

## Understanding the Mass Statues and Paintings

*Each week, we are explaining the different parts of the Mass - what is in the church, what we use in the Mass, and why (and how) we celebrate Mass the way we do.*

*Today our topic is **Statues and Paintings**.*

As Catholics, the only person we pray to is God - God the Father, Jesus (who is God the Son), and God the Holy Spirit. So why do we have **statues** and **paintings** in our Catholic church that are not only of God, but of people?

A **saint** - from the Latin word *sanctus* ("holy") - is someone the Catholic Church recognises as a good example of the way that they loved God and others. The best example of a saint is Mary, the mother of Jesus. And there are many other examples as well.

These are the people you will see in statues and paintings in the church, which help us to think of the saints, and of how they were close to God. They are meant to inspire us to consider how we too can try to love God with all our hearts. They also remind us that we are part of something bigger than ourselves, the Church on earth and in Heaven.



We do not worship saints, but we sometimes ask for their **intercession** - from the Latin word *intercedere* ("to intercede", "to go between") - which means we ask them to pray on our behalf to God, because we know God loves them very much.

It's a little bit like when you when you want to ask for something that is really important to you...sometimes you might get someone else to help you when you ask.

Saints who are shown in statues and paintings often have a special connection with that church community. There are **patron saints** - from the Latin *patronus* ("protector") - of places and things because of where they were born, or lived, or aspects of their lives.

1. How many statues and paintings can you count in your church? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Write down the name of any saints you recognise. \_\_\_\_\_