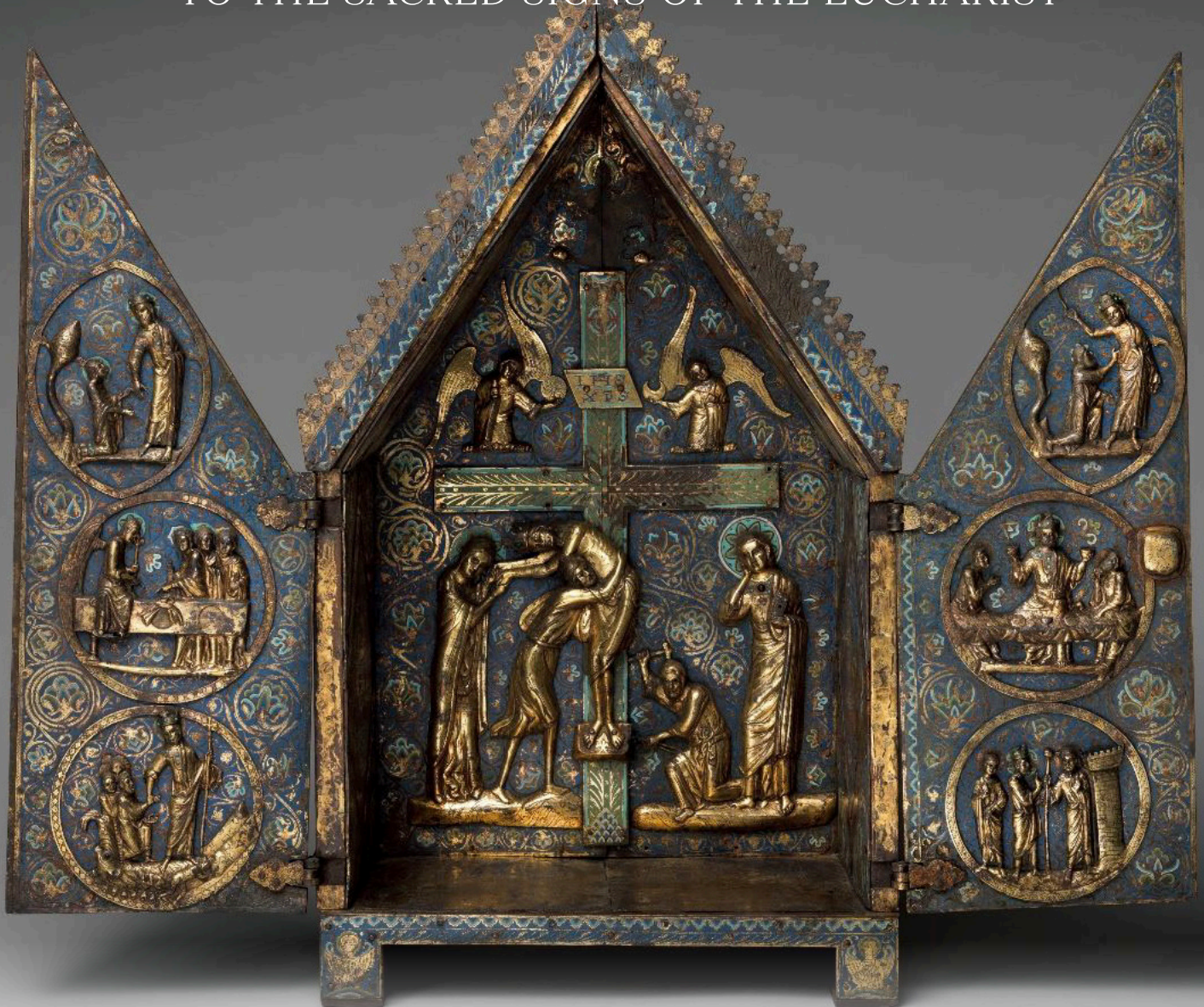


# COME LET US WORSHIP:

A CHILDREN'S GUIDE  
TO THE SACRED SIGNS OF THE EUCHARIST



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WELCOMING  
CHILDREN  
in WORSHIP

THE CATHOLIC  
UNIVERSITY  
OF AMERICA





COVER AND BACK COVER:  
*Tabernacle of Cherves*, c. 1220 – 1230  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

# COME LET US WORSHIP:

## A CHILDREN'S GUIDE TO THE SACRED SIGNS OF THE EUCHARIST

*By Anne Heekin-Canedy (August 2024)*

Welcome! We are delighted to be able to share with you this parish and parent resource for the liturgical formation of children between the ages of four and ten. Our aim is to help and support you by providing a series of presentations on the signs, symbols, and gestures of the liturgy, so as to nurture children in worship and prayer for an encounter with the person of Jesus Christ who desires to meet us in the divine-human dialogue of the Mass.

