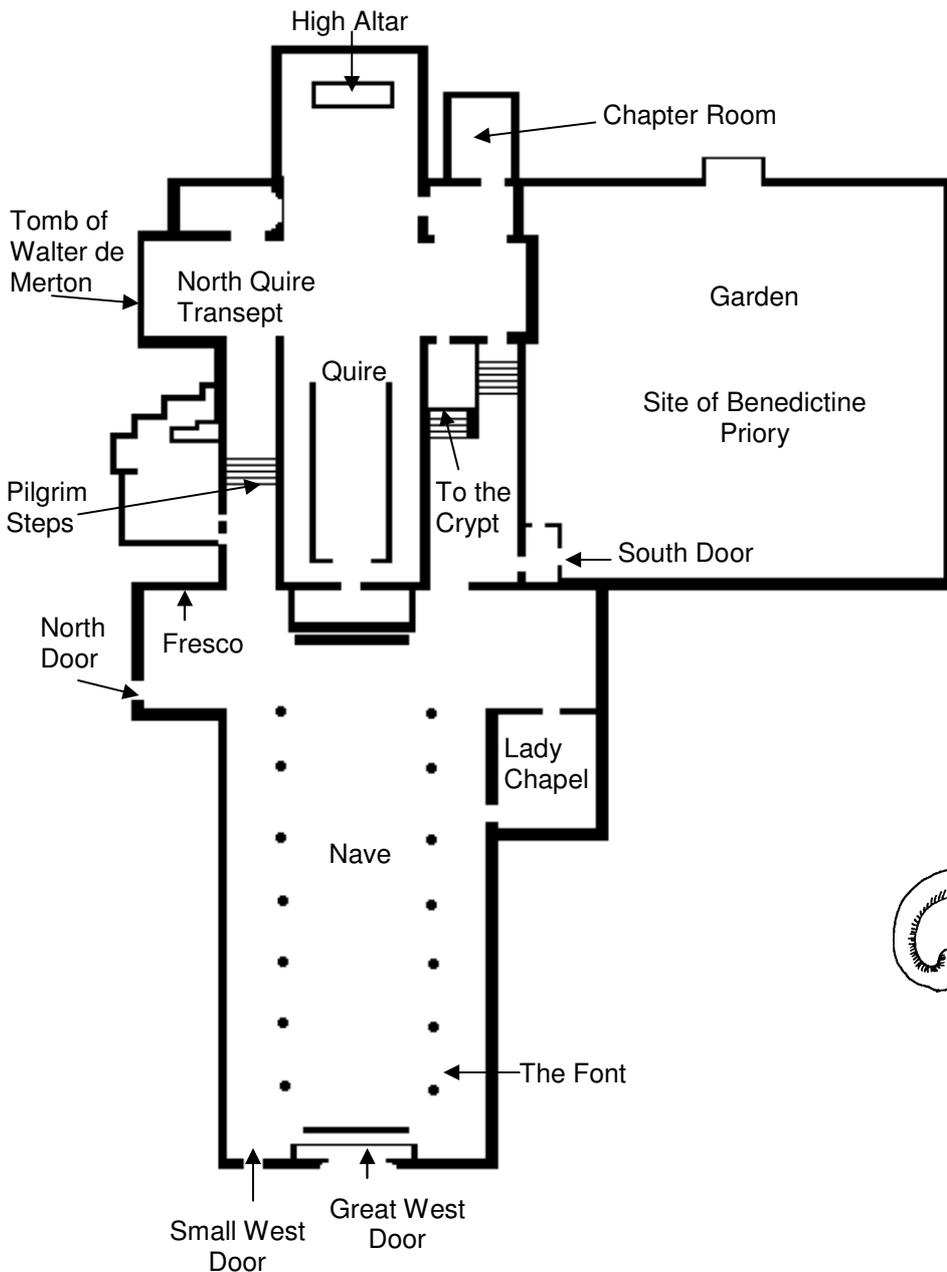


# Signs and Symbols

Welcome to Rochester Cathedral. This church building is a holy place – a place for Christians to come together to worship God. In worship Christians sing hymns and songs to God. Christians talk and listen to God in prayer, and hear and read the holy book, the Bible. As you explore the Cathedral look out for clues that tell you how and when these things take place.



