

Glossary of Terms

Alb – the white tunic worn by liturgical ministers during the Mass. Any baptized person can wear an alb. The word means “white.”

Altar – the large table in the center of the sanctuary. It has been consecrated by the Archbishop and is the primary symbol of Christ in the church.

Altar Candles – the large candles surrounding the Altar.

Altar Cloth – the cloth that covers the altar. It is only removed on Good Friday and Holy Saturday.

Ambo – the stand where the Lectionary is placed and from which the Scriptures are proclaimed.

Ambry – the cabinet where the Holy Oils are displayed.

Aspergillum – the sprinkler that the priest uses to sprinkle Holy Water on the people during certain rites.

Book of Gospels – the gold leaf book carried in **procession** by the Deacon, and read from by the Priest or Deacon. It only contains readings from the Gospels.

Bucket – contains the Holy Water and the **aspergillum**

Candlelighter – a long-handled implement with a taper and candlesnuffer used for the lighting and extinguishing of candles.

Censor – also called the “**thurible**”. A brass vessel with a long chain which holds the lighted charcoal in which the incense is burned.

Chalice – The gold-plated stemmed cup into which the priest pours the water and wine during the Offertory.

Chasuble – the large poncho-like outer garment worn by the priest for the celebration of the Mass.

Ciborium – a vessel used to hold the hosts or the Blessed Sacrament. The plate used to hold the Body of Christ for the distribution of communion is also called a **Ciborium (plural = ciboria)**

Cinture – the rope or cord tied around the waist. It is usually knotted on the left side.

Collection basket – the brown wicker baskets used to hold the gifts of money or food that people bring at the Offertory.

Communion chalices – the cups used by the Communion Ministers to distribute the Precious Blood.

Cope – a long cloak, open in the front and secured with an ornate clasp. The cope is used in Processions.

Corporal – the large, square linen cloth usually with a red cross embroidered in the

middle or on the bottom, which is placed on top of the Altar. The word “corporal” comes from the Latin word meaning “body.”

Credence Table – the tables that hold most of the things used in the Mass.

Cruets – small pitchers that hold the water and wine to be used at Mass.

Dalmatic – the outer vestment worn by a deacon during Mass. Unlike a **chasuble**, it has sleeves.

Hand towel – small towel the priest uses to dry his hands after washing them.

Holy Oils – the Oil of Catechumen (used for Baptism), the Oil of the Infirm (used in Anointing of the Sick) and the Sacred Chrism (used for all permanent Sacraments – Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders).

Humeral Veil – a rectangular shaped cloth, about 8 feet long and 1 ½ feet wide, used in Eucharistic Processions to hold a **Ciborium** or **Monstrance** containing the Blessed Sacrament.

Genuflect – to touch the right knee to the ground in worship

Incense – sweet smelling, perfumed resins that are burned to sanctify certain objects and to represent our prayers rising up to God.

Incense Boat – Holds the incense and spoon used during Mass

Large host – It’s large so that the people can see it during Mass.

Lavabo bowl – glass dish used at the washing of hands.

Lectionary – the large book which contains all the readings used in the Mass.

Lector – the minister who proclaims the first and second readings and sometimes the psalm.

Luna – a round container made of glass and gilded metal which holds the Consecrated Host securely in place in the center of the **Monstrance**. (also can be called a lunette).

Monstrance – the receptacle in which the Consecrated Host is displayed during Eucharistic Adoration.

Offertory Table – the small table upon which are placed the Offertory gifts: the bread and wine.

Pall – a stiff square of white linen that can be used to cover the chalice during the Liturgy

Paschal Candle – the large candle that represents Christ, the Light of the world.

Paten – a small plate or dish, which holds the large host and sometimes small hosts that are used in the Mass.

Presider’s Chair – the chair that the celebrant sits in and “presides” during Mass.

Priest's chalice – the ornate cup used by the priest during the Eucharist. It is usually made of gold or silver.

Procession – any movement of the ministers in the church. There is an entrance procession and an exit procession. There may also be a procession of the Gospel book or of the Blessed Sacrament at special feasts.

Processional Cross – the crucifix carried by the Cross Bearer to lead the procession.

Purificator – small, folded rectangular linen used to purify or clean the chalice and communion cups. This helps to make sure that none of the Precious Blood is lost.

Pyx – a small, round container used to carry the Blessed Sacrament.

Roman Missal – the large red book containing the prayers used during the Mass.

Sacrarium – a special sink that leads to the ground where sacred materials and water from absolutions is disposed. Sacred elements never go into the trash or sewer system.

Sacristy – the room where the priests and deacons vest. All of the vessels and linens are found here as well.

Sanctuary – the raised area at the front of the church.

Stole -- a long strip of cloth worn by an ordained minister as a sign of his office. A priest wears the stole over both shoulders. A deacon wears it over one shoulder. It symbolizes a yoke or harness.

Tabernacle – the special place where the Blessed Sacrament is held in reserve so that it might be taken to the sick and the dying, or for adoration by the people.

Tapers – the wax sticks used in the **candlelighter** to light the **Altar Candles**.

Thurible – another name for the **Censor**.

Vest – to get dressed in vestments. For a server this means to put on your alb and cincture.

Vestments – special garments worn by those who have a special part in the Mass. The priest, deacon and servers usually wear vestments.

Wine Flasks or Flagons – pitchers that hold the wine to be consecrated during Mass. They are larger than a cruet.