



Information for children visiting Canterbury Cathedral

Thank you for visiting us today. This leaflet will help you follow the one way system we have put in place to keep everybody safe. It will also tell you some interesting things about the different places that you visit, and point out things to look for.

There are lots of places where you will see hand sanitiser, please do use them. Remember to stay with your family and not to get too close to the other visitors. Please do not come and visit us if you are feeling unwell, instead we would love to see you another time when you are feeling better.

Canterbury Cathedral

The story of Canterbury Cathedral began in the year 597 when a group of monks led by St Augustine arrived in Kent. They had been sent by the Pope in Rome on a special mission to spread Christianity across England. Augustine based himself in Canterbury and set down his seat to become the first Archbishop of Canterbury. For over 1400 years people have been coming to the Cathedral to pray and gather for events and services.

You will enter the Cathedral through the South West Door. This will take you into a huge space called the Nave.

The Nave

The Nave is actually one of the newest bits of the Cathedral, but given that it was completed over 600 years ago it is still very old by most standards. It is the main body of the Cathedral and is a place where people have gathered together throughout the ages for services and also more recently events such as Remembrance, graduation and concerts.

Can you see the big arches holding up the roof? They are pointed at the top. The architecture (building style) in the Nave is called 'Perpendicular Gothic'. This means it has big tall pillars and pointed arches. The wooden ceiling you can see is actually a safety deck allowing us to get up very close to the real ceiling. We are fixing the roof and giving everything a good clean.



 **Can you spot?** The oldest window in the Cathedral is here in the Nave. It is nearly 850 years old and shows Adam digging in the Garden of Eden.

(Clue: it is in the middle at the bottom of the Great West Window. On your left after you came in the door)

The next place you will visit is the Crypt.

The Crypt

The Crypt is the oldest part of the Cathedral, and some of the walls are nearly 1000 years old. It looks and feels very different to the Nave doesn't it? You can see that the arches here are rounded and not pointed. We call this architectural style 'Norman or Romanesque'. When the crypt was built, no-one had learned how to build pointed gothic arches.

If there are no other visitors there, do have a look inside St Gabriel's Chapel. You will be able to see some beautiful paintings on the walls. Did you know that hundreds of years ago, nearly all the walls of the Cathedral were covered in brightly coloured paintings? It must have looked amazing.



Can you spot? The tops of the pillars are called capitals and they sometimes have carvings of animals such as this lion.

Clue: It is in the Western Crypt, not far from the steps you came down.

We are now heading up some steps into the Martyrdom.

The Martyrdom

The Martyrdom is the site where Archbishop Thomas Becket was murdered in December 1170. He was killed by four knights after falling out with King Henry II.

Thomas Becket was made a Saint and many people came on journeys (pilgrimage) to visit the place where he had lived and died. Canterbury soon became the most important pilgrimage site in England. The Martyrdom is quite a small space and gets rather crowded at times so probably best to move through the area as quickly as possible.



Can you spot? Did you spot this sculpture on the wall, how many swords do you see?

Clue: Don't forget to count the shadows as well as the actual metal ones.

We will now head up some steps on the way to the next bit of the Cathedral

When you get to the top of the big flight of steps, just before pulpitum arch, don't forget to look up into the tallest part of the Cathedral, the Bell Harry Tower. Now walk through the arch into the Quire.

The Quire

The Quire is the heart of the Cathedral where usually many services take place, including daily evensong and the main Sunday worship. The benches either side are called the 'Quire stalls' and the Cathedral choir sing here. (At the moment this is not possible due to coronavirus.) This part of the Cathedral was rebuilt in 1176 following a catastrophic fire.

Choirs have been singing in this location since the Cathedral was built, as this was the place reserved for the monks to sing worship. We are looking forward to hearing our choir sing again, once they can do so safely.



Can you spot? In the middle of the Quire is a lectern in the shape of an eagle. The eagle is the symbol of St John the Evangelist and the Bible is read aloud here during services.

