

Holy Rosary Parish
Altar Server's Glossary of Terms

THE CHURCH & MASS

Ablution Bowl – covered dish of water on the side of the tabernacle which is used by the priest and/or deacon to wash their fingers after distributing Communion.

Altar - The table in the sanctuary at which the bread and wine are prepared and transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ.

Ambo (Lectern/Pulpit) – The platform where the readings and homily take place.

Baptismal Font – A stand with a basin or pool containing water in the area of church where Baptism takes place.

Bells – Rung during the consecration of the Mass.

Book of Gospels – The book which contains the Gospel readings.

Chalice - The metal cup (either gold or silver) used to hold the wine that will be consecrated and distributed to the assembly at Mass.

Ciborium - A metal container with a lid used to store consecrated hosts in the tabernacle and is also used for distribution of Holy Communion.

Corporal – The large, square white cloth which is placed on the altar underneath the chalice and platen.

Credence Table – The table located to the left of the Altar, used to hold the purificators, chalices, and other items needed for the celebration of Mass.

Cruets – Water and wine containers.

Finger Bowl and Towel – Used for the rite before Eucharistic prayer.

Gift Table – The table in the back of the center aisle where the bread and wine are placed before Mass begins.

Lectionary – The book which contains the Scripture readings.

Pall – A piece of cardboard or plastic which is covered by linen and used to cover the chalice.

Paschal Candle – The tall candle which is blessed and used during the Easter season, baptisms, and funerals.

Paten - The plate used to hold the large hosts which will become the consecrated body of Jesus.

Pews – The bench-like seats in the main body of the Church.

Presider's Chair (Celebrant Chair) – The chair in which the priest sits.

Processional Cross/ Crucifix – The cross carried in and out of the Mass.

Purificator - A long narrow piece of folded linen cloth, which sometimes has a small cross sewn on. It is used by the priest and Eucharistic Minister to wipe the chalice after a person takes a drink from it.

Pyx – The small metal container which is used to hold consecrated host(s) when visiting the sick or homebound.

Sacramentary - The book of prayers and instructions used by the priest during the liturgy.

Sacristy – The room next to the Sanctuary where the priests, altar servers, and other ministers prepare for the Mass.

Sanctuary - The raised area in the front of the church. It is considered a holy and special area because this is where the sacrifice of the Mass is offered and where the word of God is read. It should be approached with great respect.

Sanctuary Lamp – The red light (or candle) that hangs beside or over the Tabernacle indicating that there are Consecrated Hosts inside.

Tabernacle – The gold “safe” in which the Blessed Sacrament (Consecrated Host) is stored.

Thurifer – The person who carries the censer (thurible) and incense boat.

Vestibule – The back of the Church where the main entrance doors to the Church are located.

VESTMENTS

Vestments are what the priest and altar servers wear during Mass.

Alb - A long white linen robe worn by the priest and altar servers.

Cincture - A cord made of silk or cotton with tassels on the ends. It is used around the waist to secure the alb so that it will not interfere with walking.

Stole - A long strip of cloth worn by the priest around his neck and shoulders.

Chasuble – Colored vestment worn only by the priest.

COLOR OF VESTMENTS AND ALTAR SCARF

The color of vestments gives expression to the mysteries of our faith and is like a calendar for the church year.

White - Masses of Easter, Christmas season, Feasts and Memorials of Jesus, Mary, the Angels, Saints who were not martyrs, Weddings, and Funerals, symbolizes Purity, Holiness, Joy, Triumph, and the Resurrection.

Red - Used on Passion Sunday (Palm Sunday), Good Friday, Pentecost, feasts of the Apostles, Evangelists and Martyrs. Red symbolizes the Holy Spirit and the blood of martyrs.

Green - Used during Ordinary time, symbolizing Life, Growth and Hope.

Violet - Used during Lent and Advent, symbolizing Penance, Atonement and Expiation.

Gold - More festive than white, which may be used on more solemn days such as Easter and Christmas, and also symbolizes Joy, Triumph and the Resurrection.

THE MINISTERS AT MASS

Priest - Specially ordained men who consecrate and offer the Body and Blood of Jesus at Mass. They forgive sins, perform baptisms, marriages, funerals, run the parish and lead the people closer to God. Their ordination to the priesthood can be traced to the Apostles who were the first priests after Jesus. Deacon - A Deacon is like a priest in training. He can assist in preaching, perform baptism, marriages, and help run the parish. He does not offer mass or hear confessions.

Altar Servers - A young boy or girl, or an adult who is specially trained to assist the priest at mass.

Eucharistic Minister - A person who is specially conferred by the Bishop to assist the priest in giving communion. They also can bring communion to people who are sick at home or in the hospital.

Lector - The person who reads the Epistles (first and second readings) and the Prayers of the Faithful at mass.

Sacristan – The person whose ministry is the care of the sacristy, sanctuary, vestments, sacred vessels, etc.

Bishop - A Bishop is higher than a priest, he's like their boss. He has the authority to ordain priests. This authority is given to him by the Pope.

Cardinal - A Cardinal is a high church official ranking next in line to the Pope. He assists and advises the Pope, consecrates Bishops and elects the Pope.

Pope - The Pope is the supreme authority of the Catholic Church. He is sometime called "Pontiff" and "Holy See", and will be the leader of the church until he dies.

SACRED OBJECTS



Chalice (CHAL-is)
The large cup used at Mass used to hold the wine which becomes the Blood of Christ.



Ciborium
(si-BORE-ee-um)
A vessel used to hold the Hosts which will be used for communion. They are also used to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in the Tabernacle



Monstrance
A sacred vessel designed to expose the consecrated Host to the congregation either for adoration in church or carrying in procession, particularly on the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ



Purificator
A white cloth used to Cleanse the Chalice. It Resembles a napkin.



Tabernacle
The shrine or receptacle either round or rectangular that serves as a place for the exclusive reservation of the Blessed Sacrament. It should be of solid material, opaque, secure and inviolable, fitting the architecture of the church in a pre-eminent place.



Paten (PAT-en)
A saucer-like disk which holds the bread which becomes the Body of Christ.



Decanter or Flagon (FLAG-un)
The bottle or pitcher like vessel used to hold the wine which will be consecrated at mass for the communion of the people. It is brought forth with the gifts. (Also called cruets)



Corporal A white linen cloth on which are placed the vessels containing the bread and wine during Mass which will become the Body and Blood of Christ



Pall (PAHL)
The stiff, square, white cover that is placed over the paten when it is on the chalice



Censor & Boat
The Censor, also known as the Thurible, is used at solemn occasions to incense the bread and wine after the offertory, the priest, and congregation. The Boat holds the incense until it is placed in the censor by the celebrant



Sanctuary Lamp
An oil lamp or wax candle that burns near the tabernacle. It is always lit whenever the Blessed Sacrament is reserved in churches or chapels as a sign of honor shown to the Lord