

Holy Trinity Catholic Church
RCIA Class Transcript
Tour of the Church
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Tonight's topic is the Tour of the Church. What I think I'll do first, though, is start talking a little bit about church architecture, and then we'll get into talking about the different things that we see at church, such as the vestments, and the sacred vessels that we use at Mass. The word *Church* actually comes from a Greek word "ekklesia." Latin word again, "ecclesia," and that word actually means "those that are called together," "those that are assembled together."

The first churches were built in the early days of Christianity, probably in the first couple of hundred years. There was persecution of the Christian Church under the emperors, such as Nero, Decius, and Diocletian. The first churches began to be built under Constantine about the year 315. Before that, the people were meeting in peoples' homes for services. In the first 300 years, they were also meeting in the catacombs, the underground tunnels underneath the city of Rome. Churches eventually began to be built. Most of them were in the center of towns.

If you go to Europe today, and you want to find where the church is, just go to city center. Usually they have steeples or bell towers, because in those days, of course, that was the easiest way for people to see the churches at a distance. Back then the Church was the very center of a person's whole life. Nowadays, you know, the shopping mall might be the center, or some other place; but in those days, everything was centered around the cathedral, or the basilica, or the churches in Europe. That was always the largest building in town.

The shape of most of the ancient churches was in the "cruciform" shape, or the shape of the Cross. What's interesting about the cruciform shape is that it actually reminds us of the Body of Christ. What's also interesting is this is going to be the shape of our church as well, of Holy Trinity. So, we try to do a traditional church, as much as we can.

What we see in these churches is that the *tabernacle* would be here. As I go through this, I'll write down some of the words so that you'll get to know what these words mean. The tabernacle is the most important thing you'll see in a Catholic Church. Even the Jews in the Old Testament had the tabernacle, or a tent, a dwelling place. The tabernacles were set up by the People of God as they traveled throughout the desert. They said that God dwelt in a special way in His tabernacles. The tabernacles would be like little meeting tents, and that's where they would have worship of God. Today we call our tabernacle, usually the gold box, you'll see those in every Catholic Church, usually they're right here in the center. Some places will put them on the side, but usually they're right here. Before we leave tonight, we'll have all of us go over and get a tour of the

tabernacle, which is here in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel at the monastery. That's where the Lord is, Our Lord Jesus Christ. You can always tell that the Lord is present, because there will be a candle lit. It's called the *sanctuary lamp*. As we're going through this, I would recommend having these two handouts nearby. This is called "The Sacred Vessels," and these are "The Sacred Vestments."

This whole area would be called the sanctuary. The word *sanctuary* comes from a Latin word *sanctus*, meaning "holy." The holiest place in the Catholic Church, or any church for that matter, would be this area here, called the sanctuary. The *altar* would be here, usually right at that spot in the sanctuary; then the pews, comes from a French word meaning "benches," or "seats." What's interesting is that when you look at the church, you'll see that it really resembles a body. You have Christ, the Head, because of the tabernacle. The tabernacle is where we keep the Blessed Sacrament, or Holy Communion, Christ Himself. Christ is the Head of the Church, so He's there in the very central, and the Head of the Church. Then, where we sit, we make up the arms and the legs of the Church. We're the Body of Christ. We sit out here. It's the shape of a human person. The arms, and the legs, and the head - Christ being at the Head. The altar is usually somewhere in this area, which is the heart.

As you can see from this beautiful chapel, the way it was originally built back in the 1920's and 1930's, is that it is in the shape of a cross – this way, and then the arms going out here. I've seen some pictures of the church before it was renovated, and there was I believe an altar rail here. All the pews were wooden pews going this way, and the main center aisle came up here. The altar was up there. I believe it was a stone or a marble altar, and it's called a High Altar if it has the very tall part going up. The tabernacle is in the center, and then, probably, shrines of Our Lady and St. Joseph, and those statues are now moved out here, again those beautiful marble statues. So you can see, that's the original design of the church.

Our church, basically, will look like the monastery here, but much larger. Where this seats 150, or maybe 200, we'll seat between 1,000 and 1,200. Our church will also have the columns, and the pillars going up the side as well; so it should be very beautiful, with 20 stained glass windows going around: 10 on one side, and 10 coming down the other. In our church, we'll have our confessionals, over here and here. We have two Cry Rooms. I guess we could call them right in the armpits of the church! Some people say "Father, are those Cry Rooms large enough for Holy Trinity, with all the 500 kids?" These two Cry Rooms are large. This is all glass, right there and there. So it'll be very easy to see.

This is called a vestibule, or a *narthex*. That's a Greek word meaning "like an entranceway." This will be glass as well. There will be speakers out here in the narthex, or the vestibule. The idea of the vestibule is that you want to transition from coming from the world into the Church of God, or the House of God. The Church is called God's House. You want to be able to transition from the

worldliness, and all your cares of the world, and all the busy activities, so you transition from the world into Sacred place. The narthax is supposed to do that. That's why you'd have coffee and donuts out there. You wouldn't have coffee and donuts in the church, because this is a very holy and a very sacred place. You could have them out in the vestibule, which is fine. That's an area for gathering, for community, for fellowship, and for socializing.

