

# 1<sup>st</sup> Communion Pilgrimage:

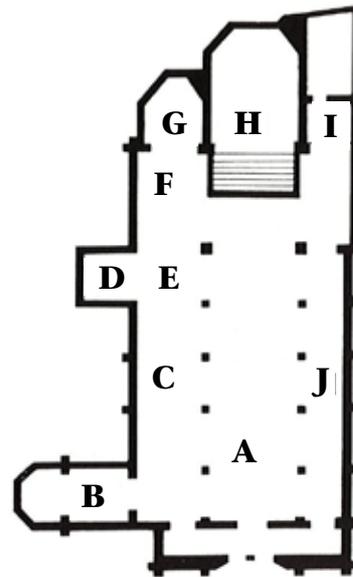
St Nicholas Church, Boldmere to St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham



## Welcome to St Chad's Cathedral

During our time here today:

- We will learn the difference between a Cathedral - like St Chad's - and a parish church - like St Nicholas.
- We will learn what all Catholic churches have in common.
- We will learn something of the history of St Chad's Cathedral
- We will have time to enjoy the beauty of this particular Cathedral church
- We will have time to pray to God, the reason this church and every church is built
- You will receive a take home quiz - with a promise of a prize for the highest scoring entry



- A The Nave
- B St Edward's Chapel
- C North Aisle
- D Bd. John Henry Newman shrine
- E Immaculate Conception Window
- F Font
- G Lady Chapel
- H Sanctuary
- I Sacristies
- J South Aisle

## The Bishop and his Cathedral

Each parish - like St Nicholas, belongs to a **Diocese** - an area, like the Midlands.

Each Diocese is led by a **Bishop**. He is appointed Bishop by the **Pope**, who leads the whole Church on earth. Each Bishop is the 'father in God' of his diocese, its chief shepherd.

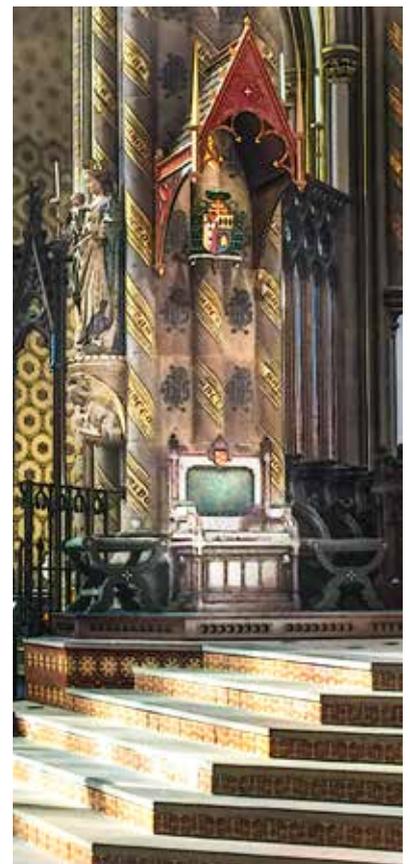
The Bishop is called to teach and lead the people of the diocese in the ways of faith, helping them to grow in their love of God and their love of neighbour.

Each Diocese has a **Cathedral** church. The Cathedral is the mother church of the Diocese, and is where the Bishop celebrates the main liturgies of the year - such as Easter and Christmas.

The Cathedral is home to a most important symbol of the Bishop's work of teaching the faith and leading his diocese. That symbol is his chair, his **cathedra**.

In each parish church, there is a presider's chair, a much simpler chair that symbolises the parish priest's role as the bishop's delegate to that parish.

Why do you think a cathedral is called a cathedral?



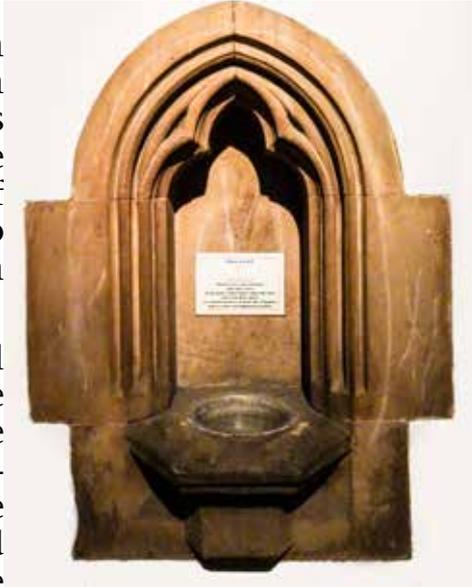
## A house for the Church.

The Church (with a capital 'C') is the family of God.

A church (with a little 'c'), even a cathedral, is a place where the family of God comes to be at home with God.

In a way all people are members of the family of God - because we are all of us created by God and he calls us all to live close to him.

But Christians become members of the family of God in a new way when we are baptised. For then we are re-born in Christ, becoming members of his Body the Church, and brothers and sisters to each other.



We remember this each time we come into a church we remember that we belong here. We are members of the Church through baptism.

So, as we come into any church we dip our hands into **holy water** - water blessed to remind us of our baptism - and we trace the sign of the cross over ourselves - in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.



**See if you can be the first to find the font in the Cathedral.**

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## The Mass is at the heart of it all... to give us heart

On the night before he died Jesus gave to the Church the precious gift of his life, himself, in Bread broken and shared, and Wine poured out and shared

That same sacramental gift is offered again at every Mass, as we join with Jesus in his offering of his Sacrifice to God the Father, and to us.

