Within the Walls of Holy Disciples

A Tour of Our Sacred Space

Holy Disciples Catholic Church
10425 187th St E Puyallup, WA
Processional Doors at the entrance of the church symbolize the Church as a tree of life whose branches provide shelter and reach out to bring people to Jesus Christ.
The center piece of the Eucharistic Chapel (to the left of the entrance) is a Tabernacle, used for the reposition (safe housing) of the Blessed Sacrament (Holy Communion) reserved for homebound, sick, or imprisoned people who are not able to attend our celebration of Mass. A Sanctuary Lamp (here a red candle light) is found near all Tabernacles in Catholic Churches and Chapels, and signifies that Christ is sacramentally present in this place. The prayerful atmosphere of our chapel is aided by an olive wood Crucifix from Bethlehem, an image of Saint Francis of Assisi (by Cenni de Peppo Cimabue in 1280), a carving of the Resurrection of Christ, a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Jesus, caring for children of the world gathered around her, and a statue of Saint Joseph, Mary’s husband and the earthly father of Jesus.
On entering our Church, one’s eyes are drawn to the large Crucifix opposite the main entrance aisle. A Crucifix is a Cross with an image of the crucified Christ. Each Catholic Church is to have a Crucifix visibly present to remind us of God's ultimate act of love for the world. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life" (Jn 3:16). Our Crucifix was crafted in northern Italy, a reproduction of one made by Italian painter Cimabue in 1272 for the Church of Santa Croce in Florence, Italy. It is painted in the Byzantine (Eastern Christian) style, showing an image of the Blessed Virgin Mary on the left and the Beloved Disciple on the right who stood at the foot of Jesus' cross (Jn 19:25-27). Tradition informs us that the Beloved Disciple is the Apostle and Evangelist John.
Framing the Crucifix are **Statues of the Blessed Virgin Mary** and **St. Joseph**, representing Jesus' earthly family. Beneath the Crucifix is a central **Tabernacle** and a **Sanctuary Lamp**, both serving the same role as in the smaller chapel. Above this grouping of the Holy Family, in the sunburst of the stained glass window is a representation of the **Holy Spirit** (the dove in the sunburst). The Holy Spirit—the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity—leads and guides followers of Jesus, and we call forth the Holy Spirit in our Sacramental celebrations (Acts 2:1-4, 17:12).

We next focus on the Altar, where we place our lives and are fed by the Lord Himself in the miracle that happens at our celebration of Mass. We are centered on the Altar, whose circular shape invites us around the Table of the Lord to celebrate the **Supper of the Lord** (Eucharist or Mass). The round shape signifies unity and inclusion, as well as the world and a compass. At the center of the altar is an **Altar Stone** which represents Jesus Christ as the rock on which our faith is built. The inlay also includes a cross constructed of sequoia wood that is 2000 years old, the same age as the Catholic Church.
At the foot of the Altar is the **Easter Candle** (Paschal Candle) and **Baptismal Font**. A new Paschal Candle is lit each Easter to signify the Rising of Christ—is his rising is our hope in Resurrection. The Easter Candle powerfully represents the Light of Christ shining through the darkness of this world.

The **Baptismal Font** is where we begin our journey as disciples of the Lord, when we are washed with the life-giving holy water of baptism. Each baptized person enters into the mystery of God by becoming a new creation through water and the Holy Spirit. Several small brass Holy Water fonts are attached to the walls at the entrances and exits of the church, and we bless ourselves with this water to remind us of the Baptismal life we live in Christ.
We proclaim the **Word of God** (Sacred Scripture) at the **Ambo**. Our Readings come from the Old Testament (Hebrew Scriptures) and New Testament (Christian Scriptures), the heart of which is the Gospel (Good News) of Jesus Christ. The Ambo’s semi-circular shape and style evokes the Altar.
To the right of the Sanctuary is the **Presider's Chair**, which links the presider of this local assembly to the ministry of the Archbishop of Seattle and to the Holy Father (Pope) of Universal Church.
Surrounding the Sanctuary within the Sacred Space of our church building, are a number of other important symbols of our Catholic faith journey.