While we hope you will work through the entirety of this resource, each presentation may stand on its own. And while we suggest these presentations be delivered in the order written, their order may be altered or conformed to other curricula. Finally, revisiting these presentations now and again in a spiral fashion will increase the understanding of the children receiving them and make their participation in the Mass more rewarding.

The purpose of this formation resource is to engage children in intergenerational worship through their understanding of the goodness of creation, the prayers of the Mass, the liturgical year, and the meaning of liturgical words, objects, and physical gestures that form part of a child's experience of prayer and worship in the Catholic tradition.

In each lesson you will find the (1) Lesson Objective, (2) Suggested Materials, (3) Vocabulary, (4) Guiding Children's Experience, (5) Children's Activity, and a (6) Summary Lesson Plan for use in parish or school settings.

Saint John Vianney noted that, "if we really understood the Mass, we would die of joy." Our hope is that in using this resource, you will foster that joy in worship and prayer in the children you are privileged to care for in worship. There is no greater gift we give to children than the capacity to fully, consciously, and actively participate in the Mass, the "source and summit of the Christian life," and the many graces that flow from it to individuals and the community of believers.

God bless you and thank you for the opportunity to support you in your ministry of nurturing and forming children for worship and prayer.

*This free resource is made possible by a generous grant from the Lilly Endowment, Inc. for download, printing, and use by pastors, parents, catechists and teachers. Please credit the project "Welcoming Children in Worship at The Catholic University of America" if you wish to reference the content of these materials. For further uses, please contact [trs-worship@cua.edu](mailto:trs-worship@cua.edu)*



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# INTRODUCTION

## FOR PARENTS, PASTORS, CATECHISTS, AND TEACHERS

In 1911, Romano Guardini, an Italian-born German Catholic priest and theologian, wrote a little book called *Sacred Signs*, which was written, in the words of Guardini, “to help open up the world of the liturgy.”<sup>1</sup> This opening up, as Guardini saw it, required a method of liturgical formation that would consider the experience of the whole person, spirit and body. It would also reclaim the capacity of the person to see and understand the signs, symbols, and gestures of the liturgy.

For more than a century, Guardini’s little book has continued to inspire, and the principles he sketches out in the introduction to *Sacred Signs* are as relevant today as they were when first published. Above all, they remind us that formation for the liturgy requires more than instruction, which by itself is superficial; rather, what is called for is engagement of the entire self, uniting intellect and experience, as well as the spiritual and material.<sup>2</sup>

Taken together, these principles have informed the methods we propose in this resource, methods which have proved to be fruitful, especially with children, who, by learning to see and learning to do, assimilate the meaning of the signs, symbols, and gestures of the liturgy.<sup>3</sup> These methods include beginning with the basics, privileging experience over classroom instruction, and encouraging repetition to promote understanding.<sup>4</sup> More specifically, our methods bring to the fore these principles of liturgical formation of children that:

- Highlight the goodness of Creation (body and soul) and prioritize the child’s participation (acclamations and responses, bringing up the gifts);
- Acclimate the child to the physical space (architecture, orientation, the liturgical year);
- Instruct the child in bodily movements (standing, kneeling, walking, hands);
- Present the objects and gestures of the liturgy as part of the child’s lived reality (chalice, paten, linens, epiclesis).

Your primary source of materials is your environment—the church, its structure and layout, its decoration—and the articles it holds for use in the Mass. Each lesson, however, provides the following support:

- Lesson Objective
- Suggested Materials
- Vocabulary
- Guiding Children’s Experience
- Children’s Activity
- Summary Lesson Plan

In addition to materials for artwork and for some activities, the only other item you will need is a Bible in order to locate and read selected passages. We recommend using the New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (NRSVCE) or the New American Bible Revised Edition (NABRE).

*Thank you for your interest in using this resource for the liturgical formation of your students and children. May the Holy Spirit guide you and keep you as you carry out the vital ministry of forming the children in your care for worship and prayer.*

## A WORD ON FORMING CHILDREN FOR PRAYER AND WORSHIP

In the Catholic tradition the Mass is “the highest point in all our prayer.”<sup>5</sup> Accordingly, formation in prayer is a natural, and arguably essential, part of liturgical formation. To this end, we have incorporated a period of prayer into the beginning of each lesson.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* mentions five forms of prayer: blessing and adoration, praise, thanksgiving, petition, intercession. Similarly, it identifies three expressions of prayer: vocal prayer, meditation, contemplative prayer.<sup>6</sup> Against this background, we begin each lesson with *lectio divina*, which familiarizes children with these forms and expressions and the discipline required for participation in the Mass. A description of this practice may be found below.

