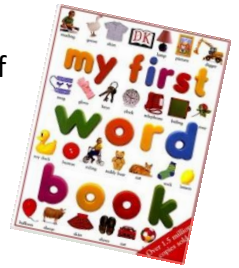


Introduction & Assembly Instructions for “My First Catholic Church Book”

When my children were little, they had several ‘My First Words’ books, which they loved. They would look at the pictures of common objects, and I would read the associated words. It was a great way for my children to learn about different objects in the world and to ask questions about them. I wanted a similar book for things we see in a Catholic church, but when I tried to find such a book, I found none. I felt called to write such a book. I wrote the first version of “My First Catholic Church Book” when my daughter was in Kindergarten, and my son was two.



The book “My First Catholic Church Book” is designed to introduce young children to the proper terms of objects in a Catholic church. One or two year olds can look at pictures while someone reads the associated words. Three and four year olds can begin to understand the brief descriptions of the objects. Older children can participate in creating and reading the book.

In this document, you will find the text portion of the book “My First Catholic Church Book”. I have created individual pages for various things you see in a Catholic church. On each page, the name of the object, such as a tabernacle, is listed as well as a brief description of the object. The rest of the book will be pictures of the objects, which you can provide. Originally, I was planning to include stock pictures in the book, but, when we moved from Chicago to Connecticut several years ago, I realized that churches can look quite different depending upon where you live. As a result, I decided to create a DIY book. When you create your version of the book, each “object page” will be opposite a picture of that object. For example, the tabernacle “object page” will be placed opposite a picture of the tabernacle.



Examples of “Object Pages” opposite of Picture Pages

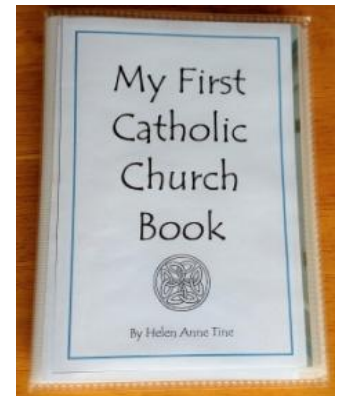
To create the pictures for each object, I suggest taking pictures in your church, but your children could also draw pictures of the objects. If you wish, you can also use some of the sample pictures at the end of this document. If you take pictures, I invite you to bring your children with you. I suggest visiting your church during the week or on a Saturday rather than staying after Sunday Mass. There are a couple reasons that I make this suggestion. First, the process could take 15 to 30 minutes. If you try to do this after Mass, young children will probably be tired and will not

want to participate. Second, during the week, there are usually times when the church is empty, so children can ask questions and walk around the church without disturbing anyone's prayer time. Depending upon the age of your children, you may want to make multiple trips to church and take only a few pictures each time. Or you may decide that it's better to take pictures by yourself, then bring your children and the finished book to church and walk through the church with the book. Do whatever works for your family!

When my children and I went to church to take pictures, I took the "object pages" of the book (pages 6-15 of this document) with us to church, asked my children to find an item, and then we took several pictures of that item. My children are older so they knew where to find everything, but you may have to guide your children through the church. Your child may or may not want to be in the pictures. When we came home, we found that some of the pictures were blurry, so we picked the best of the pictures for our final book. Our pictures are at the end of this document (pages 16 through 23) as an example.

There are multiple ways to create the actual book. I found a small inexpensive photo album at Michael's (["Recollections Brag Book/Album Souvenir"](#)) for our book. You could print the pages onto cardstock, laminate them, hole punch them, and place them on a key ring. You could make a book out of cardstock or construction paper and glue the pages into your book.

Whatever style you choose for your book, your children can help assemble the book. Older children can cut out the pages from this document. Younger children can match the pages from this document with the pictures taken at church. If your church does not have some of the items listed (like kneelers), don't include those pages in your book.



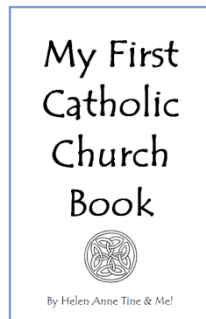
About the Author

I'm a Catholic wife and stay-at-home mom who lives in Connecticut. I would like to thank my husband, Steve, for encouraging me to work on this project after I set it aside for so many years. I would also like to thank my children, Theresa and Stephen, and Father Philip O'Neill for helping me edit the book. I hope you find this book helpful in teaching your children what they see in a Catholic church. May God bless you.