Once we enter into this, this part here is called the *nave*. We get the word "navy" from that. "Nav" is the word meaning "the ship," so most churches were in the shape, for example, of the ship. In fact, the Church is always seen as the Ark of Salvation, almost like a ship upon which people go into to be saved. Remember, at the time of Noah, when the Flood came, the people that were on the Ark were saved – those who weren't were drowned outside. Many of the churches have a sort of nautical feel to them, to remind us of the Ark of Salvation, wanting to be on the Ark when the Flood came, that we could be saved.

This is the *transept*, which goes across here. The transept is the arms of the church. I mentioned here is the altar, the Altar of Sacrifice. This is where the *Sacrifice of the Mass* takes place. As we'll hear in a few weeks, the Mass is the same sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross. It's not a new sacrifice; it's the one and only sacrifice, of Jesus offering Himself to the Father; but we are privileged that at the Mass, we are made present at the Last Supper and at Calvary. When we attend Mass, time and space are pushed aside, and we're present at the Last Supper and present at Calvary.

The altar is where sacrifices are done. In the Old Testament, they had animal sacrifices. Those are all gone, because Christ, the Lamb of God, offered Himself, and He is the One Sacrifice to the Father. He's the Perfect Sacrifice. All the Old Testament offerings of lamb and bullock and goat, that was only to prefigure Jesus offering Himself to the Father as the Lamb of God. When we attend Mass, Mass is always said around an altar, because that's where the sacrifice of Christ takes place. Jesus' cross was like an altar, upon which He gave His life for our salvation.

You'll always see a baptismal font in church, which is where the adults or the babies are baptized. Often times it's here in the narthax. There is deep significance for that, because we became Christians through Baptism. That's how we first entered Christianity, was through Baptism. Baptismal fonts are often put in the front of the Church to remind us that's how we entered into Christianity, and this is how we will enter into the Church. For example, when you come into church here, you'll see the baptismal font right over there, and that candle is called the Paschal Candle. That is blessed at the Holy Saturday night mass. The baptismal font doesn't always have to be there. It could be at other places in the church. In our new church it will be up here, in this area. I did that for a couple of reasons. One, I think that, at the Easter Vigil, it will be very nice – everyone will be able to see people being baptized. Also, we do so many baptisms at the

parish (I've done more than 500 baptisms in the last three years) that we usually will have, seven, eight, ten babies being baptized every other Saturday. It's very difficult to have ten families standing back here in a vestibule, all trying to stand around and watch a baptism, especially for Grandma. It's hard for them to stand for that entire length of time. By having the baptismal font here, you can have families sit in these pews during the baptism. Then they come up individually as a family to have the baby baptized. That's our wisdom of having the baptismal font in the front.

We have holy water containers at all the doors, so when people come into the doors and the different places where there are doors; you'll see what's called a *holy water font*, these small dishes. You dip your hand in, and you bless yourself with the holy water, and that reminds you of how you became a Christian at your Baptism. Like those of you who are baptized, when you come into class every Tuesday night, you should go over to that Holy Water font, and you should dip your fingers in, either one or two fingers in, and then bless yourself, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, because you were baptized in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. It's a reminder of your Baptism, and you're encouraged to do that as you come in the church, and as you leave church every Sunday, or whenever you come here to the monastery.

In looking at my notes, there are other names you'll see. The ceiling is called the *vault*. And when you go to Europe and see some of the great cathedrals, you'll see the magnificent ceilings or vaults that they have as well over there.

Sometimes people ask, "Well what does the word *parish* mean?" because we have churches, but we have Holy Trinity parish. The word *parish* originally comes from a word meaning "a territorial division." If you go down to some of the islands, you'll see "St. Andrew's Parish," "St. John's Parish," "St. George's Parish." It meant a district. But eventually, when churches were put in those places, they called each of those churches a parish. So a parish means "a territorial division."

I mentioned that next to every tabernacle is a sanctuary lamp. This is lit to remind people that Christ is truly present in the Blessed Sacrament. Usually it's a red candle that is lit. Let's say, for example, you go into a church, and sometimes they have to remove the Blessed Sacrament. Let's say they're going to do some painting, or construction, and they need to take the Lord from the tabernacle. What'll happen is that the priest will open the tabernacle. Tabernacles are always locked, according to Canon Law. They have to be locked, and they have to be on a sturdy pedestal. That is so somebody just can't come in and steal it, because there have been vandalisms taking place in churches for centuries, where especially Satanists will try to come in and steal the Eucharist, the Blessed Sacrament, the Holy Communion.

Tabernacles are really so important that they are kept locked. But let's say that the priest needs to take the Blessed Sacrament, and so he would open the tabernacle door, and then he would maybe leave the tabernacle doors open. He would blow out the candle, and then take the Blessed Sacrament to another location, and light another candle there. The Lord should always have a candle lit next to Him.

When you come for *Eucharistic Adoration* at the Rectory, you'll see a beautiful *monstrance*. If you notice on the sheet of "Sacred Vessels," this monstrance is a representative of a sunburst. It's about a two-foot tall display receptacle that holds the Blessed Sacrament. We would take the large host, and we would place it in the monstrance. It comes from a Latin word "monstro" which means "to show," like the word "demonstrate," we get from that. When we have the Lord exposed in the Blessed Sacrament in the monstrance, we light usually six candles, three on each side, because it's a very special way to adore the Lord when the Lord is exposed in the Blessed Sacrament.