We also recommend teaching children the responses, acclamations, and prayers of the Mass. These include the Confiteor, the Gloria, the Nicene Creed, the Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy), the Our Father, the Invitation to Prayer (Lord, I am not worthy), and the Agnus Dei (Lamb of God). These also may be found below.

### Lectio divina and teaching children to pray with scripture

*Lectio divina* is an ancient practice dating back to the early Church. It is a method of praying with Scripture that helps us to discern what God is speaking to our hearts. There are four steps: **lectio, meditatio, oratio, and contemplatio or reading, meditation, prayer and contemplation**. Each of these steps is described below.

**Lectio:** Once you have chosen a Scripture passage, read it (or have it read to you) slowly and carefully. What does it mean, in the literal sense?

**Meditatio:** Read or listen to the passage again. Are there words or phrases that stand out to you? Ponder them. How do they make you feel? What is God saying to you?

**Oratio:** Read or listen to the passage again. In light of your meditation, respond to God. What would you like to say to him?

**Contemplatio:** Read or listen to the passage again. Now sit in silence, and rest in God. Listen for what he may be speaking to your heart.

With young children, our purpose is to show them that the Bible is a special book. We teach them how to hold it so they can feel its weight, and we let them turn its pages. The passages we read to them are narrative in nature, and we guide their responses with questions. Older children who are seven and above may be led through the usual steps. The passages we read to them may be narrative or not, and their responses, if they wish, may be private. Even so, their responses may still need to be prompted by questions, until they grow in prayer and worship.

### Notes

1. Romano Guardini, *Sacred Signs*, trans. Grace Branham (St. Louis: Pio Decimo Press, 1956), <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/sacred-signs-11190>.
2. Romano Guardini, *Liturgy and Liturgical Formation*, trans. Jan Bentz (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2022), viii.
3. Fr. Samuel Weber, OSB, “Sacred Signs and Religious Formation: An Application of the Teachings of Monsignor Romano Guardini,” *Adoremus* 14, no.1 (March 2008), <https://adoremus.org/2008/03/sacred-signs-and-religious-formation/>.
4. Weber, “Sacred Signs.”
5. Benedict XVI, General Audience, [https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/audiences/2012/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_aud\\_20120111.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/audiences/2012/documents/hf_ben-xvi_aud_20120111.html).
6. Catechism of the Catholic Church, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed. (Washington, DC: Libreria Editrice Vaticana-United States Catholic Conference, 2000), 2626-2643.

## PRAYERS OF THE MASS FOR CHILDREN TO KNOW | *printable page*

### **Confiteor**

I confess to almighty God  
and to you, my brothers and sisters,  
that I have greatly sinned  
in my thoughts and in my words,  
in what I have done and in what I have  
failed to do,  
through my fault, through my fault,  
through my most grievous fault;  
therefore I ask the blessed Mary  
ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints,  
and you, my brothers and sisters,  
to pray for me to the Lord our God.

### **Gloria**

Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to people of good will.  
We praise you,  
we bless you,  
we adore you,  
we glorify you,  
we give you thanks for your great glory,  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
O God, almighty Father.  
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,  
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
you take away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us;  
you take away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer;  
you are seated at the right hand of  
the Father, have mercy on us.  
For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

### **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 Son,  
who with the Father and 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.



## PRAYERS OF THE MASS FOR CHILDREN TO KNOW | *printable page*

### **Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy)**

Holy, Holy, Holy  
Lord God of hosts.  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes  
in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.

### **Our Father**

Our Father who art in heaven,  
hallowed by thy name.  
Thy kingdom come.  
Thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass  
against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.

### **Invitation to Communion**

Lord I am not worthy  
that you should enter under my roof,  
but only say the word  
and my soul shall be healed.

### **Agnus Dei (Lamb of God)**

Lamb of God,  
you take away the sins of the world:  
have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God,  
You take away the sins of the world:  
have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God,  
you take away the sins of the world:  
grant us peace.



A photograph of a church interior, viewed from a low angle looking down a long, narrow aisle. The walls are made of rough-hewn stone. On either side of the aisle are small, arched niches containing simple wooden benches. At the far end of the aisle is a large, bright, arched window with a horizontal mullion. The light from the window is very bright, creating a strong glow and reflecting off the polished floor. The ceiling is high and features a series of wooden ribs supporting a vaulted structure.

