



Christ Church

UNLOCKING CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL: FAMILY RESOURCES

A VIRTUAL VISIT ONLINE

The Lectern



Introduction:

This is a lectern. It is the stand that holds the Bible in a church.

The eagle bearing the Bible, while standing on a sphere, represents The Word of God being carried around the world.

Other faiths have special stands for holy texts, too.

Muslims, for example, show the Quran great respect by placing it on a special stand called the 'Rehal'.

The Jewish Torah is kept in the synagogue 'Ark' for safety.

- Look carefully at it. What does it appear to be made from?

- Why do you think it might be important or special?
- Which words come to mind?
- How does it make you feel?

Background:

This lectern is in a style called 'Gothic Revival'. The Victorians *loved* Gothic because they had a romantic view of the Middle Ages, the time that Gothic flourished - conveniently forgetting things like the Plague, gruesome executions and the Feudal System pretty much making people slaves!

The lectern was designed by Francis Skidmore and features silvered figures of:

- a) Saint Frideswide, the Anglo Saxon Princess who is the Patron Saint of Oxford and whose shrine became a sacred destination for many pilgrims over the centuries. Her patronal festival takes place on October 19th each year;
- b) Cardinal Wolsey, who worked for Henry VIII and who started the first College at Christ Church, which he called Cardinal College;
- c) Robert King, the Abbott of Osney Abbey, Oxford, who was appointed by Henry VIII to be the first Bishop of Oxford, in 1546.

Things to do at home- a few ideas:

- Imagine that, when the Cathedral is closed, the metal eagle takes off and flies, leaving the rest of the lectern behind. Where does it go? What does it see? Perhaps it could help someone having a tough time? This could have words and pictures like a graphic novel.
 - Lecterns sometimes have a decorated hanging suspended at the front like a banner. Design a banner that incorporates Holy symbols such as a cross (a symbol of Jesus' great sacrifice for all people); a dove or flame (symbols of the Holy Spirit); a scallop shell (symbol of pilgrimage)... or any other Christian symbol you might either research or know about already. If you have any, coloured paper can make good collage material for a project such as this.
 - You have been asked to read from the lectern at a service. You are allowed to choose any passage from the Bible. Try reading some a few verses through and find something that lets you be *really* expressive with your voice!
 - Find some pictures of lecterns. Try and find ones that were made in different centuries. Are there any unusual ones out there? You could also see if you can find five of them made from different materials.
 - You are a designer and you have been asked to design a new, very special lectern. How would it look? You could draw it or, possibly, make a model out of card.
- Things to consider:
- a) The Lectern is carrying a precious book – one that is probably quite heavy. It is important it is visible from a distance and a good height to read from.
 - b) What features might you introduce to help someone who wouldn't normally be able to use a lectern?