Usually, the Lord is in a *ciborium*, which we'll see here. This is a ciborium. It's a gold container with a lid. The hosts that are consecrated at the Mass are then placed in a ciborium, and placed in the tabernacle, and then locked. But if we were to take the Lord from the tabernacle to a different location, if He wasn't going to go back to the tabernacle, we would blow out the sanctuary lamp to let people know the Lord was not present there. It's really beautiful when you go into any Catholic Church throughout the world, you can always find the tabernacle. You can go in, and you'll see the gold box or container, and then you can see the sanctuary lamp lit, and then you know that the Lord is there. And we call that the *Real Presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament*, that you really can sense the presence of the Lord in Holy Communion in the tabernacle. There's a sense that someone is there, and it's the Lord.

It was pretty interesting when the Pope went to Baltimore; the Secret Service had to go into the Seminary first, and the Secret Service had to make sure there was nobody there, that nobody had put any bombs in the Seminary chapel. They took these dogs in there, with a very keen sense of smell; they can sense if there's a person there, or if there's a bomb. They had taken these dogs in, and all the dogs went right to the tabernacle, and sort of knelt down, because they kept barking, saying "Somebody is there; somebody is there." That was a pretty neat story the Secret Service told after the Pope had visited.

Again, the Church is the *House of God*. In many of the tabernacles, when you open them, there will be a curtain, which represents the curtain that hung in the Temple of God, and a veil. Veils are very important in Scripture. It meant something was very sacred or very holy. That's why a woman, when she gets married, she'll often have a veil over her head as she walks up. If she wants to, she can wear a veil. And the veil represents a sense of mystery, a sense of sacredness. The veil is lifted during the wedding ceremony, at that point. You'll

see many veils that we have at Mass. You see this is over the altar. It's called the *Chalice Veil*. And then in the tabernacle, when you open the tabernacle, there's usually a veil there as well.

What you'll also see in every Catholic Church are candles. Usually you have candles on both sides of the altar. The way the candles originated was at the time of the catacombs. In the first 300 years, most of the Masses were underground in the catacombs, because it was illegal to be a Christian. The Christians went into these underground tunnels, or burial chambers, that were there in Rome, and that's where they had their Masses. Of course, there was no electricity; so the only way that the priest could read the Scriptures and read the prayer books was to light candles, or tapers, or torches, and those would then be used for Mass.

Even though the Church in the 300's has now come out of the catacombs, we still continue to use candles on both sides of the altar, to remind us that at one time the Church was persecuted; the Church was underground, and that's the only way that they could see, was the lighting of candles or tapers.

Sometimes when you go into churches you'll see *votive lights*. Have you ever seen those little, maybe 20 or 30 tiny candles? Those are called votive lights. The word *votive* comes from a Latin word meaning "a vow" or "a promise." What people would do is when they would visit these churches, or in the catacombs, they would carry a torch, and they would often times leave that in front of the tombs of one of the saints or one of the martyrs. That became sort of a votive light. Many times, people would make a vow to serve God or to give up something, and then they would leave these candles there.

Nowadays, we have all the candles already there, and you can just light a candle. I'm sure you've heard that expression, "I'm going to go light a candle." It's not good luck; it's not superstition. What it is, though, is you light a candle, and then you kneel down and pray to the Lord. You might pray for a sick mother, or a sick father, or relative; and what the candle means is that even though you have to go back to work and go back to take care of your family, what the lighting of the candle means is that you want God to remember that prayer, even after you've left the Church. Every one of those candles means somebody is praying for a special intention. When you walk into a church and see 50 candles lit, that means that 50 people have been there asking for prayers for those intentions. It's a nice idea to say a prayer for all those people that are being remembered by the lighting of the candle. The idea is that yes, you have to go back to busy work, and you might not be able to think about that; but some of those candles, they could be 24-hour candles, or seven-day candles, and those will be lit for seven days, because they want to be remembered by God for the next week or so.

It's a very beautiful thought that they say that candles and flowers are very beautiful in churches, and one of the writers said that really the candles represent

the presence of the Angels at Mass. And these Angels are beautiful beings of light. The flowers represent the saints, the beautiful virtues of the saints. You'll always see at every church, the flowers, and you'll see the candles, which remind us of the Angels and the saints.

In every Catholic Church, too, you'll see stained glass windows. Now of course here, you can't see them too well at night. During the day, they're magnificent. This particular handout has the explanation of the stained glass windows here at the chapel. Come during the day and bring this, because it is very educational to see how beautiful these windows are. The stained glass windows always tell a story. Usually it's stories from the Bible, the life of Christ, or it might be the story of the life of a saint. Stained glass windows originated during the times of the building of the great cathedrals, because the majority of people could not read in those days. They somehow had to teach the people about Jesus and about the Bible and about the saints. So they came up with a way of making these stained glass windows with images. This is a way to teach the people that couldn't read about their Faith. They have an image of the Crucifixion, or an image of the Resurrection, and these would be very educational. When you go through the beautiful churches of Europe, you'll see the most magnificent stained glass windows in France and Italy, and of course, here even in our own country. The idea was to teach people the Faith by using glass. The windows are also called the "Catechisms in glass" or the "Bible in glass."

