

# RCIA

## **RCIA HO Class 16 Church Tour Terms:**

**Tabernacle**= the place in which the Blessed Sacrament is reserved. The tabernacle is the center of attention in the Church because the Lord present in the Sacrament is the center of our worship.

**Blessed Sacrament**= Holy Communion, the Eucharist reserved in the tabernacle.

**Sanctuary** = the raised area where the sacrifice takes place. It is higher than the rest of the church to resemble a mountain. In the Bible, a mountain is always the place of encounter with God, e.g. Moses on Mt. Sinai to receive the 10 Commandments, and Jesus and the apostles on Mt. Tabor for the Transfiguration.

**Altar** (not alter) An altar is a place of sacrifice. The word "alter" means "other, i.e. alternate. The altar is not a table. It is only used for the sacrifice of the Mass.

**Crucifix** = a cross with an image of Christ on it.

**INRI** (on Crucifix) = Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum =Jesus the Nazarene King of the Jews

**Pascha nostrum immolatus est Christus** (on the altar at St Augustine) = Christ our Passover has been sacrificed. Indicates the purpose of the altar.

**Ave Verum Corpus** (on the tabernacle altar at St Augustine) Hail, the True Body.

**Nave** = where the people sit. Shaped like a boat. As we are safe in a boat on a stormy sea, so are we safe in the church from the storms of life.

**Stations of the Cross/via Crucis** 14 stations representing the events of the Passion (suffering and death) of Christ. A devotion popular during Lent.

**Stained glass windows** = create the sense of being in heaven because everything for God is NOW. In heaven we will see everything all at once. We are in heaven during the Mass. We take the Lord back out into the world afterward.

**Baptismal Font** - Octagon = 8 sides = symbol of re-creation. God created the world in six days and rested on the seventh. Adam and Eve brought sin into the world and the world needed to be recreated. God recreated the world in Christ on the eighth day, i.e. the day after the Sabbath (7th) day = Sunday, the day of the Resurrection.

**Easter/Paschal candle** = used at the Easter Vigil, Baptisms and funerals. The flame symbolizes the light of Christ. The candle is a symbol for Christ who was used up shedding His light to the world as the candle is used up shedding its light to the world.

**Ambry** = place where the Holy Oils are kept near the baptismal font.

**Holy Oils**= used for the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders. Consecrated by the bishop at the Chrism Mass during Holy week and taken to all the churches in the diocese for use in the sacraments.

**Holy Spirit** = Columba, dove (over the baptismal font). Calls to mind the gift of the Holy Spirit received at baptism.

**Status of: St. Augustine** = Patron of the cathedral parish and of the Diocese of Bridgeport. One of the great saints and bishops of the Church (died 430 AD.)

**Holy Family/Sagrada Familia** = Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. Model for all families.

**Four Evangelists** = Gospel writers

**I Matthew. Symbol:** man. The Gospel begins with a genealogy of Jesus' ancestors (men).

**II Mark. Symbol:** lion. The Gospel of Mark begins in the desert where the wild animals live. Ioft

**III Luke. Symbol:** ox: The Gospel is situated around the Temple where oxen were sacrificed.

**IV John. Symbol:** eagle. John's Gospel is theological. The eagle symbolizes "high flying" thinking about the Lord. John does not tell the story of Jesus but explains it.

**Ambo** = where the readings are read. The eagle is a symbol of preaching and theology because the legends say that the eagle flies toward the sun (light) as it ages in order to see better the light of truth.

**Angel w/ trumpet** = symbol for the end of time and the 2nd coming of Christ (from St. Paul 1 Cor 15:52). "In a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed".

**Cathedra** = the bishop's chair, sign of his authority over the diocese. Every diocese has a bishop, and every bishop has a cathedral and his cathedra. No one uses the bishop's chair except the bishop.

**IHS** (on the ceiling over the sanctuary) = Greek letters of the name "Jesus". If no one else sees it, God does!

**Choir loft and organ** = stained glass windows of David (the writer of the Psalms/hymns of the Old Testament). St. Cecilia, early Roman Martyr said to have sung to God in her heart as she was martyred for the Faith. The organ is said by the Church to most closely resemble the sound of the human voice. The human voice is the preferred instrument for the Mass because it was created by God for God

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## ***RCIA WKSH Class 16 Tour of the church***

I. Using your Church handout, give an explanation of the following terms:

- 1) Sanctuary
- 2) altar (not alter)
- 3) Tabernacle
- 4) Blessed Sacrament
- 5) Crucifix
- 6) Cathedra
- 7) Ambo
- 8) Nave
- 9) baptismal font
- 10) Easter/Paschal candle
- 11) Holy Oils
- 12) Ambry
- 13) Stations of the Cross