the Light of the World. God’s light shines on us! There are also candles by Saint Statues or by the Statue of Jesus which we light and then say a prayer as a way of praying for someone to Mary, a Saint or to Jesus. Mary and the Saints bring our prayers to Jesus in a special way.

**Stained Glass Windows**– The stained glass windows in Church often have stories from the Bible or holy images in them in order to help us pray and remember the wonderful things God has done. When stained glass windows were first made a long time ago, most people could not read. These windows were called “the Bible of the Poor” because anyone could see the pictures and then tell the stories of the Bible without having to be able to read or having a Bible, was rare because every Bible had to be copied by hand! The stained glass windows at our Church show images of the 7 Sacraments.

**Stations of the Cross**– Around the Church, there are 14 “pictures” that tell the story of how Jesus was sentenced to death, carried the Cross, died on the Cross and was buried. These are a reminder of all Jesus did for love of us! During Lent, we gather as a community and pray “the Stations of the Cross”, stopping at each station to pray, sing and remember what Jesus did for us!

7.	presiders/priests chair	14.	crucifix
6.	Baptismal font	13.	stations of the cross
5.	pews	12.	ambo
4.	Sanctuary lamp	11.	priest
3.	Mary statue	10.	stained glass window
2.	alter	9.	tabernacle
1.	candles	8.	saint statue

### Answer Key

Try to get the right answers yourself before looking here! 😊

We hope this has helped you to get to know God’s House better and feel comfortable – because as God’s Children, this is your House too!!!!