Some of the other things you'll see in church are of course the *pulpit*. It has a number of different titles. Usually that would be here, off to the side, a pulpit or an *ambo*, which is a stand, where the Gospel and the readings are proclaimed. The teachings of Scripture and the homily would be given.

Other things you'll see in churches are *statues*. For example, in our church we'll have a beautiful statue of Our Lady, Mary, and a statue of Joseph. And then, probably in these areas here, we'll have other statues of other saints. The ideas of statues are to remind us of the saints that went before us. As we talked about last week, Catholics do not worship statues or images. These are not graven images; these are sacred, holy images, and they remind us of higher realities. Just like our American flag reminds us of our love of our country; the Statue of Liberty reminds us of freedom. If you go to Gettysburg, PA you see statues of those who fought in the wars. The different places you'll see statues that represent – you would go to Washington, DC, and you see Lincoln sitting there. These statues obviously are reminders – we don't worship them; they're good reminders. Some people say "Well, where in the Bible does God say that's okay?" Well, in the Book of Exodus, God tells the Israelites to make an Ark, the Ark of the Covenant, which contained the Ten Commandments; and He said, "On the Ark, make two adoring Angels" or cherubim. These Angels, you've probably seen images of them. They have the large wings; they're bowed; and they have their hands in prayer, and they're on both sides of the Ark of the Covenant. If you want to see an exact replica of the Ark of the Covenant, go to the Shrine of the

Immaculate Conception. Their tabernacle is made of gold, and has the images of the Angels on there.

Sacred images are not forbidden in the Bible. It's graven images that are condemned, things like when the Israelites made the golden calf. Remember, they melted down all their gold jewelry, and Aaron made the golden calf, and they worshiped that. That was a mortal sin - that was terrible, worshiping a graven image. We don't do that in the Church; these images just remind us. For example, if somebody came and took a sledgehammer to Joseph or to Mary, that wouldn't hurt Joseph or Mary up in Heaven, because they're up in Heaven. These are just representations. We should treat them, obviously, with respect. We don't trample on the American Flag, nor do we destroy sacred images, because they remind us of higher realities.

I'm sure in your home, you have pictures of your family, pictures of your kids, pictures of your wife, and these images, you don't worship those; they just remind you of people that you love. Some people might wear a locket, with a picture of somebody that they love.

Anyway, the statues, again, are found in the churches throughout the world. I think they're very good, because we all have different senses, and the Church knows how to use these senses. For hearing, we have beautiful music. Even for the sense of smell, we have incense. If you notice on your sheet, the back of the sheet of "Sacred Vessels," this is called a *thurable*. The word "thurus" in Latin means "incense." The way this opens, this lifts up here, and then you put the charcoal in there, and then you light that with a match. This is called the boat, because many of the incense containers are shaped like a boat. You then take these little granules and place them on the hot coal, and that produces the incense. Incense was used in the Bible to represent the prayers of the saints drifting up to Heaven. When we use incense, not only does it enhance the sense of smell, but it was also to remind us of our prayers that drift up to God.

In some of the places, in the cathedrals, because a lot of the people didn't bathe much, and especially in Europe, it would also help to help the smell. Like if you go to Santiago de Compostela in northern Spain. It's a place of great pilgrimage, and they have the largest thurable in the world. It's about this big; it's about four feet tall, and this round. It takes six men to swing it back and forth. You might have seen this on the History Channel. But Santiago is a place where people would travel from all over Europe, and they would come to this place on pilgrimage. Now if you'd been traveling in the 1500's or 1600's, it took you 40 days to get there, and you haven't bathed, I'm sure the incense would help keep that church smelling a little bit better. So it has a number of reasons.

Let me come over here and explain some things on the altar. Most altars are rectangular. This is sort of a rare one, actually being square. Most of them are about the size of a coffin, believe it or not, because in the early days of the

Church, when the Church was in the catacombs, what they would do is they would actually say Mass on the tombs of the saints. They would cover it with a white cloth, and as you know, they would be maybe three feet wide, and six feet long, and so they would cover that. That's where they would gather around, and they would put the candles around so people could see what's going on.

Let me explain some of these things you'll see at the Mass. This is called the *corporal*. It's found here on your sheet, "the corporal," on the back of the "Sacred Vessels." It's actually folded in nine, because that way no particles or crumbs can come out. The way it's opened is that it's laid on the altar, and then opened like this, so all nine squares are shown. It's called a corporal, from the Latin word *corpus* meaning "the Body of Christ." Corpus Christi, Texas means "Body of Christ."

The corporal is placed on the altar, and on the altar is placed the sacred vessels. The most important of all of them is the *chalice*. It comes from the Latin word *collis*, meaning "a cup." Most chalices are made of silver or gold, usually a precious metal. The cloth that's placed over it is called the *purificator*. We use this to purify and cleanse the chalice. On top of that, the little dish is called a *paten*, which comes again from the Latin word meaning "a dish." This is the *Host*. This is just unleavened bread, pure wheat, flour, and water. This is, at this time, ordinary bread. It's not been consecrated at the Mass; it's not been used at Mass yet, probably tomorrow morning we will.

