

Apologetics - Part 3 - Statues and Artwork in the Catholic Faith

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Catholic artistic tradition assigns each saint particular symbols that denote the Saint's martyrdom, miracles, or circumstances of their lives. These symbols serve to identify the saints, and aids to memory of a Saint's life and actions, and as symbols of spiritual ideals.

Historically God himself has used statues, for example, in the angel statues where their wings covered the ark of the covenant, and in the desert, where one had to look upon the bronze serpent that Moses had made at God's command, in order to be saved.

The Saints often hold the tools of their Salvation. The sheer number of different items depicted in Icons show us the diversity of ways in which God calls us. The Cross, the Gospel, holy Wisdom, the Church: all ultimately lead to Christ, of course, yet the richness of items points to the abundance of His Mercy and Grace. In paintings even the backgrounds or figures of particular animals have meaning.

In order to more deeply appreciate these art forms, several websites have accumulated lists of items and their meanings. These items include: fruits, trees, flowers, work tools, animals, birds, fish, insects, religious objects, colors, clothing, food, and even the human elements. For a general understanding of many of these, see this download: Religious Art ([.pdf download here](#))