UNIT I | **Lesson One**

**WELCOMING CHILDREN TO SACRED SPACE**

*Introduction to Sacred Space*

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## LESSON OBJECTIVE

*The purpose of this lesson is to introduce children to the experience of sacred space.*

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## SUGGESTED MATERIALS

- Bible
  - “Adoro Te Devote,” *Stillness and Sweet Harmony*, by The Cambridge Singers and John Rutter, digital download on iTunes or Amazon Music
  - Phone or other device for playing music
  - Copywork template
  - Pens or pencils
  - Colored pencils
- 

## VOCABULARY

<b>Altar</b>	the table from which the Mass is celebrated
<b>Ambo</b>	the stand or lectern from which Scripture is read
<b>Narthex</b> ( <i>vestibule</i> )	the area inside the front door of the church
<b>Nave</b>	the area of the church that contains the pews in which the assembly sits
<b>Sacred space</b>	a space set apart for the worship of God
<b>Sanctuary</b>	the area of the Church that contains the altar and the ambo

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## GATHERING AND PRAYER

Pray *lectio divina* using Jeremiah 32:17.

## GUIDING CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCE

Ask the children to distinguish among spaces. For instance, how do we know that a classroom is a classroom or that a church is a church? How is a church different from other kinds of spaces? Next ask the children if a church also feels different from other kinds of spaces. If so, in what way? Is it loud in a church or quiet? Is it light or dark inside? Do people move quickly or slowly? Does a church feel special or ordinary?

Explain that churches are different from other kinds of spaces, because they are set apart for the worship of God. Anything set apart for the worship of God is sacred, so churches are sacred spaces. Why, we wonder, do we make sacred spaces? We make them to honor and give glory to God.

The creation of sacred spaces is closely connected to the virtue of reverence, that deep regard for the greatness of God. Recognition of this greatness comes naturally to children, and its expression can be associated with their conduct in sacred spaces. To this end, emphasize the importance of respectful behavior when in church.

Essential to this lesson is the exploration of the church. You will want to prepare by familiarizing yourself with as much of your particular church as possible. This will help you to answer the children's questions and to point out the elements that may be unique.

After entering the church, identify its main areas: the narthex (vestibule), the nave, and the sanctuary. Once in the sanctuary, point out the altar. What is it for? It is the table from which the Mass is celebrated. Also identify the ambo as the stand or lectern from which Scripture is read.

Encourage the children to explore on their own, emphasizing the importance of respectful behavior. Notice what draws them, and answer their questions. It will be helpful to know something about the decorative elements of your particular church, such as the stained-glass windows, the stations of the cross, and the statuary.

When the children have finished exploring the church, invite them to sit quietly and to reflect on their experience. This should take no more than five minutes. Then return to the classroom and ask them to share their reflections.

We have provided a list of questions for your use with the children. You may, however, develop your own. The only criteria are that they assist the children in their reflections. For the activity, ask the children to copy Isaiah 66:1 and to illustrate the interior of the church from memory, while listening to "Adoro Te Devote."

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## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- > *Did the space feel different from ordinary spaces?*
- > *Is the space suited to its purpose?*
- > *Did anything surprise you?*

## ACTIVITY

Using the template provided, copy Isaiah 66:1 and illustrate the interior of the church from memory, while listening to **Adoro Te Devote**.