As you leave the Quire to head up towards the Trinity Chapel, you will see a very strange tomb on your right hand side. It has two levels (a bit like a double decker bus) and is the tomb of Archbishop Chichele. On the top, the Archbishop is shown as he was in life and dressed in fine robes befitting his important position. Underneath, he is shown as he would have looked in death. Amazingly Archbishop Chichele had this tomb built while he was still alive, so he would have walked past it every day! The words on the tomb remind us that no matter how important we are in life, in death we are all the same.

The steps on the way up to the Trinity Chapel are called the Pilgrim Steps. Long ago, pilgrims would have been expected to climb these stairs on their knees.



The Trinity Chapel

The Trinity Chapel is the highest part of the Cathedral that visitors can access and was built to house the shrine of Saint Thomas Becket. The shrine was very large and impressive and we believe it was made from marble and covered in gold and precious jewels. It must have looked amazing! It was destroyed in 1538 on the orders of Henry VIII.



Can you spot? There is nothing left of the magnificent shrine that once stood in the Trinity Chapel. This candle marks the place where it used to be. Look carefully in front of the candle and you might be able to see a much worn piece of pinkish coloured marble. This is where thousands of pilgrims knelt in front of the shrine over the hundreds of years it was here.

The stained glass windows around the outside of the chapel are called the 'Miracle Windows' because they tell the stories of some of the miracles said to have happened shortly after the death of Saint Thomas in 1170.

The Corona Chapel once held a reliquary (a special box used to house the bones or relics of Saints) in the shape of the head and shoulders of Saint Thomas Becket. Inside this special box was kept the top piece (the crown or 'Corona') of the skull of Saint Thomas. If you were a very important visitor, you may have been allowed to see or even kiss it!

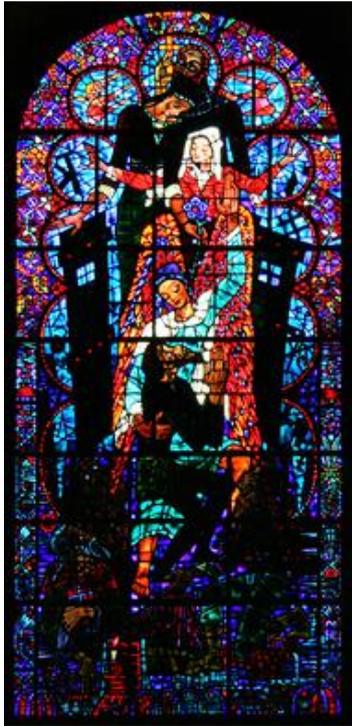
You will see many tombs in the Trinity Chapel, including two royal tombs. These are the tombs of King Henry IV and Edward of Woodstock, better known as the Black Prince. If you look above the tomb of the Black Prince you can see his shield, jupon (tunic), helmet and other items of battledress. Together they are called his 'achievement', and show that he was a fierce, brave and important knight leading many armies into battle when he was alive.

You will come down the steps in front of you to leave the Trinity Chapel and walk past St Anselm's Chapel. You will then see some beautiful, brightly coloured windows on your left hand side.

The Bossanyi Windows

These are some of the newest windows in Canterbury Cathedral, having been made in the 1950's to replace windows that were damaged in the Second World War.

The windows are full of colour and if you look closely at the faces, you will see that they look very similar to the faces you see in Disney cartoons.



 **Can you spot?** This window on the left hand side is called Salvation. Can you see the beautiful coloured wings of the angel? If you look very carefully, you might also spot two doves and a serpent or snake.

Clue: The doves are at the top and the serpent is in the bottom right hand corner)



You have finished looking around the inside of the Cathedral now, if you have got time, do have a look around the rest of the precincts as there are some beautiful places to discover including the *Great Cloister* (where the monks spent a lot of their time) and the *Herb Garden*.

Thank you for visiting, we hope you had a great time.

