

Saint Pius V

Altar Server Dictionary

Promulgated during the Pontificate of Francis, 266th successor to the Apostle Peter.

1. The main **areas of the church** with which you should be concerned:

1. The **sanctuary** is the area in the center and toward the front of the church where the altar, the ambo, and the priest's and altar server's chairs are located.
2. The **sacristy** is the room where the priest, deacon and altar servers vest and prepare for Mass. Many of the items used in the celebration of the Mass are stored there.
3. Other areas include the **baptistry**, where the baptismal font is located and where baptisms may be celebrated; the **vestibule**, the entrance to our church; and our four **confessionals**, where the sacrament of penance is celebrated.

2. Books used at Holy Mass:

1. The **Lectionary** is the large book containing the Bible readings. There may be a separate **Book of the Gospels**, called the **evangeliary**.
2. The **Roman Missal** is the large book used by the priest when standing at his chair and at the altar during Mass.
3. Other books may be used too in the sanctuary, including a hymnal, a binder containing general intercessions, ritual books for the various sacraments, and a binder of announcements. Our binders are different colors, matching the liturgical color of the day/season.

3. Vessels used at Holy Mass:

1. The **chalice** is the cup that holds the wine for consecration and communion.
2. The **paten** is a plate that holds the hosts for consecration and communion.
3. The **ciborium** is a special vessel used to hold the hosts for communion of the people. It has a lid or cover.

4. The **cruet** is the small jar that contains the water to be used at Mass. Cruets are usually made of glass or ceramic, with a handle.
5. The **decanter** is a large jar that contains the wine to be used at Mass. Ours is made of glass, and used at the Sunday 10 a.m.

4. The **vestments** and **linens** used in Mass:

1. The **alb** is a long white robe worn by the priest, and by altar servers.
2. The **cincture** is a rope or cord worn around the waist over the alb.
3. The **stole** is a garment in the form of a long, narrow band of cloth which the priest wears draped over his shoulders and hanging down in front, or a deacon wears draped over one shoulder and fastened at his side. It may be white or colored.
4. The **chasuble** is the outer garment worn by the priest at Mass. It may be white or another liturgical color and usually matches the color of the stole.
5. The **dalmatic** is the outer garment worn by the deacon.
6. The **corporal** is a white cloth that is spread upon the altar during Mass to hold the chalice, paten and ciboria.
7. The **pall** is a small, square, protective cover of stiffened cloth placed on the chalice during Mass.
8. The **purificator** is a white linen cloth which the priest or deacon used to wipe out the chalice during Mass.
9. The **chalice veil** is a cloth that covers the chalice during the Mass when the chalice is not being used.
10. The **finger towel**, or hand towel, is a cloth napkin used to dry the priest's hands.

Other vestments which may be worn in certain circumstances include the following:

11. The **amice** is an oblong white linen cloth worn about the neck and shoulders, under the alb, by a priest or deacon.
12. The **cassock** is a robe (usually black) worn in some parishes by the priest and other ministers during liturgical functions. The surplice is worn over it.
13. The **surplice** is a white garment, shorter than an alb, worn over the cassock.

14. The **miter** is a ceremonial hat sometimes worn by a bishop on special occasions. The **crozier** (more often referred to as "staff") is the shepherd's staff carried by the bishop.

5. The following **furniture** may be found in the sanctuary:

1. The **sedilla** is the bench from which the priest presides during the liturgy of the word and during the concluding prayers of the Mass.
2. The **pulpit** is a stand from which the priest or another minister reads or speaks to the congregation. The stand used for the scripture readings and the homily is also called the **lecturn** or **ambo**.
3. The **altar** is the holy table from which the priest presides over the liturgy of the Eucharist. It is covered with an altar cloth.
4. The **credence table** is another name for the side table in the sanctuary where the wine and water cruets, communion patens, etc., are kept during Mass when they are not being used.
5. The **gifts table** is the table that holds the bread and wine before it is presented to the altar. (This is also called the **offertory table**.)

6. Some other items with which to be concerned:

1. The **ambry** is the cabinet that holds the holy oils.
2. The **tabernacle** is the large, ornate safe in which consecrated Eucharistic Bread is kept for the communion of the sick and for adoration by the people outside of Mass. It is usually located in an area apart from the sanctuary. The **tabernacle key**, when not in use, is kept in a safe place, in the sacristy.
3. The **thurible** is a metal container on a chain in which incense is burned on a piece of charcoal.
4. The **incense boat** is a covered container, with a spoon, for the incense that will be burned in the censer.
5. The **funeral pall** is a large decorated cloth that covers the casket during a funeral Mass.
6. The holy water sprinkler (or **aspergillum**) is a device, usually a metal stick or the branch from a bush, used by the priest to sprinkle holy water on the people or objects that he blesses. (The priest may also call this the **holy water bucket**).

7. **Chrism** is the holy oil used to anoint people in baptism, confirmation and ordination. It is made from olive oil and a special perfume. The chrism is kept in the ambry.
8. The **monstrance** is a large, standing vessel used to show people the holy bread that is the body of Christ. The **luna** is a small glass container that holds the host and is put inside the monstrance.