*What is the house that you would build for me, and what is my resting place?*



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## SUMMARY LESSON PLAN

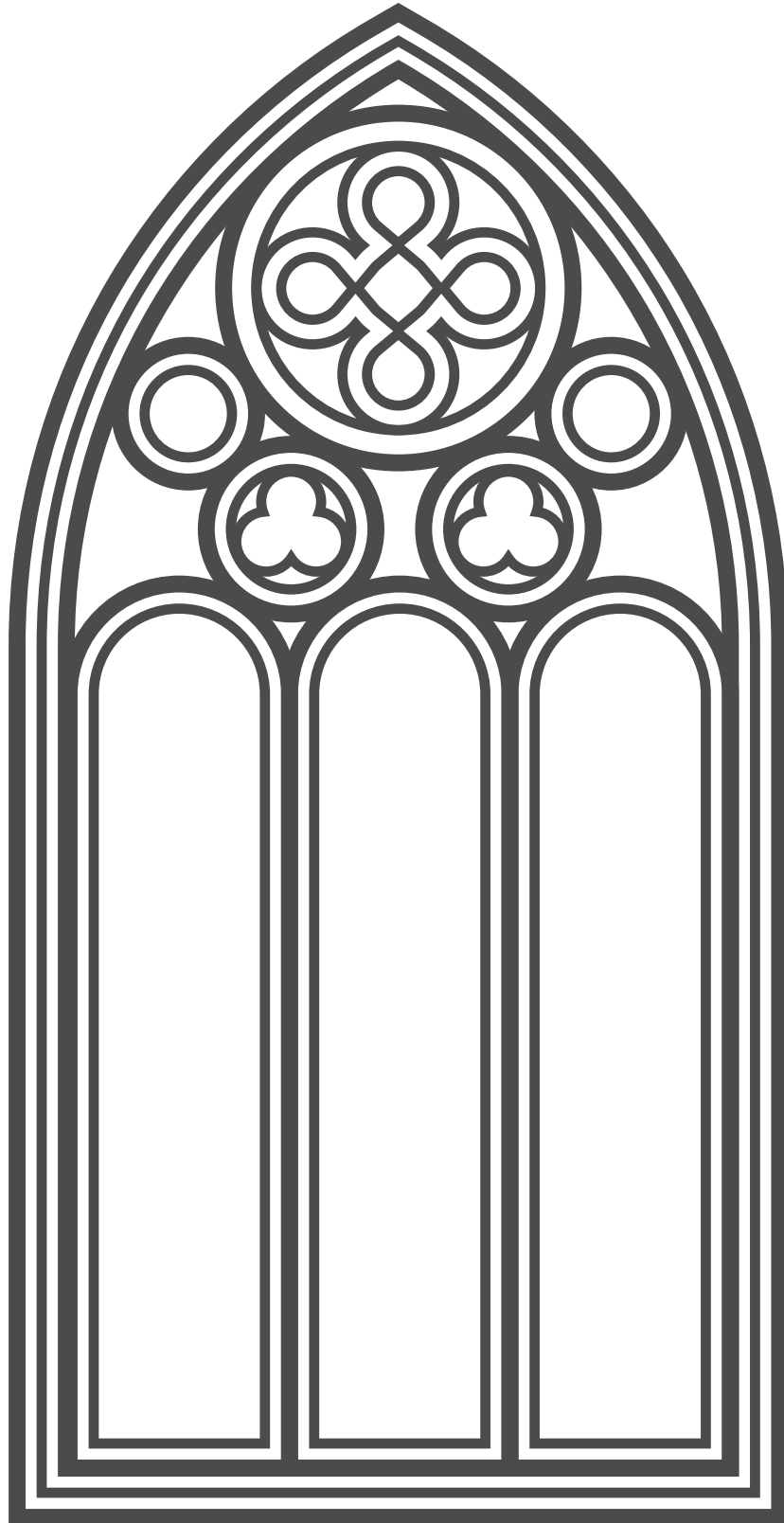
### Lesson One: Welcoming Children to Sacred Space (*Introduction to Sacred Space*)

MATERIALS: Bible, “Adoro Te Devote,” phone or other device for playing music, drawing paper, pens or pencils, colored pencils

MOMENTS	PREPARATION	PRESENTATION/ACTIVITY	NOTES
<b>Gathering and Prayer</b>	Mark Jeremiah 32:17 in your Bible.	Pray lectio divina: Jeremiah 32:17.	
<b>1st Moment</b>		Ask children to distinguish among spaces. Ask children if a church only looks different, or does it feel different, too? How? Why?	How do we know that a classroom is a classroom or that a church is a church? Noisy or quiet? Light or dark? Special or ordinary?
<b>2nd Moment</b>		Explain that churches are different from other kinds of spaces, because they have been set apart for the worship of God. We call this sacred space. We make sacred spaces to give honor and glory to God.	Anything set apart for God or the worship of God is sacred. Everything else is ordinary.
<b>3rd Moment</b>		The creation of sacred spaces is closely connected to the virtue of reverence.	Reverence is expressed through our behavior in sacred spaces.
<b>4th Moment</b>	Familiarize yourself with as much of your particular church as possible.	Explore your church. Begin in the sanctuary with the altar. What is it for? What is it made of? Encourage children to explore on their own. Emphasize respectful behavior. Finish with a few moments of quiet reflection, then return to the classroom.	A church has three main areas: the narthex (vestibule), nave, and sanctuary. The altar is the table from which the Mass is celebrated. Items of possible interest: stained glass windows, statuary, stations of the cross, baptismal font.
<b>5th Moment</b>		Ask children to share their reflections, using the questions provided as a guide.	
<b>Activity</b>	Print copies of the copywork template and Isaiah 66:1. Have “Adoro Te Devote” ready to play.	Have children copy Isaiah 66:1 and illustrate the interior of the church from memory. Play “Adoro Te Devote.”	
<b>Closing Prayer</b>	Choose closing prayer.	Pray closing prayer.	

## BONUS ACTIVITY

*Inspired by the stained glass windows you see at your local Church, color this Window with colored pencils.*



A photograph of a church interior, viewed from a low angle looking down a long, narrow aisle. The walls are made of rough-hewn stone. On either side of the aisle are small, arched niches containing simple wooden benches. At the far end of the aisle is a large, bright, arched window with a horizontal mullion. The light from the window is very bright, creating a strong glow and reflecting off the polished floor. The ceiling is high and features a series of wooden ribs supporting the arch. The overall atmosphere is serene and sacred.