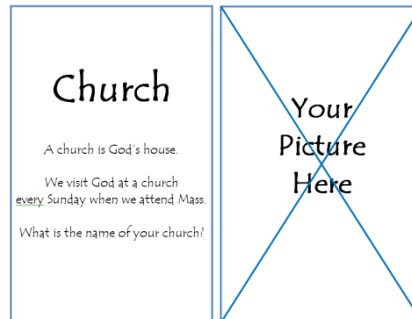
- Helen Tine (helen@tinefamily.com)

Layout of Pages for “My First Catholic Church Book”

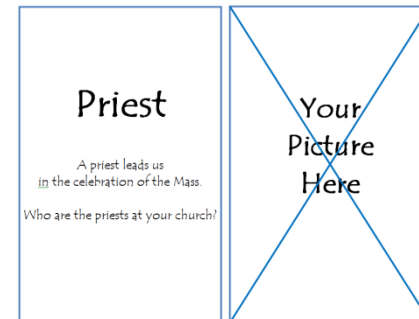
Use this layout to create your version of the book. You can find the “object pages” for the book on pages 6-15 of this document. You will need to supply the pictures. If you wish, you can use any of the sample pictures at the end of this document (pages 16-23).



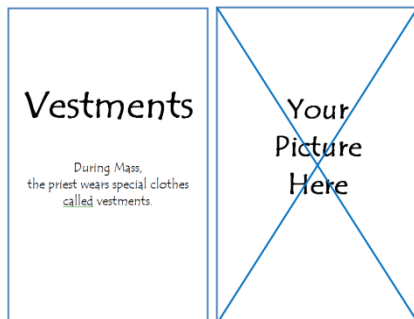
Cover



Pages 2 & 3



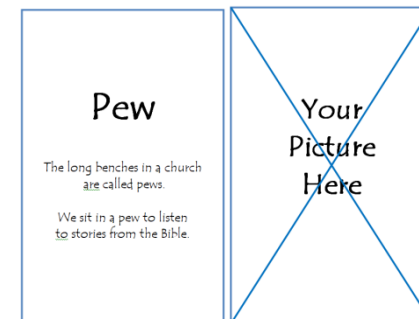
Pages 4 & 5



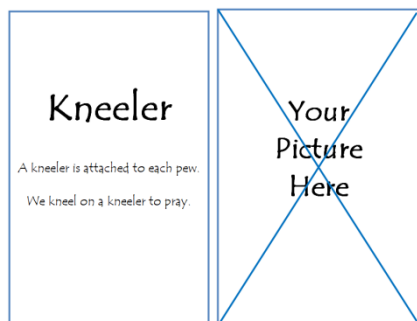
Pages 6 & 7



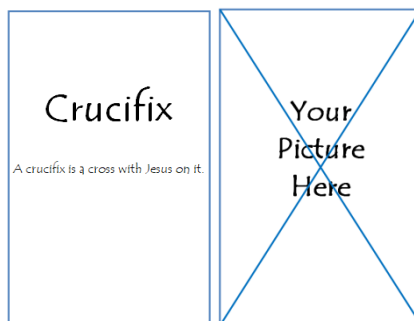
Pages 8 & 9



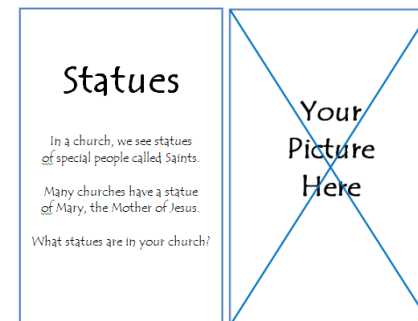
Pages 10 & 11



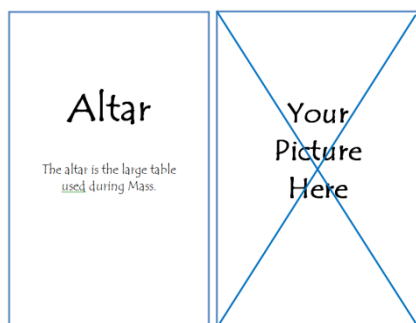
Pages 12 & 13



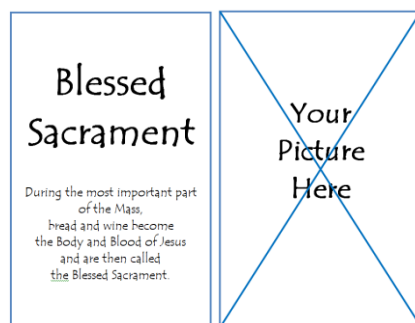
Pages 14 & 15



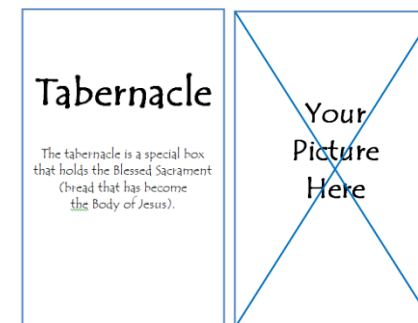
Pages 16 & 17



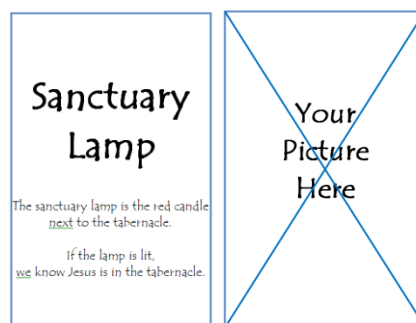
Pages 18 & 19



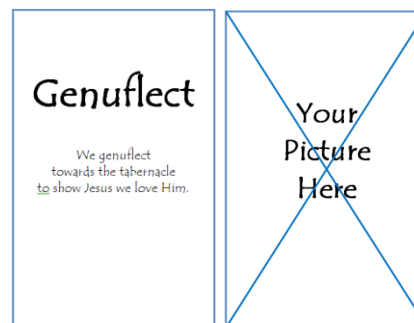
Pages 20 & 21



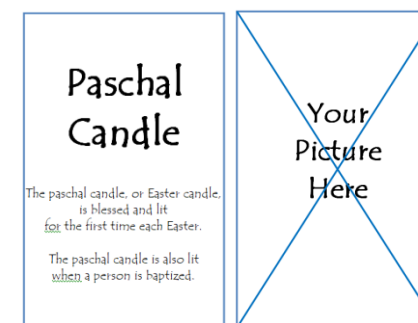
Pages 22 & 23



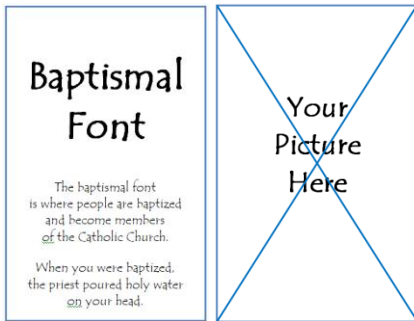
Pages 24 & 25



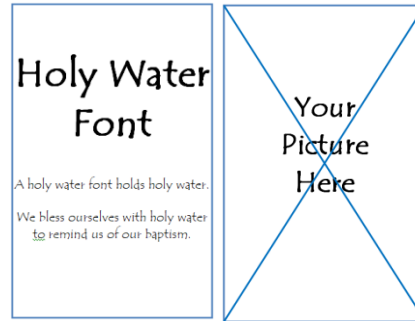
Pages 26 & 27