This is called a *pall*. When you go to a funeral, they place the pall over the casket. It just means "a covering." This particular one has Mary. I have other ones with Jesus or some of the other saints. The way this was invented, again was in the early days. They had to cover the chalice in the catacombs, because when you're underground, it's damp, it's cold; you have drops of water coming down from the ceiling. It's like in Luray Caverns, with the stalagmites and the stalactites all dripping. You have to cover the chalice, also in case insects or bugs would be flying around. You'd want it covered, or little pieces of dust or particles of the cave would be crumbling down. This is a *chalice veil*. As I mentioned, it represents the sense of sacredness and the sense of mystery, covering something very sacred.

On top of it is called the *burse*, and you'll see that on the sheet. A burse means "like a pouch." It opens this way, and then once the corporal is folded, and again, the way the corporal is folded, we have to very careful that no particles of the Lord are lost, because Jesus is present in every particle. Not just the whole host, but if you broke it in half, if you were running out at Communion, and you only had one host left for three people, you could break the host in three, and each person could receive Jesus. They receive just as much Jesus as the other person, as we who have received the whole host. Every particle is the Body of Christ. If you took mirror and shattered it, you could look into each little piece, and still see your reflection. Jesus is still present, even in a half, or the smallest

particle of the host. We fold up the corporal like this, and that way, if there are any particles there. This is not just thrown into the laundry. This is washed in a very special way, like in a large basin of water, and it is soaked in there for many hours. That way, if there were particles, they would be dissolved. The Lord leaves when the matter breaks down, and when it's dissolved. They would be hand washed, and then ironed and folded, and this goes into the burse.

The other things you'll see at the altar, this is the *ciborium*, coming from the Latin word "cibus." You'll see the ciborium. It's like a chalice, except that it has a lid. This is what we use to distribute Holy Communion. At daily Mass, we use the special ciborium, which is called an *Intinction Set*. Intinction means to "dip the host into the Precious Blood of Christ." I use this every day at daily Mass. After Easter, if you come to Mass during the week here, instead of just receiving the host, the Body of Christ, and again when you receive the host, you receive the complete Jesus (Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity), we would dip the host into the consecrated wine, which has become the Blood of Christ. We say "The Body and Blood of Christ," and then you receive that way. Again, it's a very beautiful way to receive, called "by intinction."

These here are called the *cruets*. One would contain water; one would contain wine, and you'll see that on your sheet. In Europe, you'll see very ornate cruets. Usually they're made of gold or silver. If they're metal, you can't see what's inside, and so they would put the initials. In America it doesn't work, because it's "w" and "w," water and wine; so it wouldn't help us in America. But over there, it'd be *aqua*, "a" for water, and "vino" for the wine. There's some beautiful ones too, that they use symbols. They'll use a seashell for the water, and they use grapes, like a little image of grapes for the wine. If you go to museums, you'll see some very beautiful cruets.

This is the *finger bowl*, where the priest washes his hands. This originated when, during the Offertory, in the early days, people would bring up things like a basket of potatoes for the poor. They'd bring up apples. They would bring up all sorts of things. The priest would receive these things; then he had to go wash his hands. This was done during the Mass. Nowadays, it's more symbolic. We don't bring up hogs, and pigs, and cattle, things like that during the Mass, so our hands are clean. We still purify our hands right before we offer the holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

This book is called the *sacramentary*. You'll see that on the top of side B of Sacred Vessels, the sacramentary. The word *sacra* means "holy," so this is the holy book. In the sacramentary are all the prayers of the Mass. The opening prayer, the Eucharistic prayer, the closing prayer. It's divided up – prayers for Advent, for Lent, for Easter, and for Christmas. It has the different ribbons to help you find your pages, and these tabs represent different Eucharistic prayers that the priest can choose from at Mass. And this is the *sacramentary stand*.

One of the neat things I just remembered about the altar is that most of the altars are either made of wood or marble, some very sturdy material. Before Vatican II, every altar had to have an *altar stone*, which was a piece of stone about this big, and it was cut into the altar. In those altar stones were relics of the saints. That's why, when the priest comes and begins Mass, he always first kisses the altar. He's revering and respecting the relics of the saints. Now in the early days of the Church, when the Church was in the catacombs, the entire saint was buried underneath the altar, so they would respect the presence of the saint. But once churches were built, they would take some of the relics of the saints, some of the remains, maybe a piece of clothing that the saint had worn, and then they would place that in the altar, and that would be put in the altar stone. That's why the priest still kisses the altar at the beginning and end of Mass, because this is where the sacrifice is going to take place, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. It's also respecting the relic of the saint that would be buried in the altar.

We have the *crucifix*. You'll always notice that every Catholic Church has to have a crucifix, either on the altar or somewhere up above, sometimes on the back wall; but a crucifix is always necessary. You also have the *processional cross*. That's the one that the altar servers carry in, and that's brought in during a procession.

This book is the *lectionary*. The word *leccio* in Latin means "the word," so this book has all the readings in the Bible divided up into a three-year cycle. If you attend Sunday Mass for three years, you'll hear almost the entire Bible being read to you in a three-year cycle. If you come to daily Mass, it's divided up into two years. If you come to daily Mass, because the readings aren't as long at daily Mass, you'll hear the whole Bible being read to you about every two years.

This is what the altar servers use. It is called a *paten*, the little dish. They place it under the chin or the hands of the person receiving Communion. Again, it's to safeguard any particles or crumbs that might break off when somebody receives Communion.