And so at the heart of the Cathedral are the two tables of word and Sacrament. From the ambo the Scriptures are proclaimed, and at the altar the Sacrifice of Jesus at **Calvary** is once more presented to the Father and then shared with us.

To this Cathedral, and to the Eucharist, comes the people of God, for occasions of great joy, and for times of intense pain and sorrow.



Jesus invites us to come to him to share with him whatever we are feeling, whatever we are fearing and whatever we are facing. Always he invites us to come to him. Always he receives us in love and mercy. Always he wants to help us grow and fulfil all the potential of our lives.

**Always come to Mass ready with**

- **one thing to give thanks for**
- **one thing to say sorry for**
- **one thing to ask for help with.**

## A patron saint

A patron saint is a saint to whom we ask to pray for a particular community - a diocese, a church, or a particular group of people.

Churches are usually known by the name of their patron. So, for example our parish is the parish of **St Nicholas**, and the Cathedral is **St Chad's** Cathedral.

In some notable cases the saint is chosen as a patron saint, because the church has been built over the place where they are buried. This is the case which **St Peter's** in Rome, or the Basilica of **St Francis** in Assisi.

St Chad was a saint who died in the 7th Century, and was buried in Lichfield. He was a man of great holiness and the first bishop of this part of England. He loved and served the people of his diocese with great generosity.

After his death they continued to come to his place of burial to pray to him, to ask him to present their prayers to God.

In the 16th Century, at the time of the Reformation, when the Catholic Church



was persecuted in England, the shrine of St Chad was destroyed, and his body would have been too. However one of the priests of the Cathedral in Lichfield secretly rescued his bones, and moved them to safety.

For hundreds of years afterwards the bones of St Chad were either kept hidden or later kept in great reverence in a number of places in England and France.

In the early 19th Century a new Catholic Cathedral was to be built in Birmingham. It was agreed that the relics of St Chad would be installed in the Cathedral. And they have been venerated here ever since, in the Cathedral which proudly bears his name and boasts of his patronage.

In St Edward's Chapel there are stained glass windows showing the history of the relics from the time of the Reformation to their being installed in this Cathedral.



**Look out for the statue of St Chad carrying a model of the Cathedral at Lichfield**

## A Blessing from God (and a future saint?)

John Henry Newman was a member of the Church of England who converted to the Catholic Faith in the 1840s. He served as a priest in our diocese - he even celebrated Mass at St Nicholas parish in Boldmere. He was a member of the Oratorians - a religious community. He was made a Cardinal by Pope Leo XIII in 1879

He was a great preacher and teacher, and a great witness to the **holiness** that God calls all Christians. A time when many in England were suspicious

of the Catholic Church, Newman helped them to see that they had nothing to fear.



In 2010 Pope Benedict XVI came to England and during his visit he beatified Cardinal Newman. Beatification is a recognition of Cardinal Newman's exceptional holiness, and we are encouraged to follow his example. We hope that in a short time Blessed John Henry Newman will be declared a saint.

**Ask Bd. John Henry to pray for you!**

## Some history...

The first Catholic chapel in Birmingham was built in 1688. But the year it was built it was destroyed in an anti-Catholic riot. The next church was built in 1786: it lasted until 1969.

The first church on the site of this Cathedral was built in 1808, but in the 1830s it was decided to rebuild and provide Birmingham's Catholics with a beautiful Cathedral. **Bishop Walsh** commissioned **Augustus Welby Pugin** to design the Cathedral. He laid the foundation stone in October 1839 and it was completed and consecrated in June 1841. It cost £20,000!

In the years since the Cathedral has been changed and enriched. At first it had only one spire: the second, on the south west, was added in 1856. In 1868 the Immaculate Conception window was installed. In 1933 the chapel of St Edward was built - part of the original design there was no money to build it until the 1930s.

Many of the furnishings of the Cathedral came from elsewhere. They link us to the life of the Church in other times and other places - for example the statue of Our Lady, the canon's stalls on the Sanctuary, and pulpit - all dating from the 15th Century and coming from the Netherlands, France and Germany. The Stations of the Cross, carved in Antwerp, Belgium date from 1875.

The Trinity window in the South Aisle is a memorial to men of the Cathedral parish killed in the First World War. At the bottom of the window a priest shows a priest offering Mass for those who have died. The altar boy has the likeness of a Cathedral server killed in the war.



## Prayer

### Opening Song

Jesus, I love you,  
Jesus, I love you,  
Jesus, I love you,  
you are my Lord.

Spirit, I love you...

Father, I love you...

### Scripture Reading

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John

**Glory to you, O Lord**

*We trace the sign of the Cross on our forehead, our lips and over our heart*

Jesus said to his disciples:

'As the Father has loved me,  
so I have loved you.

Remain in my love.

If you keep my commandments  
you will remain in my love,  
just as I have kept my Father's  
commandments  
and remain in his love.

I have told you this  
so that my own joy may be in you  
and your joy be  
complete.

This is my  
commandment:  
love one another  
as I have loved  
you.

The Gospel  
of the Lord.

**Praise to you,  
Lord Jesus Christ.**

### The Lord's Prayer

### Blessing

Acknowledgments: Opening Song: unknown copyright; Scripture: From The Jerusalem Bible © 1966 by Darton Longman & Todd Ltd and Doubleday and Company Ltd.



**A bomb fell through the  
South Aisle roof in WW2.  
But it did no more damage.  
Find the *Deo Gratias* panel!**