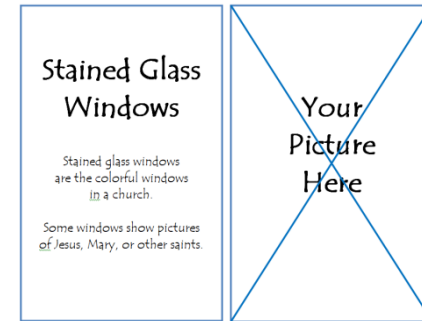
Pages 28 & 29



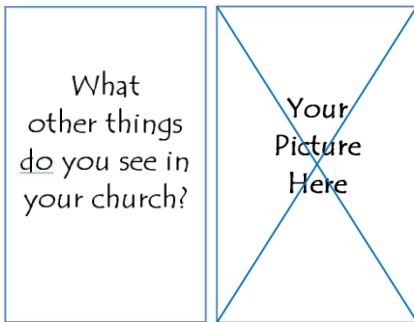
Pages 30 & 31




Pages 32 & 33



Pages 34 & 35



Pages 36 & 37



My First Catholic Church Book



By Helen Anne Tine & Me!

Church

A church is God's house.

We visit God at a church
every Sunday when we attend Mass.

What is the name of your church?

Suggestion for Picture of "Church": Your picture could be taken outside or inside the church. Ask your children for their preference.



Priest

A priest leads us
in the celebration of the Mass.

Who are the priests at your church?

Vestments

During Mass,
the priest wears special clothes
called vestments.

Suggestion for Picture of "Priest": You could take a picture of your children with a priest or use a picture from your child's baptism.

Suggestion for Picture of "Vestments": You could take a picture of a priest after Mass or ask a priest if you could see the closet of vestments.



Colors of Vestments

During the year, the priest wears different color vestments.

What color vestments will the priest wear this Sunday?

The priest wears purple during Advent (the 4 weeks before Christmas) and Lent (the 40 days before Easter).