(A question) The incense we especially use at funerals. Some parishes use the incense every Sunday at the High Mass. There are certain fire codes at public high schools that we have to adhere to, and this is a very small setting. Here on Saturday night, it's so jammed-packed that we don't want people dropping off like flies. Some people might be allergic to smoke in a small area. At funerals, we always incense the casket on the way out. We incense a casket to help prepare the body for burial. It's a sign of reverence and prayers, and we incense it out of respect.

(A question) It depends on how big the candle is. The little ones, like this, are probably 24-hour candles. Some of the larger ones are three days. The ones you'll see, probably back here in the Blessed Sacrament chapel, will be a seven-day candle. Those are only changed every seven days. When you go to a church

and light a candle, you can sort of tell by the size. The little one is about a day; the larger one, three, and then ones this big are seven days. Hopefully, we'll have votive lights at our new parish. Sometimes these Prince William County fire codes, and all that, it's up to, these days; some other factors are involved as well.

(A question) If the Host is dropped, hopefully the altar boy is doing a good job, and has the paten to catch the Blessed Sacrament. If the Host does fall to the ground, what normally would be done, the Eucharistic Minister would pick up the Host and then bring it back up to the altar for the priest to consume. Or, the Eucharistic Minister could consume the Host. And then, they would take a purificator, and they would go down and place it on the floor.

The other things that you'll see on the back of this sheet is the *aspergillum* and the *aspersory*. This is used for holy water once or twice a year. There's a little bucket that the priest carries around. He takes holy water and blesses the people as they renew their Baptismal vows and promises. At the Masses that we do that at, it's usually when you renew your Baptismal vows and promises, "Do you believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth? I do." The *asperges* in Latin means "the sprinkling of holy water."

Let's see if we covered all the things on the front. The first thing on the front we didn't cover is the *pyx*, right next to the ciborium. The *pyx* is a small container, about this big, and it's used to take Communion to the sick. You might have seen people come up at the auditorium after Mass, and they hand me the *pyx*, and they say they need one or two hosts. It depends on how many sick people they have to visit. The word *pyx* comes from the Latin word meaning "a small box." And they take that and give communion to the sick.

The other thing you'll see down here is *reliquary*. This is like a small monstrance, and it's usually about this big; and it's a smaller display for the relic of the saints.

Next, I'll show you the *vestments* that we use. This one is called the *alb*. It comes from a Latin word meaning "white." It's a white garment. The priest wears this over his clerical attire. These are his *clerics*, his black shirt and pants. The *alb* goes on first, and then after that, you notice that they're different colors.

Depending on the season of the year, different colors are used. Purple, of course, is used for two seasons, Advent and Lent. Take a look at the very bottom of the back of the "Sacred Vessels" sheet. You'll see the different colors. So purple is the color for penance. This is mostly worn during Advent and Lent. It also represents royalty: the royal expectation of Advent and preparing for Lent, preparing for Easter.

The red represents the Blood of Christ. We wear this on Good Friday. We wear red on Passion (or Palm) Sunday when we read the story of the Passion. We also wear this red on any of the days of the martyrs, any saints who died for

Christ, who shed their blood for Christ. We also wear red for the Holy Spirit. At Confirmation, we wear red for Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came down upon the Apostles.

White represents purity, and usually the Blessed Mother. The white with the blue would represent the Blessed Mother. You'll see the different symbols; this one has "AM" on it, and that's for *Ave Maria*, which is Latin for "Hail Mary." We'd wear this tomorrow, for the feast day of the Immaculate Conception. Then, for something like this, you can actually see there's a lamb on there, for the Lamb of God. This would be nice to wear on Easter, for the Resurrection, with the Lamb of God.

Gold would be worn for any feast days of Christ, like Christmas or Easter, or one of those big occasions.

Then of course, we have the green. Green is worn most of the time. This is the ordinary color – it's a sign of springtime, a sign of hope, and so green is really the color that you see most in the trees, and the grass, and the leaves. So green is the ordinary color. We wear that at the Ordinary Time.

The rose-colored vestment is only worn a couple of times a year. It's not pink, everybody! It is a rose-colored vestment. One thing you'll see is an "IHS." You'll see this on a lot of things. IHS stands for "Jesus, Savior of Humanity." The "I" and the "J" are the same. Remember "Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom," or "Raiders of the Lost Ark?" He steps on something like an "I" or a "J." See, in those days, they didn't have J's, so they had I's. And so, for Jesus' name, it was spelled with an "I" instead of a "J." The "I" represents Jesus; "S" is for Savior; "H" is for Hominum, which is Humanity: Jesus, Savior of the Human Race, IHS. This is the rose-colored vestment. It represents joy. And this is worn this Sunday, in fact, the third Sunday of Advent. It's also worn during one Sunday in Lent, *Laetare Sunday* in Lent, and *Gaudette Sunday* in Advent.