UNIT I | **Lesson Two**

**WELCOMING CHILDREN TO SACRED SPACE**

*Origins of Sacred Space*



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## LESSON OBJECTIVE

*The purpose of this lesson is to assist children in their understanding of sacred space by providing them with historical context.*

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## SUGGESTED MATERIALS

- Bible
  - Image of Dura-Europos house-church facade and baptistry
  - Images of Christ the King Chapel facade and Bitonto Cathedral baptismal font
  - “Veni Creator,” *Heavenly Harmonies*, by Stile Antico, digital download on iTunes or Amazon
  - Phone or other device for playing music
  - Construction paper in multiple colors
  - Scissors
  - Glue
  - Markers
  - Colored pencils
- 

## VOCABULARY

**Baptismal font** a large receptacle holding baptismal water

**Baptistry** a building, room, or space within a church where baptisms are performed

**House-church** a private home, or converted private home, used for Christian worship

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## GATHERING AND PRAYER

Pray *lectio divina* using Psalm 89:11.

## GUIDING CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCE

Explore with the children how the early Christians met for worship in people's homes,<sup>1</sup> and how it was not until the fourth century that churches were built for public worship.<sup>2</sup> Read St. Paul's salutation from the First Letter to the Corinthians: "The churches of Asia send greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, greet you warmly in the Lord (1 Corinthians 16:19)."

Explain that sometimes people donated their homes to the community for worship and other religious activities. These homes had to be large enough to celebrate the Eucharist and to set aside a space with a font for baptisms.<sup>3</sup> Some homes had courtyards for worshippers to gather in. We call these homes house-churches.

Ask the children if they would like to see some pictures of the oldest known house-church, which is in present-day Syria. Explain that this house-church is nearly 2000 years old.<sup>4</sup> Show them a photograph of the remaining façade and a photograph of the baptistry.

After examining the photographs, ask the children if they would like to see some pictures of a more recent church. Explain that this church was built for public worship and is a little more than 100 years old. Show them a photograph of the Christ the King Chapel, in Front Royal, Virginia, and a photograph of the Bitonto Cathedral baptismal font, in Bitonto, Italy.

As before, we have provided a list of questions for your use with the children. You may, however, develop your own. For the activity, ask the children to make a collage of a church building, while listening to "Veni Creator."

### Notes

1. Andrew B. McGowan, *Ancient Christian Worship: Early Church Practices in Social, Historical, and Theological Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 52.
2. McGowan, 106.
3. McGowan, 53.
4. McGowan, 165.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- > *In what ways are the house-church and basilica different?*
- > *In what ways are the house-church and basilica the same?*
- > *Is one space more sacred than the other?*

## ACTIVITY

*Make a collage of a church building using geometric shapes cut from construction paper, while listening to **Veni Creator**.*

- Cut or ask children to cut geometric shapes (square, rectangle, triangle, circle) from construction paper. The shapes should vary in size, length, and width.
- Let the children experiment with the shapes before settling on a design for their church building.
- Once the children have settled on a design, ask them to make a collage by gluing the shapes in the form of a church building onto a sheet of construction paper.
- The children can add detail to their church building with markers or colored pencils.



## SUMMARY LESSON PLAN

### Lesson Two: Welcoming Children to Sacred Space (*Origins of Sacred Space*)

**MATERIALS:** Bible, images of Dura-Europos house-church, Christ the King Chapel, and Bitonto Cathedral baptismal font, “Veni Creator,” phone or other device for playing music, construction paper in multiple colors, scissors, glue, markers, colored pencils

MOMENTS	PREPARATION	PRESENTATION/ACTIVITY	NOTES
<b>Gathering and Prayer</b>	Mark Psalm 89:11 in your Bible	Pray <i>lectio divina</i> : Psalm 89:11	
<b>1st Moment</b>	Mark 1 Corinthians 16:19 in your Bible.	Tell children that the early Christians met for worship in people’s houses. Read 1 Corinthians 16:19.	It was not until the fourth century that churches were built for public worship.
<b>2nd Moment</b>		Tell children that sometimes people donated their homes to the community for worship and other religious activities. We call them housechurches.	These homes had to large enough to celebrate the Eucharist and to set aside a space with a font for baptisms. Some homes had courtyards for worshipper to gather in.
<b>3rd Moment</b>	Print photographs of the Dura-Europos housechurch façade and baptistry.	Ask children if they would like to see some pictures of the oldest known house-church in the world. Examine photographs of the remaining façade and baptistry together.	The oldest known house-church in the world is in Dura-Europos, in present-day Syria. The Dura-Europos house-church is nearly 2000 years old. The baptistry was reconstructed offsite by Yale University.
<b>4th Moment</b>	Print photographs of the Christ the King Chapel facade and Bitonto Cathedral baptismal font.	Ask children if they would like to see some pictures of more recent churches. Examine the façade of Christ the King Chapel and baptismal font Bitono Cathedral together.	The architectural style of the Christ the King Chapel is gothic revival.
<b>5th Moment</b>		Ask children to share their reflections, using the questions provided as a guide.	
<b>Activity</b>	Have “Veni Creator” ready to play.	Have children make a collage of a church building using geometric shapes cut from construction paper. Play “Veni Creator.”	Younger children may not be able to cut shapes on their own.
<b>Closing Prayer</b>	Choose closing prayer.	Pray closing prayer.	