The priest can wear rose on the 3rd Sunday of Advent and the 4th Sunday of Lent.

The priest wears white during the Christmas season and the Easter season.

The priest wears red on Palm Sunday and Pentecost Sunday.

The priest wears green during Ordinary Time.

Parent Note: The above list covers the vestments for most Sundays. For a complete list, refer to a Catholic calendar.



Pew

The long benches in a church
are called pews.

We sit in a pew to listen
to stories from the Bible.

Kneeler

A kneeler is attached to each pew.

We kneel on a kneeler to pray.

Suggestion for Pictures of “Pew” and “Kneeler”: Your children may want a picture of themselves sitting in a pew and kneeling on a kneeler.



Crucifix

A crucifix is a cross with Jesus on it.

Statues

In a church, we see statues of special people called Saints.

Many churches have a statue of Mary, the Mother of Jesus.

What statues are in your church?

Suggestion for Picture of "Statues": Ask your children to find their favorite statues.



Altar

The altar is the large table
used during Mass.

Blessed Sacrament

During the most important part
of the Mass,
bread and wine become
the Body and Blood of Jesus
and are then called
the Blessed Sacrament.

Suggestion for Picture of "Blessed Sacrament": You could search online (using the words 'Catholic host' or 'Catholic hosts' to find a picture of hosts.



Tabernacle

The tabernacle is a special box that holds the Blessed Sacrament (bread that has become the Body of Jesus).

Sanctuary Lamp

The sanctuary lamp is the red candle next to the tabernacle.

If the lamp is lit,
we know Jesus is in the tabernacle.

Suggestion for Picture of "Tabernacle": Remind your children to be reverent as they approach the tabernacle.



Genuflect

We genuflect
towards the tabernacle
to show Jesus we love Him.

Paschal Candle

The paschal candle, or Easter candle,
is blessed and lit
for the first time each Easter.

The paschal candle is also lit
when a person is baptized.

Suggestion for Picture of “Genuflect”: Take a picture of your children genuflecting.

Suggestion for Picture of “Paschal Candle”: Some Paschal Candles burn down quite a bit during the year, so you may want to retake your picture during the Easter Season when the candle is new, tall, and all the symbols can easily be seen.



Baptismal Font

The baptismal font
is where people are baptized
and become members
of the Catholic Church.

When you were baptized,
the priest poured holy water
on your head.

Holy Water Font

A holy water font holds holy water.

We bless ourselves with holy water
to remind us of our baptism.

Suggestion for Picture of "Baptismal Font": You could take a picture in church or use a picture from a baptism.

Suggestion for Picture of "Holy Water Font": Your children may want a picture of themselves dipping their fingers into the font.



Stained Glass Windows

Stained glass windows
are the colorful windows
in a church.

Some windows show pictures
of Jesus, Mary, or other saints.

What
other things
do you see in
your church?

Suggestion for Picture of “Stained Glass Windows”: Ask your children to find their favorite stained glass window.

Suggestion for Picture of “Other Things”: Ask your children to find something (maybe the Stations of the Cross or candles).