This plan of the Cathedral will help you find your way round. Stand with your back to the West Door and hold the plan in front of you to see the Cathedral layout.

# ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL

Rochester Cathedral is the 'mother church' of the Anglican Diocese of Rochester. A diocese is a group of churches looked after by a bishop. You can find a map of the Diocese of Rochester in the Cathedral crypt.

## Who's who in Rochester Cathedral

**The Dean** is the senior member of clergy in the Cathedral. The Dean is responsible for the worship and everything that goes on in the Cathedral.

**The Canons** are clergy who assist the Dean. Rochester Cathedral has several Canons, each with a special area of responsibility in the Cathedral.

**The Vergers** look after the day to day running of the Cathedral. They make sure that everything is prepared for the services. They also take care of the building.

**The Choir** sing at the Cathedral services. Rochester Cathedral has three choirs and three organists.

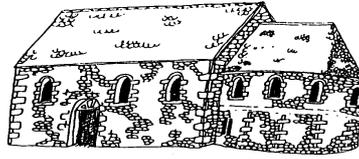
There are many other people who work at the Cathedral to ensure the smooth running of all aspects of the Cathedral's life and work. There are people in the office, answering phone calls and letters and booking events. There are people in the Education and Visits Department, welcoming school groups and adult visitors. There are people working in the shop and the tearooms. There are gardeners, cleaners and the housekeeper.

There are also hundreds of volunteers who help in the shop, the tearooms, arrange flowers, clean the brass and welcome visitors. There are volunteers who ring the bells, who repair the robes for the choirs and clergy, who embroider the altar cloths and hassocks used in the Cathedral. There are many different jobs to be done!

You will only see a little of what goes on in a Cathedral during your visit. Come back another time and see some more!

# Rochester Cathedral

There has been a living, working cathedral here in Rochester since 604. The original building was a small Saxon chapel.



When the Normans arrived in Rochester they rebuilt the Cathedral. The present Nave is mainly Norman. The building was spacious, airy and very impressive. The size of the building spoke to people about the power and strength of the Normans.

What words would you use to describe how this building looks, feels and sounds today? Write them below.

Cathedrals and churches are often built in a special shape. What is this shape and why is it used? (*Clue - look at the map on the front cover*).



Many churches and cathedrals are built with their entrance in the west and the most important part of the building, the **High Altar**, in the east. In the natural world what happens daily in the east and the west?

## The Nave

Find somewhere to sit down. Take time to look around you.

Write or draw some of the things which tell you that you are in a church building.

Think of four things you would expect to find happening in a church or cathedral.  
Note them down below.

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
----------	----------	----------	----------

## The Font

Find the **Font** (*it's a large stone basin*). When someone is welcomed into the Christian family, holy water from the Font is poured over them. What do we call this service?



.....

What do you use water for at home?.....

What does the water used in this welcoming ceremony represent? (*Clue - look at your answers above!*)

.....

## The Fresco

Find the **Fresco** (*a large painting on the wall beside the North Door*).

A fresco is a special painting which is done on wet plaster. This fresco was completed in 2004 and is the first picture of its type to be painted in an English cathedral for eight hundred years. It should last for 1000 years!

The fresco is not just there for decoration,  it is a form of prayer. Take time to look closely at the picture and think about what you see.

Who is shown in the upper part of the picture?.....

What is the theme of the picture?.....

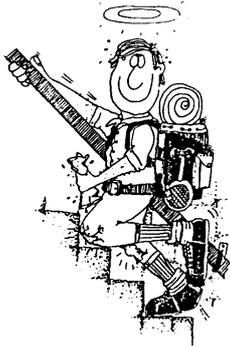
If you were to design a fresco what would you show in the picture. Draw or write your ideas below.

# The Pilgrim Steps

*Go to the Pilgrim Steps.*

A pilgrimage is a journey which helps you to get closer to God. Sometimes it involves going to a special place associated with your faith.