Of course, there's other special vestments like, this is a papal vestment, for the Jubilee Year 2000. We first put on the alb, and then the priest would put on the *stole*. This is the garment called the stole. A priest wears a stole over both shoulders, because he has the authority to do all the sacraments, Baptism, Communion, Confessions, and saying Mass. A deacon wears the stole over one shoulder. He wears it over one shoulder, which means he doesn't have full authority; he just has some authority. Deacons can only do baptisms, and preach, and witness marriages; but they cannot say Mass or hear Confessions. So the priest wears this first, over the alb, and then he puts on the *chasuble*. The chasuble comes from a Latin word meaning "a little house." When the priest puts that on, in a sense, he's going into his little house.

The chasubles originated in the catacombs. When it was very damp and cold, they would wear a poncho down there. But then, over the years they became

more decorative, and different colors were made out of them, like the reds and the golds.

Take a look at this sheet. If you look at the bottom of the sheet of vestments, you'll see the alb, the white garment. Jesus probably wore a garment similar to this, a long robe with sleeves all the way down to the wrists. The *cincture* is the belt, or the rope that's worn around the waist. It represents purity. It comes from the Latin word meaning "a girdle," but it's not really a girdle, as you know. It's more like a rope. And then, the *maniple* is not used anymore. That's no longer in use after Vatican II. It was like a little, tiny stole that hung over the elbow. The *amice* is a piece of cloth that's worn around the neck, but most albs now cover the clothing underneath. If the alb only came down to here, then the priest would wear an amice, which is a long square with the strips of cloth in it. He would put that on, and that covers up the clothing underneath. You see how the priest is wearing that here.

On side two, you'll see the stole, which I mentioned, and then the chasuble. That's the most important vestment that the priest wears at Mass. As I mentioned, it means "a little house," so he's in a sense underneath that little house. Then, the other things that you'll see are the *cassock* and *surplice*; this is what the altar servers wear, the black cassocks. Sometimes they're red cassocks. The surplice, this comes from the Latin word "supersilium," which means "over the chest." This is over the cassock. Many priests will still wear the cassock.

Usually everything that the Church gives up, Hollywood adapts. For example, if you saw "Matrix," you saw Keanu Reeves wearing a cassock, kicking people in the face and all that. Keanu Reeves loves the cassock. He wore it in both the movies. The surplice goes over that.

Like Bishop Sheen said, whenever the Church gives up something, like when, during the Sixties, when Catholics stopped praying the Rosary; they threw away the beads; and the hippies picked up the beads and put them around their neck. And so, the idea is that whatever the Church throws out, which it shouldn't, Hollywood picks up. Like when you see the priests or nuns in Hollywood, they're always fully with all the veils and long rosary beads. We shouldn't throw away these beautiful traditions that we have in the Church.

The last two things down here, you have the *cope* and the *humeral veil*. The cope is a long cape that's worn on the back of the priest, and the humeral veil is the cloth that goes over the shoulders, and that's done for *Benediction*.

(A question) If they're seminarians, normally you'd have the white collar underneath that. Wearing the white collar underneath is fine, but obviously, the altar boys don't have a clerical shirt like this. This is the plastic piece that goes in

here, and this slides in here, and then you button this here, and then you slide this over here, and you have “instant priest.”

(A question) Yes, if we were running out, hopefully we try our best to approximate how many people are going to be there. So, we know from experience, but Christmas and Easter, you have extra people, and so we could break the Communion in two, or even fours, or even in one-sixteenths, and everybody would still receive the same Jesus.

(A question). No, I can wear regular clothes too. If I go golfing, or if I go swimming, or something like that. You don't have to wear, but it is good that a priest does wear his clerical attire most of the time. If I'm at a restaurant, people say, “Where's your church?” kind of things. So it's a witness to others, and they can bring people closer to God if they see a priest out there.

(A question). For a couple of reasons. One, it's supposed to be sort of a non-worldly color. It's not very flashy, and it's sort of dying to self, in order to live for Christ. It does remind people of death as well. Like the black that people wear at funerals. The widow wears black, and people usually wear black at funerals to remind people to focus on Heaven and on the next world, and not to focus on this world. But probably, it originated at the time of the priests when they were teaching in the universities, because the teachers, the educated person, would wear black robes, like people do at graduation. Everybody wears robes. Nowadays sometimes they're blue or whatever, but originally it was an all-black robe, and those that had graduated and had an education would wear the black robe. And so, all the priests that were teaching would wear black robes, and then eventually, the black robe became a little bit more tightly fit, called a cassock. So the cassock originated from the black robes of the universities. The priest would wear a cassock, and then once they were working out in the world, it was a little bit easier just to transfer the color black into regular pants and shirt. It probably originated from the teachings an educated person would wear, a black robe.

(A question). Some parishes and some dioceses just have girl altar boys -I'm just teasing! Some have altar boys and altar girls. Throughout the country, most dioceses do allow girls to serve at the altar as well. About 15 or 20 years ago, under our previous bishop, he had asked all the priests at a priests' meeting when it was allowed. It's up to the bishop in the diocese to decide. It's up to each individual bishop to allow that or not. Bishop Keating, who died about five years ago, he had asked all the priests what they preferred, and the majority said no, let's just keep it altar boys, because they felt it would help vocations to the priesthood. Since girls don't become priests, having boys serve, it might help them maybe think more about the priesthood. That was done for the vocation aspect.

All the other dioceses in America have both altar girls and boys, except for Lincoln, Nebraska and Arlington, Virginia. So if you go anywhere in the country, you'll have boys and girls serve.