**Remains of Dura-Europos House-Church**, Marysas, Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain



Dura-Europos Baptistry (Reconstruction), Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain



**Christ the King Chapel**, Campus of Christendom College, Front Royal, VA



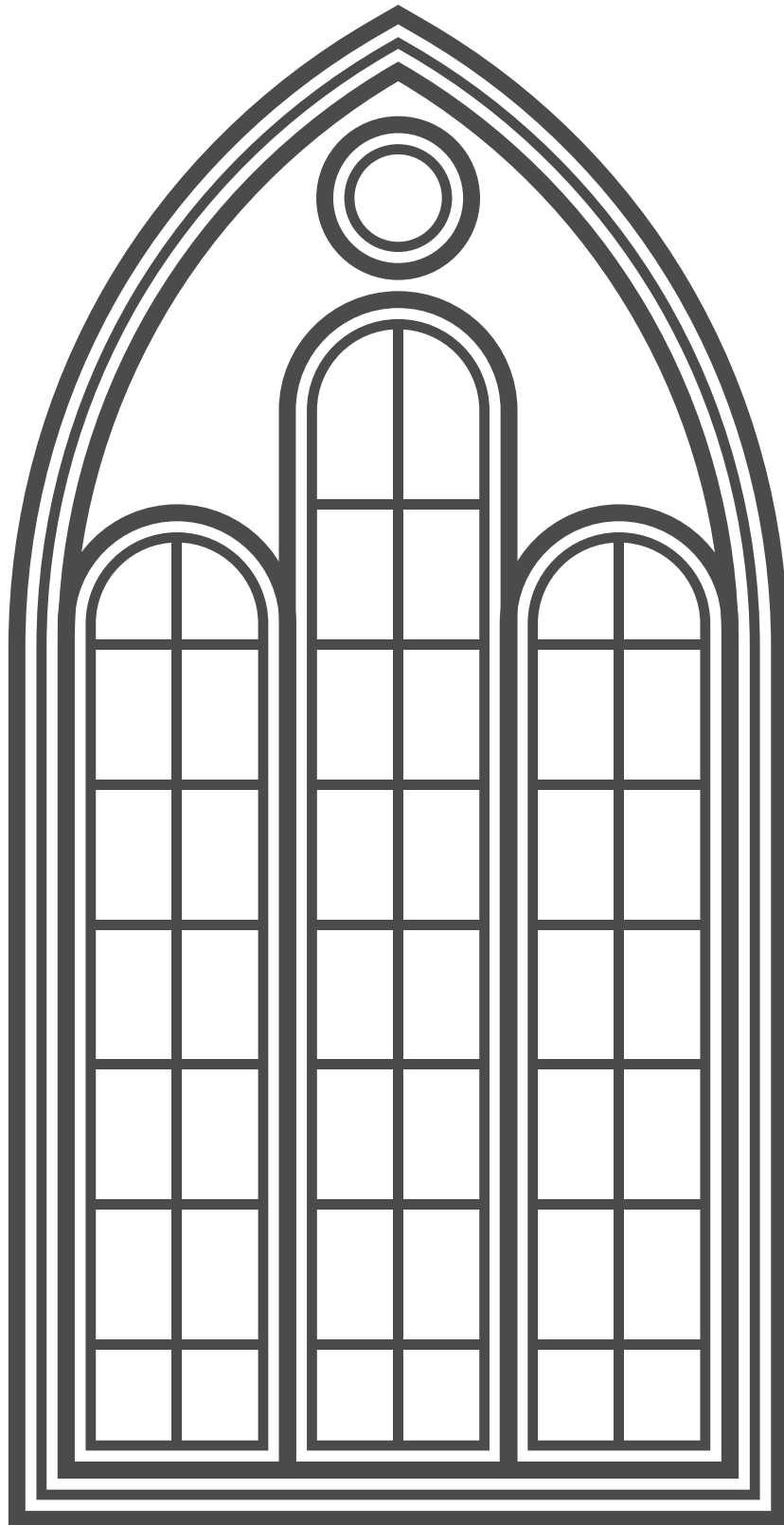
Bitonto Cathedral Baptismal Font, City of Bitonto, in the Province of Bari, Italy





## BONUS ACTIVITY

*Inspired by the stained glass windows you see at your local Church, color this Window with colored pencils.*



A photograph of a church interior, viewed from a low angle looking down a long, narrow aisle. The walls are made of rough-hewn stone. On either side of the aisle are small, arched niches containing simple wooden benches. At the far end of the aisle is a large, bright, arched window with a cross-shaped frame. The light from the window is very bright, creating a strong glow and reflecting off the polished floor. The ceiling is high and features a series of wooden beams supporting the arches.

