

THIS IS MY CHURCH

DIRECTIONS

Making “*THIS IS MY CHURCH*” your church.

To make *THIS IS MY CHURCH* your church, take pictures of your parish church that correspond to these pages and load them onto your computer. I suggest turning off the date function on your camera for these pictures. Once this is done, open *This Is My Church*. To insert your own pictures on each page, click on the “mountain” in the center of the picture place. This should open the picture folder on your computer. Select the appropriate picture and it will be inserted.

The pictures you will need are: outside picture of the church; pastor & priest(s); people in your church; altar; crucifix; ambo; tabernacle; sanctuary lamp; baptism font; reconciliation room; prayer candles; sacristy; holy water font; organ or piano; book stand. The page for your priest(s)’ picture indicates where to put in his name(s). Delete page for organ or piano, whichever you do not use. Or keep both if you use both.

There are also pages with pictures of Archbishop Nelson Perez, Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Newark, Pope Francis and a representation of the Church Universal (the Church throughout the world). On this last page, add pictures of your pastor and people in your parish.

After making your changes, select “save as” and rename it. No changes will be saved to the original document.

Dear parents and religious educators,

All children learn most effectively with examples that relate to their own experience, and some absolutely require it. The pages within this template are designed for you to insert the digital pictures of your parish church to develop a personalized “church tour,” so that your own church can be visited frequently, simply by visiting these pages. However, the purpose is not for children to visit the church within a book, but so they can become familiar with this sacred space, and therefore feel comfortable during their actual visits and participate in Mass and other times of communal prayer, as they are able.

You will notice that there are very few words on the picture pages. This is so the person with developmental or learning disabilities you are sharing this with may focus on the pictures. On the back of each picture page is more specific information. Much of this is intended for you, which you can then share in the way best understood by your son, daughter or learner.

Please follow the directions on the Directions page to make this a visit with *your* church.

This is a *PRAISE** resource developed by the department for Pastoral Ministry with Persons with Disabilities of the Archdiocese of Newark and used with permission. Please feel free to share it with anyone you know wishing to help children become familiar with their parish church, the sacred space we gather to worship God and celebrate God’s presence with us in life.

*Persons Recognized Accepted Included Spirit-filled Educated - The *PRAISE* Project is the work of talented professional educators with generous hearts in collaboration with the department for Pastoral Ministry with Persons with Disabilities.

We come here to Mass on Sundays because we are happy that God is with us always and we thank God for this.

This is my church,
[Insert parish name]

The pastor guides us and helps our parish live like Jesus wants us to.

[Insert name], our pastor.

There are many people in the Church.
Everyone has something to do: welcoming
people, singing, playing an instrument,
distributing Holy Communion, proclaiming
the Word of God, participating in Mass,
etc.

[Insert pictures of people in your church on the next
page. Add as many pages as necessary. Even include
people who normally sit near you in Mass.]

Here is the altar and it is also called, “The Table of the Lord.” It is on this table that the bread & wine become Jesus.

It is from this table that we are all fed.

Altar

The crucifix shows that Jesus died on a cross.

When we go to Mass, we remember that
Jesus died and was raised from the dead.

Crucifix - Jesus on the cross

Here is the ambo, where God and Jesus stories are told. They are in the Bible.

This ambo is bigger and different from the one in your parish.

Ambo - where God and Jesus stories are told. 14

This is the Tabernacle that holds Jesus in the Sacred Hosts. It is in The Lady Chapel, named in honor of Mary, the Blessed Mother.

Tabernacle - A special place for Jesus.

The Sanctuary Lamp is near the Tabernacle.

It is always lit. This shows us that Jesus is present in the Tabernacle and with us always.

The Sanctuary Lamp

The water of Baptism cleans us and makes us new.
At Baptism we become part of the Church.

Baptism Font

This is the Reconciliation Room, where we tell the priest about the unloving choices we have made. He forgives us in the place of Jesus.

Reconciliation Room

We light a candle and say a prayer for someone or ask God to help us. A candle with light is a sign that God is with us.

Prayer Candles

This is the Sacristy where supplies for Mass are kept, such as: the priests' clothes, altar cloths, unconsecrated communion wafers, the books used in Mass.

Sacristy

We put our hand in the Holy Water and bless our self with the Sign of the Cross. It is like washing our spirit clean and having God cover us. We do this when we enter a church and when we leave. This reminds us of our baptism.

The Holy Water Font

The music of the piano is beautiful. It helps us to sing our prayers to God and make them stronger.

The Piano

These are books that are good to read. They tell us about God and about being Catholic.

Book Stand

The archbishop guides his church, the parishes of the archdiocese. He is the pastor of the archdiocese.

He serves like Jesus the Good Shepherd.

The crosier, the pastoral staff, carried by him reminds us of this.

The hat worn by the archbishop for Mass is called a mitre.



Here is Archbishop Nelson Perez

In the Gospel by Matthew, Jesus said, “You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church.”
(Mt 16:18)

The pope guides the Church, in the place of St. Peter. St. Peter was a follower of Jesus and we say he was the first pope.

The pope is also the Bishop of Rome.



Pope Francis

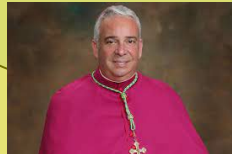
Together, all parishes around the world in the different archdioceses and dioceses, including the Vatican, make up the whole Church.

But the Church is the people, not the buildings. The buildings are where the people meet.

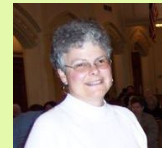
Pope in Rome



Parishes



(Arch)dioceses



The Whole Church