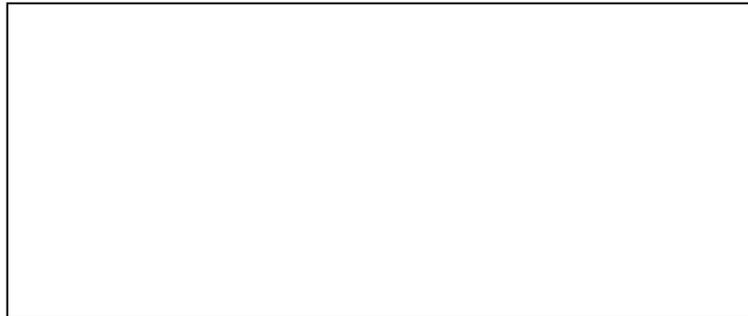
In Medieval times, thousands of people came on pilgrimage to Rochester Cathedral to visit the shrine of William of Perth. Many climbed the Pilgrim Steps on their knees to reach William's shrine which was in the centre of the North Quire Transept.



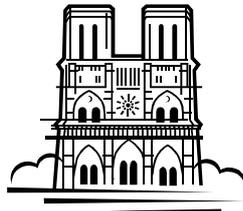
William was a baker who lived in the Scottish city of Perth. In 1201 he set out on a pilgrimage. When he reached Rochester he spent a night in the monastery guest hall. Once rested he restarted his journey, but just outside Rochester he was murdered! The monks brought William's body back to the Cathedral to be buried. Healing miracles were said to have occurred at his tomb. Word of these miracles spread and many people came to visit. They brought gifts of money which helped the monks to rebuild the Cathedral after the ferocious fires of 1137 & 1179. William's shrine was destroyed in 1547 during the Reformation.

*Go up the Pilgrim Steps and into the North Quire Transept. Find the tomb of Walter de Merton (on your left hand side)*

Behind Walter de Merton's tomb are some stained glass windows. One window shows William of Perth. On his bag and hat is the sign of a pilgrim. Draw it here.



People still go on pilgrimage today. Why would Christians want to visit these places?



How many reasons can you think of for going on a pilgrimage? List them below.

**Canterbury Cathedral**

**Israel**

**Lourdes**

# The Quire and Presbytery

When this part of the cathedral was first built only the monks were allowed to worship here. Everyone else had to stay in the Nave. Now everyone is welcome at the services which are held here.

The Quire was where the monks sang praises to God and celebrated the Mass. During the Mass, which is similar to the service of Holy Communion today, bread and wine were blessed in memory of the Last Supper and the death and resurrection of Jesus.



Find the ornately carved wooden throne near the choir stalls. This is the **Cathedra** - the Bishop's throne. The word cathedra is from the Greek, meaning chair / throne. This church is called a cathedral because it is the Mother Church of the Diocese and where the Bishop has his throne. Beside the cathedra is the Bishop's **Crozier**. This looks like a shepherd's crook. Why do you think this is?

Also in this area is the **Lectern**. This large brass book stand is shaped like an eagle on a globe. Which book rests on this stand?  
(Clue - the eagle is strong enough to carry the word of God ).



## The High Altar

The **Altar** is the table where the bread and wine are blessed during the Holy Communion service. Face the High Altar and see how special and ornate it is. One reason this altar is called the **High Altar** is because it is the most special altar in the Cathedral.

What do you think the other reason is?  
(Clue - look back down the Cathedral to where you came in. Are you still at the same level?)

The altar is covered by a cloth which helps us to know which season of the Church's year we are in, or if it is a special saint's day.

Season	(On a special saint's day a red or white cloth is used)	Colour
Advent	Starting at the end of November, this is a time of preparation for Christmas	Blue / violet
Christmas	Starting on December 25th, this season celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ	White or Gold
Epiphany	This season starts in January, twelve days after Christmas	Green
Lent	Starting in February or March with Ash Wednesday, this is a time of preparation for Easter	Blue / violet
Eastertide	Starting on Easter Day, this season celebrates Jesus' rising from the dead	White
Ascension	Starting 40 days after Easter Sunday, this season celebrates Jesus' return to God	White or Gold
Pentecost	Starting 50 days after Easter Day, this season celebrates the time when God sent his Holy Spirit to the followers of Jesus	Green

# The Garden

Go into the garden through the south door.

