



1 FONT

- **Water** that has been blessed (holy water) is put into the Font at baptism
- The Font has **6** sides and is a **hexagon**

Fonts are nearly always situated close to the entrance to the church symbolising the entry to the church through baptism. Our Font has been moved several times. It was originally where the organ now stands under the tower arch. When the organ was installed it was moved next to the organ player's seat. Most recently, it has been moved to the north aisle so that wheelchair users can get to the accessible toilet in the new extension.



2 ROOSTER

- The roosters in the light box used to be in the **Vestry Door**
- The vestry is where vicars change into the robes they wear during the church service. The information board on the wall next to the rooster light box also has a picture of the roosters when they were in a door underneath the much smaller organ that used to be in an organ gallery where the current organ now stands.



3 STATIONS OF THE CROSS

- There are **14** Stations of the Cross in St Mary's
1. Pilate condemns Jesus to death
 2. Jesus receives the cross
 3. Jesus falls to the ground
 4. Jesus meets his mother
 5. Simon of Cyrene takes the cross
 6. Jesus has his face wiped by Veronica
 7. Jesus falls a second time
 8. Jesus tells the women of Jerusalem not to weep for him
 9. Jesus falls a third time
 10. Jesus is stripped of his garments
 11. Jesus is nailed to the cross
 12. Jesus dies on the cross
 13. Jesus' body is taken down
 14. Jesus is placed in the tomb

Praying at the Stations of the Cross is a tradition carried out during Lent or Holy Week – the week before Easter. Christians have always wanted to walk in the footsteps of Jesus to the cross. It was the Franciscans who first promoted the use of scenes from the last journey of Jesus to the cross to help Christians to do this.

4 CHANCEL

- **Stone Steps** separate the Nave and North Aisles from the Chancel in St Mary's
- The Chancel is the space around the Altar, including the Choir and the Sanctuary. The Sanctuary is the holiest place within the Chancel where, in the past, fugitives could not be arrested. Traditionally, churches are constructed so that during the celebration of the morning worship the vicar and congregation face towards the rising sun, a symbol of Christ. The large window behind the Altar is the East window in St Mary's.



5 ALTAR

- There is a **Brass Cross** in the centre of the Altar at St Mary's
- The Altar table is where the bread and wine are consecrated or blessed in communion services. During the consecration of bread and wine, the bread and wine become the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

6 NEW WINDOW

- The temple is shown in the lower diamond in the right panel of the new window
- There is a **Violin** and a **Lute** in the left panel, a **Lyre** and a **Harp** in the right panel

There used to be a large stately home called Gopsall Hall near to Congerstone. It was built in 1750 for Charles Jennens who was a friend of the musician Handel. The hall cost £100,000 to build (£8.5 million today). The Hall was set in several hundred acres of land and included two lakes, a walled garden, a Chinese boathouse, a Gothic seat and various garden buildings. It was once thought that Handel wrote 'The Messiah' in the temple in the gardens of Gopsall Hall. This isn't true as the Hall was not built in 1741 when the Messiah was written.



7 BOX PEWS

- There are **5** box pews in the Chancel in St Mary's
 - There is a **Fireplace** in the left hand corner of the Howe family box pew
- Until the 1950s, there used to be a chimney for the fireplace on the outside of the Chancel.



8 CHOIR

- There are **8** poppy finials at the ends of the benches in the Choir in St Mary's
- In many larger churches the Choir area is occupied by finely carved and decorated wooden seats known as Choir Stalls. In monasteries Choir Stalls are often fitted with seats that fold up when the monks stand and fold down when they sit. Often the hinged seat will have a Misericord (small wooden seat) on the underside on which a monk can lean while standing during the long services.



9 BIER

- There are **4** wheels on the Bier in St Mary's
- The bier is steered using a brass handle which is attached to a circular metal plate that moves the wheels**

It's quite difficult to move the Bier backwards in anything other than a straight line as you have to turn the wheels in the opposite direction to the one you want the Bier to go – like backing a lorry into a driveway!!



10 EAGLE LECTERN

- Yes**, the eagle on the wooden lectern in St Mary's is standing on a sphere
- There is a box next to the lectern **to stand on when reading from the bible** because the lectern is so tall

The eagle flies highest and symbolises the carrying of the word of God to the four corners of the world. The eagle is also the symbol used to depict John the Apostle, whose writing is said to most clearly witness the light and divinity of Christ. In art, John, as the presumed author of the Gospel, is often depicted with an eagle.



11 PULPIT

- The brass plaque at the base of the Pulpit commemorates **Lady Evelyn Eyre**, the sister of the 4th Earl Howe

The Pulpit was erected in 1921 by personal friends and parishioners as a token of sincere regard. There are steps up to the Pulpit floor and a reading light to illuminate the bible during services. The cloth hanging from the reading light is called a Parament. It is decorated with an appliqué consisting of a green cross and white lilies. To Christians the flowering lily represents the resurrection, new beginnings, purity and life restored.



12 NAVE AND NORTH AISLE

- The seating in St Mary's consists of open ended **Benches** rather than Pews
- An Aisle is a space for walking with rows of seats on both sides or with rows of seats on one side and a wall on the other. St Mary's has two Aisles leading to the Chancel. One is in the centre of the Nave; the other is the North Aisle. The ends of the seven benches between the Nave Aisle and the North Aisle are marked with decorative cast-iron poppyhead finials.



13 SOUTH NAVE WINDOW

- The female saints shown in the South Nave window are **St Mary Virgin, St Elizabeth** and **St Anne**. St Mary Virgin was the mother of Jesus. St Elizabeth was the mother of John the Baptist. St Anne was the mother of Mary and the grandmother of Jesus
- The winged lion is in the border at the bottom of the right hand window below St Elizabeth's name.



14 ORGAN

- The organ was installed by the 4th **Earl Howe** and commemorates his **sister Evelyn**

The organ was built around 1860 by Henry Willis who built the original Grand Organ in the Royal Albert Hall. The organ had previously been installed in Oldbury Hall, near Atherstone. It is a very large organ, compared to the previous gallery organ, and the Earl was clearly worried about this because in the January of 1914 he asked if the organ could be dismantled and rebuilt to make it smaller! The installation of the new organ required the creation of an access door to the pump room behind the organ, the insertion of a first floor ringing room, the removal of the internal staircase which used to lead to the old organ gallery and the creation of the rear staircase in the north wall of the tower which still provides access for bell ringers.