**Stations of the Cross** hang around the upper walls of the Church. These 14 stations commemorate eye-witness accounts from the Passion and Death of Jesus, beginning with his Trial before Pontius Pilate and ending with his Burial in the Tomb provided by Joseph of Arimathea. Stations of the Cross began appearing in churches during the Middle Ages to allow Christians to experience something of a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, at a time when it was prohibited by physical distance and dangers of travel.
Just as we see the large Crucifix upon entry, as a reminder of the sacrificial death of Jesus, so we see the carved image of the **Ascension of the Lord** into Heaven (Acts 1:9) reminding us of our call to go forth and proclaim the Good New of Jesus Christ’s Resurrection into the world (Mt 28:19).
The **cruciform shape of our ceiling** highlights four stained-glass windows, each facing one of the four directions, North, South, East and West, thus following the commission of Christ to go out and make disciples of all nations (Mt 28:19).
Bells or a Gong are often used during the Eucharistic Prayer of the Mass to emphasize the consecration of the simple elements of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. The ringing of bells or sounding of a gong signal important moments of the Mass:

1) the Epiclesis (invocation of the Holy Spirit),
2) the Words of Institution (spoken by Jesus over the offering of bread and wine at the Last Supper), and
3) the elevation of the consecrated elements (which have become the Body and Blood of Christ).
A **Monstrance** is a vessel that holds a consecrated Communion Host for purposes of Exposition (showing) and Adoration (prayer) of the Blessed Sacrament. The word "monstrance" comes from the Latin word **monstrare**, which means “to show”. Monstrances are used in processions and for Benediction (blessing) as well as for adoration. The Consecrated Host is held in the center of the Monstrance by a lunette. The style of our monstrance depicts rays of light emanating from the Body of Christ.
Special books and texts are used in our liturgies. The **Roman Missal** contains prayers and solemn blessings for Masses throughout the year. A **Lectionary**, reverently placed upon the Ambo, holds the readings from Sacred Scripture.
Icons, Statues, and Shrines

Icons and Statues help us visualize the Lord, Saints, and holy places that they represent, assisting us in our prayer, and drawing us closer to God. **Icons** are visual representations of events from Sacred Scripture or from the lives of Christ or the Saints. Icons “proclaim” these events and so we say that icons are “written” not painted. **Statues** are similar to icons, but are images which are carved or casted. **Shrines** are the places of honor which hold these images of our Lord and our Saints.

When we pray, we **honor the Lord and ask for the saving help which only He can give.** Often we ask for the prayers of the Saints in Heaven. They are our brothers and sisters who help us with their prayers, like our loved ones and friends here on earth.
To the right of the Sanctuary and Presider’s Chair is a large **Icon of the Glorified Christ**. Like all icons this image was written in a constant state of prayer, following the iconographer’s (icon writer) rules for use of color and symbols. Icons always are meant to portray glorified existence, not realistic images.

*This icon was written for Holy Disciples by parishioner Valerie Hirn.*
An image of the **Divine Mercy** is mounted on an easel in the front of the church to the left of the Sanctuary. This was painted in Poland, after the visions of St. Faustina Kowalska, which began in 1924.
A Shrine to Our Lady of Guadalupe is located on the right side of the church building, within classroom four. This is the vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary as experienced by St. Juan Diego at Tepeyac, Mexico, in December 1531. Our Lady of Guadalupe is the Patroness of the Americas.
Shrine of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha, "Lily of the Mohawks"

Classroom Two

Kateri Tekakwitha (1656-1680) was born into the Algonquin people, where her mother had been baptized, but later carried off and forced to marry a Mohawk chief, in area that is now New York. Kateri was born in the same village where ten years earlier the Jesuit father, St. Isaac Jogues, was martyred. She was baptized by Jesuit missionaries at the age of twenty, but encountered vehement opposition to her new Christian life. Kateri eventually fled to a settlement near Montreal, Quebec, where she led a life of great austerity and love. She suffered greatly for the faith, and was especially devoted to the Eucharist. Kateri is called the “Lily of the Mohawks” and is the first native American to be beatified in 1980, and later canonized in 2012. She is the patroness of the environment and ecology as is St. Francis of Assisi. Her feast day is July 14.

Icon written for Holy Disciples Catholic Church by parishioner Valerie Hirn.
Located in the rear of the church near the Welcoming Desk, a painting of The Anointing of Jesus marks an event at the end of Jesus’ public ministry. The Gospels recall a woman named Mary, who anointed Jesus’ head with precious nard in the house of Simon the leper in Bethany (Mt 26:6-13, Mk 14:3-9, Jn 12:1-8). This anointing marks the end of Jesus’ public ministry before his journey to Jerusalem.

Painted by Slovenian-American artist Lillian Brulc, 1923-2012
Lillian Brulc was born and brought up in Joliet, Illinois. She learned to draw as a child, and furthered her artistic development at Xavier College (now University) Chicago and the University of Chicago. Brulc was a profoundly Catholic artist, whose work visualized some of the great events of the Gospels, as well as subjects of Slovenian-American life, touching on her own heritage. Her sacred art is found in Catholic churches and schools, ranging from Joliet and the greater Chicago area to Bermuda, Panama, and Rome.

