

ALTAR GUILD GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY

Ablutions: The cleansing of the Chalice and Paten after the receiving of Holy Communion. Also the cleansing of the hands of the Priest at any time during the service.

Acolyte: One who serves the celebrant at the altar, sometimes called the server or altar boy.

Alb: A long, white, linen vestment with straight sleeves which covers the cassock.

Alms Basin: Also spelled Bason. A large circular vessel of greater width than depth, usually made of wood, brass, or silver in which are placed the offerings of the people.

Altar: The Holy Table, the Communion Table.

Altar Bread: The wafers or bread used at the Holy Communion.

Ampulla: A cruet for wine or water.

Bishop's Chair: A special chair on the gospel side of the sanctuary, reserved for the diocesan bishop on his visitations.

Boat: A vessel, named by its shape, for holding incense before it is put in the censer or thurible.

Bread Box: A box, usually of silver, in which is kept the bread or wafers for the Holy Communion.

Burse: The case for the corporal.

Cassock: A long closely fitting garment reaching from the neck to the shoe tops, worn by the clergy, acolytes, and choir.

Celebrant: The priest (bishop or deacon) who celebrates the Holy Communion.

Celebration: The consecration and administration of the Holy Communion.

Chalice: The cup used at Holy Communion.

Chancel: The east end of the church, raised above the floor of the nave, containing the choir (usually) and the sanctuary.

Chasuble: A loose vestment with neck aperture oval in shape made without sleeves and worn over the Alb.

Chrism: A consecrated oil used for ceremonial anointing.

Ciborium: A chalice-like covered cup to hold the Sacramental Bread. Also used to hold the Reserved Sacrament.

Cincture: The girdle of a cassock.

Corporal: A square, white linen cloth used upon the altar at Communion under the sacred vessels.

Credence: A shelf or table at the epistle side of the sanctuary upon which the Elements of the Holy Communion are placed until carried to the Altar.

Crozier: (Pastoral Staff) The staff of a bishop, patriarch, abbot or prior.

Crucifer: The one who carries the cross.

Cruet: The receptacle for wine and for water. Also known as an Ampulla.

Elements: The materials used in the Sacraments appointed by Christ: Water, Wine and Bread.

Epistle Side: The side of the altar at which the Epistle is read, the right as the congregation sees it. Also the side where the Credence Shelf is located.

Ewer: The pitcher for holding the water for the font and for the lavabo basin.

Fair Linen: The principal covering of the top of the altar. It hangs over the sides of the altar almost to the floor.

Flagon: A large covered glass or metal container for a reserve of wine.

Frontal: A covering of cloth that hangs before the front of the altar, covering the entire front of the altar.

Gospel Side: The side of the altar at which the Gospel is read, the left as the congregation sees it. Traditionally the side at which the pulpit is located.

Host: The bread or wafer consecrated at the Holy Communion.

Incense: A mixture of spices for ceremonial burning, symbolizing prayer.

Lavabo: The ceremony of cleansing the celebrant's hands before the offertory oblation in the Holy Eucharist. The word is also used to denote the bowl containing the water, and for the small towel accompanying it.

Lectern: A stand near the chancel on which rests the Bible.

Lectionary: A selected list of Scripture passages for daily readings throughout the Christian year.

Liturgical Colors: The colors used in the church during the course of the year: white, black, red, violet (purple), green, rose, and gold. See additional explanation on Liturgical Colors following Glossary.

Mensa: The top of the altar.

Missal: Altar Book. The book containing the Communion Service, Collects, Epistles, and Gospels.

Narthex: The vestibule or closed-in porch across the building at the rear of the nave.

Nave: The central division of the church in which the congregation is seated.

Offertory: The offering of the bread and wine and alms at the Holy Communion.

Pall: The linen cover for the Chalice; also the cover for a coffin.

Paschal Candle: A candle which stands on the floor of the sanctuary on the gospel side, lighted on Easter Even and extinguished on Ascension. It may also be

lit during baptisms, from which the baptismal candles are then lit.

Paten: The silver or gold plate for the bread used at the Holy Communion.

Piscina: A basin with a drain directly to the ground where water used in the Sacrament of Holy Baptism is poured;

Processional Cross: A cross affixed to the end of a staff which is carried at the head of a procession.

Protecting Cloth: A cloth placed over the fair linen when there is not a service, designed to protect the linen from dust and dirt. Also known as an altar cover.

Purificator: A small linen napkin used to wipe the Sacred Vessels after Holy Communion.

Reredos: A decorated panel behind an altar. It is usually of wood or stone. The reredos is often made elaborate with sculpture, carvings and painting.

Sacristy: The room in the church building where the vestments, books and sacred vessels are kept.

Sanctuary: The sacred portion of the church in which the altar stands.

Sanctuary Lamp: The lamps suspended in front of the altar. One, three or seven.

Sedilia: The seats for the clergy within the sanctuary, on the south (Epistle) side and on the north (Gospel) side for the acolytes and layreaders.

Server: An acolyte.

Shell: A scallop-shell, or metal vessel of this shape, used for taking water from the font to pour over the head of a person to be baptized.

Stole: A long, narrow band of silk or brocade worn over the shoulders of the clergy.

Tabernacle: A locked safe used for the reservation of the Sacrament.

Thurible: A vessel in which incense is burned. Also known as a censer and swings

on a chain. The "boat" is the metal container in which the incense is reserved.

Thurifer: The one who swings the censer containing the burning incense.

Veil: A covering for the Chalice.

Vestment: An ecclesiastical garment worn for church services; also, coverings for the altar.

Wafer: A thin disk of unleavened bread used in the Communion.

LITURGICAL COLORS

The assigning of a particular color of vestment for a particular feast or celebration has varied widely throughout the centuries, especially in the early days of the English Church. The following is a list of the most "popular" use of colors at present in the Church.

White: Feasts of Christmas and Easter.

Green: The "common" Sundays or Sundays after Whitsunday (Pentecost).

Purple: Lent and Advent.

Red: Pentecost (Whitsunday) and in some uses for Palm Sunday.

Rose: For the fourth Sunday in Lent and the third Sunday in Advent.

Gold: May be used in place of white.

Black: The traditional color for funerals, offices of the dead, Good Friday, and Requiem Mass.