When the new bishop came five years ago, he maintained the tradition that we had from the previous bishop, and has not changed that. So currently, in our diocese, just the boys are the servers. And girls were only supposed to be allowed if there was a shortage of altar boys. Of course, we have 40 or 50 altar boys in our parish. They only get to serve once a month now, or twice a month. The idea is that there's really not a pressing need to allow the girls to serve. If we only had a few boys serving, then yes, we should get the girls to help. But we do hope and do feel that it will help to encourage vocations to the priesthood, by having just the boys serve. But it's up to each diocese. Each bishop can make his own decision on that.

Note: In 2006, Bishop Loverde of the Catholic Diocese of Arlington changed the policy regarding altar servers. Each parish was free to allow girls and boys as altar servers, or keep using only boys as altar servers. Some parishes in the diocese did change. Father Peffley announced that the policy would remain the same at Holy Trinity Parish. The decision was made after prayerful consideration, and receiving much input from parishioners. Most parishioners felt that the policy should not be changed.

(A question) This is just ordinary bread. Once it becomes consecrated at the Mass, it becomes the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Christ. If you just received the Host, you receive the total and complete Christ – Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. You are receiving the Body of Christ when you receive the Lord under the appearance of bread. However, when we dip the Host into the Precious Blood, into the Body and Blood of Christ; it's a fuller sign. So you don't receive any more of Jesus; it's just like a more complete sign of the reality of the Presence of the Body and Blood of Christ. At daily Mass, I stand here and give out by *intinction*, and the Eucharistic Minister stands here, and just gives out the Body of Christ. The people that come to the Eucharistic Minister, and those that come to me, receive the exact same amount of Jesus. They both receive the complete and total Christ. But by *intinction*, it's a fuller sign.

(A question) Anybody who wants to come up for a blessing, just come up and place your hands over your heart, or your hands like this over your heart, and that's an indication to me that you'd like a blessing. I would encourage all of you to do that as well until Easter. You make your First Communion at Easter, then come up for Communion after that. But in the meantime, come up for a blessing.

(A question). There are still some people that fall asleep – I see them out there! A priest can see everything from the pulpit. You can see everybody yawning and looking at their watches, and falling asleep. We do see that once and a while. I don't know how other priests do that. I would imagine that in the past, like when I

was growing up as a kid, I remember some of the priests at my parishes, they were very interesting to listen to and entertaining. They would throw in some humorous incident or whatever, so it all depends on, sort of maybe what parish you were in where you grew up; and it's sort of up to the style of the priest. Some are more, maybe intellectual; some are more conversational. It all depends on really, sort of the style of the priest. I think priests these days do try to preach a homily that people will be able to remember. They'll take something from it and try to apply it to their daily life.

Before we go, I think we should just go over and show you the tabernacle. Come in here and genuflect.

In every Catholic Church as well, you have the *Stations of the Cross*. The Stations of the Cross were invented by the Franciscans, because not everybody could get to the Holy Land, to Jerusalem, to walk through the streets of Jerusalem to make the Via Dolorosa (the Way of the Cross). St. Francis and the Franciscans had an idea, that "Let's make little images of the 14 Stations of the Cross, and put them in churches." You don't have to travel all the way to Jerusalem to walk the Way of the Cross. We actually have that in every Catholic Church, the 14 Stations of the Cross.

This is the sanctuary lamp, right there. I mentioned sometimes it's red; sometimes it's white. Here they have a white candle, and that would remind us that the Lord is present. As I mentioned, this pillar is unmovable, so it's very solid. Nobody could break in and steal the Most Blessed Sacrament.

The way we show adoration for Christ is called *genuflection*, which comes from a Latin words "genu," meaning "knee," and "flec" means "to bend the knee." If you go to England, and you go before the Queen, people would genuflect, and kiss the Queen's ring. For the Lord, we always genuflect. You might have seen this at church, where you sort of just go down on one knee, like that; and it's a sign of adoration for Christ's presence, like the Wise Men came to Bethlehem. It says they knelt down and adored Him. Genuflecting is a very beautiful custom; it acknowledges that Jesus is truly present. You're welcome to try to genuflect. Usually, it's down on the right knee. It's always good to genuflect as you enter your pew. When you leave Mass, genuflect, and then walk back out. Whenever you pass before the Blessed Sacrament, genuflect.

I'll show you the *sacristy* over there, for those of you who want to stay around a couple of extra minutes. I'll show you the *holy sink*, because the water that goes into that drain does not go into the regular pipes. It goes outside and goes right into the earth. That's where we would purify some of the sacred vessels. Then you'll see the cabinets, where we keep all of the other religious things, like the chalices and the vestments and things like that. As you can see, the tabernacle is kept locked and safe, for the Lord.

If you want to come over here and see the sacristy. Again, the sacristy is the place where the priest gets vested at Mass. We keep all the vestments back here. This is called the *sacrarium*, and a sacrarium, as I mentioned, is the holy sink. That's used for the purification. Whenever any of the linens get used, we would put them in here, and then somebody would come and clean them. Over here, this is where they keep all the vestments for the priests that come in and say Mass. We would have this in our church as well. And they would have all the other things in there, all the things that are used for Mass.

I'm glad that you all got to get a little tour. And God-willing, when we have our church, we'll be able to take you through our church.