

## KNOW YOUR FAITH IX

### Architecture

**Narthex** The area outside the nave. In recent years this area is designed larger and larger replacing the old church basement. Important for gathering.

**Nave** The area where the congregation gathers for worship. Comes from the Latin meaning *ship or boat*. Many NAVES are shaped like an upside down boat. Sometimes the boat is in quiet waters and other times and turbulent waters.

**Sacristy** The room off of an altar area that contains the gowns, robes, candles, communion vessels, etc. Some sacristies contain a Piscina or a dry well in which to pour water used for baptisms and wine left over that was put into the chalice. Some traditions suggest that the priest/pastor drink the remaining wine. Left over Hosts are kept in a Host Box. When there is no dry well, the wine from the chalice is often poured into the earth outside the church.

**Apse** In very large churches (Cathedrals) this is the rounded area in front of the church.

**Font** The container for the water for baptism. In the early church this was a separate building called a baptistry. Until the 1960's most fonts were off to the side. Since the 1960's the font is often put at the entrance of the church as it is by baptism that we enter the Family of God. There are various debates as to what is baptism: initiation rite, believers' baptism, baptism of repentance (change of mind), baptism of infants, baptism of adults who avow their faith, etc. Baptism is one of the two sacraments commanded by Christ.

**Pulpit** The place where most often the Gospel is read and explained. The **Lectern** is where the lessons are just read and/or the leading of the Psalm for the day. Technically, the **Pulpit** should be on the left side of the altar/table from the perspective of the congregation. The left side is the Gospel side and the right side is the Epistle side of the altar. This distinction melted away for the most part in the 1960's with its liturgical renewals. In settings where there is just one place for all the lessons and readings, it is called an **Ambo** (the Italian word for "both.")

**Altar or Table** When there is no communion, the piece of wood or marble in the front of the church is called the altar or God's footstool or the Throne of God. When there is communion, it is referred to as a **Table** as in the Table of the Lord.