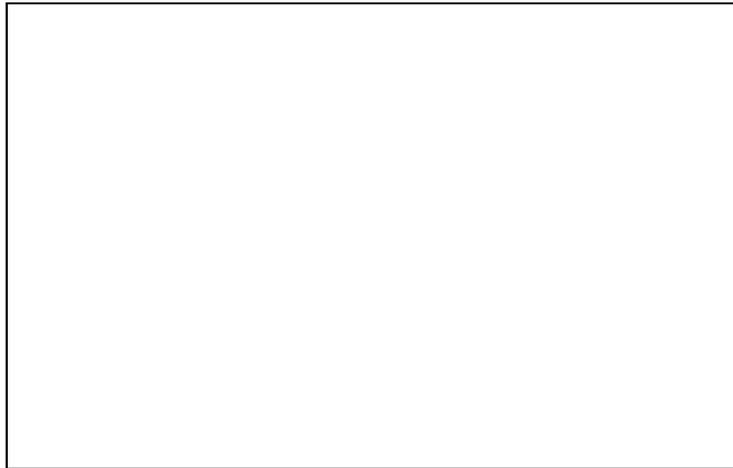
Many years ago a community of Benedictine monks lived and worshipped here at Rochester Cathedral. This garden was surrounded by the buildings in which they lived and worked. Follow the path around the garden and list down any buildings you can identify. (*Clue - look out for the blue plaques*).

## Monastery Buildings.



Can you find this modern sculpture in the garden? It shows Jesus as a child with his mother, Mary. Why do you think it is here?

You have been asked to design a new sculpture for the Cathedral to help people think about the Christian religion. Draw or write your ideas here.



# The Crypt

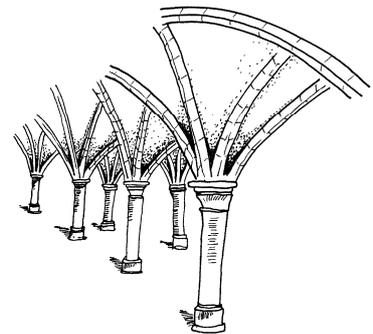
Come back into the Cathedral. Go down the stairs to the Crypt. **Please be quiet here!**

Can you think of 3 differences between here and the main part of the Cathedral upstairs?

1

2

3



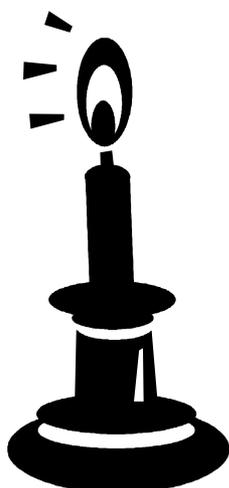
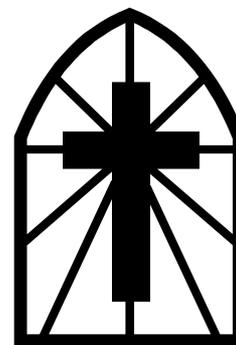
Why do you think the Chapel in the Crypt has been closed in by Perspex windows?

## The Lady Chapel

*Find the Lady Chapel. This is the small chapel to the south side of the Nave.*

This chapel is named after a special lady. She is shown in all of the lower stained glass windows. Who is she?

Many churches have stained glass windows. These church windows tell stories and give messages about the Christian faith. Look closely at the windows in this room. What stories are told in them?



Find the candle stand in this chapel. Sometimes people light candles when they have prayed in the Cathedral. The lit candle symbolises their prayer, which God still knows about even when the person stops praying.

*Spend some time sitting quietly here. If you wish to you could write a short prayer, or note down your thoughts.*

Christians also use light as a symbol to help them remember God's Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus called himself the Light of the World. What do you think he meant by that?

.....

## **The Tapestries**

The brightly patterned pictures on the wall are tapestries. Their theme is "Meetings". Why do you think this theme was chosen?

If you were to design tapestries for our Cathedral what theme would you choose? Note ideas below in words or sketch your ideas on the back cover of this booklet.

# The Cross

There are many ways of using a cross as a sign or a symbol. How many can you think of. Draw or write them here.

The cross is a symbol of Christianity. Do you know why? (*Clue - look back at the stained glass windows in the Lady Chapel*).



Sometimes crosses are shown with the figure of Jesus on them, sometimes they are empty. What difference does this make to the meaning of the cross?



Note down as many places as you can where you can see crosses in the Cathedral.

# Memorials

There are many memorial stones and sculptures in the Cathedral. Draw one here.



What does it tell you about the faith and beliefs of the person who died?

# Before you leave

*Go back to your favourite part of the Cathedral. Find somewhere to sit quietly. Why is this your favourite place?*

How would you describe this Cathedral to someone who has not visited?