UNIT I | **Lesson Three**

**WELCOMING CHILDREN TO SACRED SPACE**

*Entering Sacred Space*

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## LESSON OBJECTIVE

*The purpose of this lesson is to advance children's awareness of having entered sacred space by identifying the symbolic nature of holy water and making the Sign of the Cross.*

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## SUGGESTED MATERIALS

- Bible
  - Image of Andrea del Verrocchio and Leonardo da Vinci's the *Baptism of Christ*
- 

## VOCABULARY

### **Holy water**

water that has been sanctified by a priest for the purpose of baptism or the blessing of persons, places, or objects

### **Holy water font**

a receptacle containing holy water, usually placed near the entrance of a church the ambo

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## GATHERING AND PRAYER

Pray *lectio divina* using Isaiah 40:8.

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## GUIDING CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCE

Ask the children what they know about water. Do we drink it? Swim in it? Water the garden with it? What else is it used for? Could we live without it?

Explain that when the priest poured the water over their heads at their baptism, they received the gift of water. What do they think the water was for? Add that the priest also said a prayer while he poured the water: "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." Ask if the prayer sounds familiar.

Ask the children if they would like to see a picture of Jesus' baptism. Show them the *Baptism of Christ* painted by Andrea del Verrocchio and Leonardo da Vinci and point out the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

After examining the painting, explain that when we enter a church, dip our fingers in the holy water and make the Sign of the Cross, we are preparing ourselves to enter sacred space by bringing to mind our baptism.

As before, we have provided a list of questions for your use with the children. You may, however, develop your own. For the activity, have the children practice making the Sign of the Cross after dipping their fingers in holy water.

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## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- > *Why is there holy water at the entrance to a church?*
- > *Why do we make the Sign of the Cross when we enter a church?*
- > *How do holy water and the Sign of the Cross help us to remember our baptism?*

## ACTIVITY

*Have the children practice making the Sign of the Cross after dipping their fingers in holy water.*

- Fill the bowl with holy water.
- Review the Sign of the Cross.
- Show the children how to dip their fingers into the holy water before making the Sign of the Cross.
- One at a time, let the children dip their fingers into the holy water and make the Sign of the Cross.
- Use the cloth to wipe their hands.



## SUMMARY LESSON PLAN

**Lesson Three: Welcoming Children to Sacred Space** (*Entering Sacred Space*)

MATERIALS: Bible, image of Andrea del Verrocchio and Leonardo da Vinci's *Baptism of Christ*, phone or other device for playing music, drawing paper, pens or pencils, colored pencils

MOMENTS	PREPARATION	PRESENTATION/ACTIVITY	NOTES
<b>Gathering and Prayer</b>	Mark Isaiah 40:8 in your Bible.	Pray lectio divina: Isaiah 40:8.	
<b>1st Moment</b>		Ask children what they know about water. Do we drink it? Swim in it? Water the garden with it? What else is it used for? Could we live without it?	
<b>2nd Moment</b>		Tell children that when the priest poured the water over their heads at their baptism, they received the gift of water. Ask children what they think the water was for. Tell children that the priest said a prayer while pouring the water over their heads. Recite the prayer ( <i>see notes</i> ).	"I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."
<b>3rd Moment</b>	Print copies of the <i>Baptism of Christ</i> .	Ask children if they would like to see a picture of Jesus' baptism. Examine the <i>Baptism of Christ</i> together. Point out the <i>Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit</i> . Explain that when we enter a church, dip our fingers in the holy water and make the Sign of the Cross, we are preparing ourselves to enter sacred space by bringing to mind our baptism.	The <i>Baptism of Christ</i> was painted by Andrea del Verrocchio and Leonardo da Vinci between 1472 and 1475. It hangs in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, Italy.
<b>4th Moment</b>		Ask children to share their reflections, using the questions provided as a guide.	
<b>Activity</b>		Have children practice making the Sign of the Cross after dipping their fingers in holy water.	
<b>Closing Prayer</b>	Choose closing prayer.	Pray closing prayer.	

*Baptism of Christ*, Andrea del Verrocchio and Leonardo da Vinci, Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain

