

ENRICHMENT: LITURGY

Sacred Images Teach Us

Think of your parish church. Think about the art on the walls, the stained glass windows, and the statues. The art at parish churches usually depicts scenes or people from the Bible and the Church's history. The Church has been using art to teach us about the faith from the beginning.

We see how the faith is taught through images in the ruins of a church in Syria from around A.D. 250. At that time, Christians were often persecuted, so they gathered for liturgies in people's homes. These homes had certain rooms used for worship. One of these rooms was the baptistery, where Baptisms were celebrated. As someone walked to the baptistery, he would pass by paintings on the walls. The paintings on the walls showed events from the Bible.

The paintings in the ruins of the church in Syria teach many things about the faith. One of the first paintings shows the Fall of Adam and Eve. Another image shows the battle between David and Goliath. These images teach about the Fall and our battle against sin.



There are also many images of Christ. The painting on the left shows Jesus' miraculous healing of a man who was paralyzed. If you look closely, you can see the healed man carrying the mat he lay on before Jesus healed him.



The painting on the left shows Jesus, the Good Shepherd, carrying a sheep on His shoulders. This image teaches that Jesus seeks out sinners and brings them back to Himself.



This last image shows what a person would have seen just before being baptized. The wall painting on the left shows two women with lanterns, who may be the women who went to Jesus' tomb on Easter morning and found it empty. This image was next to the baptistery in the church house, showing the connection between Baptism and our new life in Christ through His Death and Resurrection.

Journal Reflection

What do you think went through the minds of those who were about to be baptized when they saw these images as they walked to the baptistery? Write your answer on the journal page. [Journal pages are available on the parent and student portals.](#)