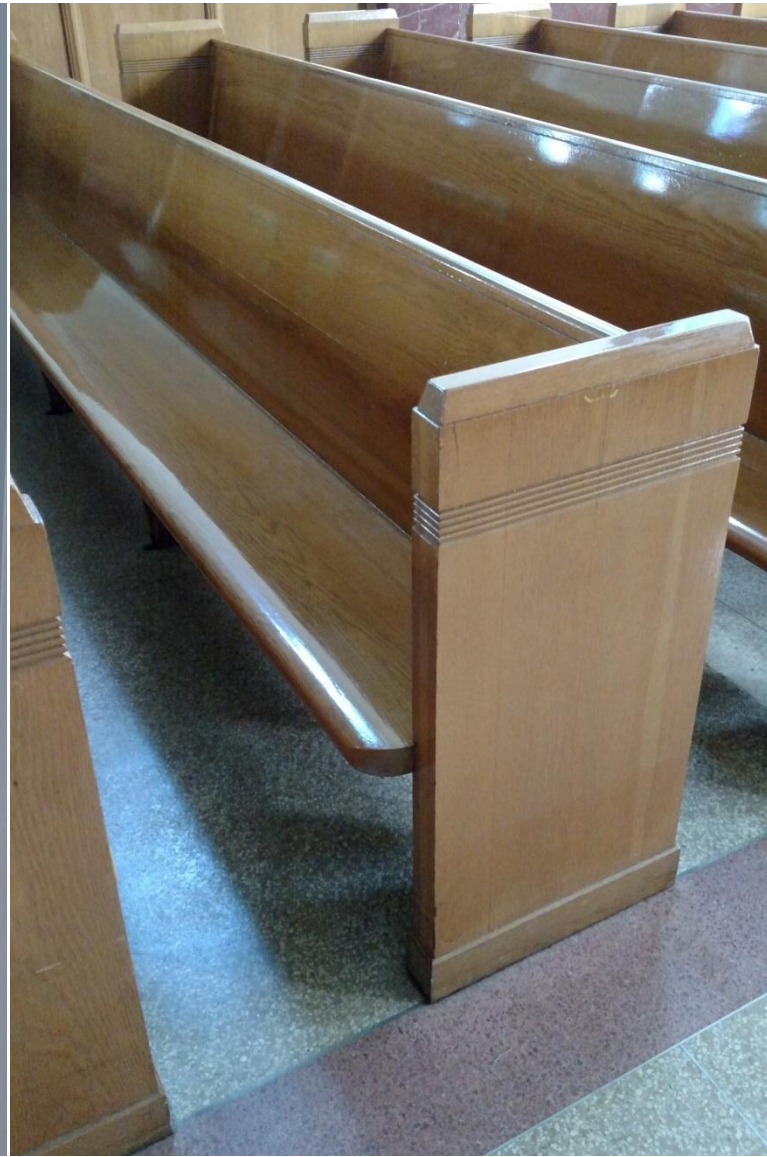
Church



Priest



Vestments



Pew



Kneeler



Crucifix



Statues



Altar



Tabernacle



Sanctuary Lamp



Genuflect



Paschal Candle



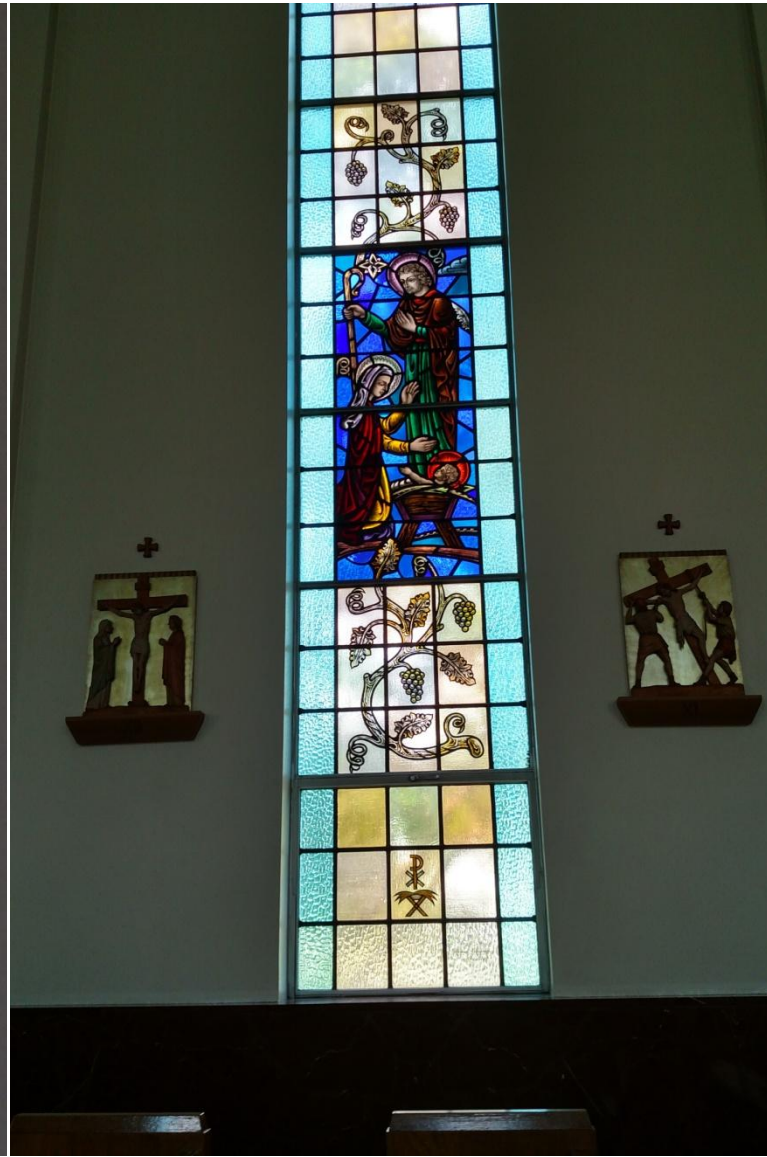
Baptismal Font



Holy Water Font



Stained Glass Windows



Stations of the Cross