Gifted to Holy Disciples Catholic Church by Mrs. Barbara Smith in memory of her loving husband, Melvin Ray Smith (1947-2011).
Icon of Maximilian Kolbe

Classroom Three

MAXIMILIAN MARY KOLBE (1894-1941) was born near Lodz, Poland. He became a Franciscan friar, and eventually a priest and missionary to Japan. In 1941, back in Poland, Kolbe was arrested by the Gestapo and sent to Auschwitz concentration camp. As a punishment for the escape of a prisoner, the Nazis marked nine inmates for death by starvation. Father Kolbe voluntarily stepped forward and offered his life in exchange for a young husband and the father of a family. At first his captors were baffled, and couldn’t understand his action. Then places were exchanged, and Kolbe was starved for some time before the Nazis murdered him by lethal injection. Kolbe was canonized by Pope John Paul II in 1982. His feast day is August 14.

Icon written for Holy Disciples Catholic Church by parishioner Valerie Hirn.
Sacred Vessels used at Mass include the Chalice and Paten. The Chalice (from the Latin calix or cup) is made of a durable metal and holds wine which, when consecrated at Mass, becomes the Precious Blood of Christ. A Paten (small plate) performs a similar function for the bread (hosts) which, when consecrated becomes for us the Body of Christ. Additional chalices and patens are used for the general distribution of Holy Communion. A Ciborium is a cup-like vessel with a lid that contains the Blessed Sacrament (Holy Communion) for reservation in the Tabernacle.
Other items used for the celebration of the Eucharist include:

A **Corporeal** - the linen cloth spread by the priest on the Altar upon which are placed the Paten(s) and Chalice(s).

A **Purificator** - a linen napkin-like cloth used by the priest to absorb consecrated elements and later in purification of the vessels after Holy Communion.

The **Pyx** is a small circular box made of precious material to hold the host for taking Holy Communion to those unable to attend Mass.

**Cruets** – the small vessels used to hold water which is poured into the Chalice as part of the consecration ritual, and used for the ritual washing of the priest’s hands.

The smoke of **Incense** symbolizes the rising of our prayers to heaven is sometimes used to underscore the sacredness of the offerings. A **Censer** contains the charcoal and incense while burning, and a **Boat** contains the unused incense.
Those who serve the liturgy (bishops, priests, deacons, altar servers, and masters of ceremony) all wear a white Alb, symbolizing the Baptismal life and the call to serve in ministry. Bishops, priests, and deacons don additional Sacred Vestments (garments). All three wear a Stole, which originated with Roman magistrates who wore a long scarf when engaged in their official duties (just as our judges wear a court gown). Whenever a priest celebrates Mass or administers the Sacraments, he wears the Stole as a sign that he is occupied with an official priestly duty. Bishops and priests wear a Chasuble when presiding at Mass. The Chasuble had its beginnings as Roman courtly dress, but came to symbolize the virtue of charity, and the yoke of unselfish service for the Lord, which the priest (and bishop) assumes at ordination.
Liturgical Colors of the Vestments and Church Decorations also carry deep symbolism.

**White** - symbolizes celebration. It is used on all feast of the joyful and glorious mysteries of our Lord's life (Christmas and Easter), on the feasts of our Blessed Mother, on the feasts of angels, and for feasts of all saints who were not martyrs.

**Gold** - considered a richer, more regal form of white.

**Red** - the color of blood, is used on all feasts of Christ’s suffering and death, and on the feasts of all who have given their lives in witness to the faith (martyrs), including the Apostles. Red also symbolizes the Holy Spirit, who began empowering us with Divine energy at Pentecost.

**Purple** (deep violet) - represents penance, and is used for the penitential Season of Lent (the forty days before Easter). A a bluer version of purple is used during Advent to emphasize the penance necessary to prepare the way of the Lord during the Advent Season of expectation.

**Green** - the color of living vegetation, new growth, and budding, symbolizes our growing in faith following the major seasons of Christmas and Easter. It is used on the Sundays after Epiphany until Lent, and after Pentecost until Advent.

**Rose** - can be used in place of purple on the Third Sunday of Advent (*Gaudete*—Rejoice!—Sunday) and on the Fourth Sunday of Lent (*Laetare*), when the Church tempers the somber atmosphere of these penitential seasons with an invitation to rejoice in the goodness of God our Savior, soon to be celebrated in Christmas and Easter, respectively.