

Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church

Church Walkthrough for Catechists

** You can use the My Catholic Church Scavenger Hunt handout. Have copies ready to take with you. **

Entrance

1. Walk them into the church and have them bless themselves with holy water.
2. Remind them that every time we walk in and bless ourselves, we are reminded of the same graces (blessings) we received at our baptism.
3. They can line up at the double-doors and two-by-two, have them genuflect.
 - The word **genuflect** comes from Latin: *genu* means knee and *flectere* means to bend.
 - They are to genuflect at the middle of the church facing the tabernacle, by bending their right knee to the floor and doing the Sign of the Cross.
 - This is done to show respect and adoration to Jesus Christ in the tabernacle.

First Stop: The Sacristy

4. Show them around the sacristy so that they can see where Father prepares for Mass.
5. Open Father's closet to show them the different colors of the vestments and chasubles that Father wears.
6. Remind them that the purpose of the altar servers is to help Father during Mass. The altar servers wait in the sacristy until Father is ready to begin Mass. To be an altar server, you must have made your First Communion. This is to make sure that the altar server understands what the Eucharist is and how important it is in our faith.

Second Stop: The Altar

7. Take them back around to the lector's side of the church.
 - Make sure they bow as they cross the middle of the church.
8. Sit them in that area where the lectors and Eucharistic ministers sit.
9. Explain to them that this area is called the altar. This is where we celebrate the Eucharistic Celebration (Mass) every Sunday.
 - Show them the two altar candles on the side of the altar. The altar candles are lit before Mass begins, and stay on throughout the duration of Mass.
10. Show them the altar linens and banner(s) hanging from the wall. Explain that these items give us hints as to which season we are in. Also tell them that the linens used on the altar and pulpit (where the lectors read) all match and are the same color as the season we are in.

• Advent: Purple	• Lent: Purple
• Christmas: White/Gold	• Easter: White/Gold
• Ordinary Time: Green	• Pentecost: Red
11. While still sitting, they are able to see the baptismal font. Ask them if they know where it is used at. The baptismal font is where we are baptized at. It is where the holy water is stored at our baptism.

The Altar *(continued)*

12. Next to the baptismal font is the Paschal Candle, also called the *Easter Candle*. This candle is lit during the season of Easter and reminds us that Jesus is the light of the world.
 - During baptisms, the candle and the baptismal font are moved to the front of the church so that everyone present can witness the baptism.
 - The parents and godparents bring a candle to be lit during the baptism, and it is lit from the Easter Candle to remind us that we are to share Jesus's light with others.
13. Now have them look for the tabernacle on the table behind the altar. Tell them that this is where the Body of Christ is stored. Explain that the importance of our genuflecting at the middle of the church, is to show respect for the body of Jesus.
14. Next to the tabernacle, you will see a red candle. This is called the Sanctuary Lamp. Anytime the Body of Christ is in the tabernacle (which it almost always is), this candle will be lit. I
15. Show them that the area that the lectors read from is called a **pulpit** or *lectern*.
 - Explain that a lector's job is to share God's word with others.
 - Now, explain that the purpose of going to Mass is to learn more about our own faith, to listen to God's Word and sing praises to Him. This is why it's called the Lord's Day and not our day!

Third Stop: The Stations of the Cross (along the walls) & Stained Glass Windows

16. There are 13 Stations of the Cross that are along the walls. Explain that these Stations are a devotion that most Catholics do during Lent and pray about Jesus's walk to his death.
 - It helps prepare us for Easter Sunday, when Jesus rose from the dead.
 - At OLG, it's usually done every Friday during Lent.
17. Also mention that along the walls are the stained glass windows and how ours represent the sacraments. See if they can determine which sacraments some of them are.
 - *Interesting Fact:* During the Medieval Times, when only the wealthy knew how to read, churches used stained glass windows (and other images) to teach people who could not read about the Bible. That is why many churches have stained glass windows. It is a way of teaching us without using words and adding beautiful imagery in the church.

Fourth Stop: The Choir Section

18. Now walk back around to where the Choir sits, genuflecting as needed.
19. Explain the two areas of the church where most of the words of the Mass come from.
 - The Lector area is where the lector reads God's words.
 - The Choir area is where the choir sings God's words.
 - Explain that our participation in singing is so important to Mass. Everyone signing at Mass is another way we show respect to God, our creator.

Exit

20. Have them genuflect as needed and bless themselves on their way out.