

Art, Architecture, & Worship —Mary Calabrese

“Knock and the door will be opened to you” (Matthew 7:7b).



“Each **Sunday** the baptized are challenged to rest from their daily labors, to contemplate the goodness of God, to make present the victory and triumph of Christ’s death, to enter the joy of the Risen Lord, to receive the life-giving breath of the Spirit, and to commit themselves to serve those in need. Sunday affirms both the primacy of God and the dignity of the person.”

—Paragraph 20

Did the doors of a church ever capture your imagination? They are usually wide or tall, or both, visually reminding us that there is room for all of us no matter where we are on our faith journey. By passing across the threshold, we accept the invitation of welcome that is extended, and with each step we take our commitment to our faith becomes more deliberate.

When we enter the church the possibility of our life changing for the better can become a reality. The alluring offer of internal peace is set before us. As is the opportunity for personal and spiritual growth. Change can be sometimes uncomfortable, yet it should always be uniting...building up God’s Church.

It is a place to rest from our weariness and labor, a place of quiet. A home inhabited by a diversity of people, yet of one heart. It is an encounter with the Risen Lord, seeing the face of Jesus in the seat across from us, and next to us, and in the people we like, and in those we don’t.

Listening to the Scriptures proclaimed, we hear God speaking to us. We are inspired to think and pray for others. We are given a seat at the banquet at the table of the Lord, nourished so that we may leave better than when we arrived. There is no telling what can happen when one enters those doors with an open mind and an even wider heart.

The church building, in its construction, design and decoration, has “the ability to remind people of Christ’s presence as the Way that leads to the Father” (par. #97). “*Whoever enters through me will be saved*” (John 10:9b).

The **Gathering Space (or Narthex)** is a place of welcome, helping believers make the transition from everyday life to the celebration of the liturgy, and afterwards returning us to everyday life, to live out the mystery we encountered.

Many liturgical moments take place in the Gathering Space. We are a part of important processions in and out: the soon to be baptized into new life, and the soon to be laid to rest, making their final journey.

May our lips express the glory of God and may God continue to bless us as we pray together.