



DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

- **Alb** – the long white inner garment worn by the priest
- **Altar** – the sacred table on which the sacrifice of the Mass takes place.
- **Apostolic Nuncio** – Papal Representative to the Church and the Government of a country.
- **Aspergil** (AS'per'jil) – a vessel used for sprinkling holy water.
- **Auxiliary bishop** – an assistant bishop assigned by the pope to help carry out pontifical functions such as, but not limited to, confirmations, ordinations and the like.
- **Cantor** -- One who sings and leads the singing during the Liturgy.
- **Cassock** – non-liturgical, full-length robe used by priests and other clerics. Black for priests, purple for bishops and other prelates, red for cardinals, white for the Pope.
- **Cathedra** -- the chair used by a bishop from which he leads services in the cathedral.
- **Cathedral** – major church in a diocese or archdiocese.
- **Celebrant** -- the priest who presides over the assembly and consecrates the Eucharistic Sacrament.
- **Chalice** – the cup used to hold the Blood of Christ at Mass.
- **Chasuble** – the outer vestment worn over the alb by priests when celebrating Mass.
- **Ciborium** – a vessel used to hold the Body of Christ for Communion.
- **Concelebrants** -- those priests and bishops who join the Celebrant in celebrating the Mass.
- **Consistory** – an assembly of cardinals presided over by the pope.
- **Crosier** (CRO'zhier) – the bishop's staff, symbolic of his office as bishop. Also used by the Pope as Bishop of Rome and head of the Church.
- **Crossbearer** -- the one who carries the cross in the procession.
- **Cruets** – vessels containing the wine and water used at Mass. They are placed on the credence table in the sanctuary.
- **Dalmatic** – vestment worn by the deacon over the alb.
- **Deacon** -- an ordained minister whose participation in the Sacrament of Holy Orders allows him to perform many functions, including the witnessing of marriages, preaching and assisting the celebrant at Mass.
- **Diocese** -- a fully organized ecclesiastical jurisdiction under the pastoral direction of a bishop as local Ordinary.
- **Eucharist** – from the Greek, meaning “thanks” – (1)the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ; (2)sometimes used as a name for the Mass (“The celebration of the Eucharist).

- **Eucharistic Prayer** – the prayer of the Mass in which the bread and wine is consecrated into the Body and Blood of Christ.
- **Host** – the bread, used in the Mass, which becomes the Body of Christ. After the Consecration at the Mass, it is called the “consecrated Host.”
- **Incense** is used as a symbol of the Church’s offering and prayer arising to God.
- **Liturgy** – the public prayer of the Church. Often used synonymously for “the Mass,” although other public prayers, such as the Divine Office, are part of the liturgy.
- **Liturgy of the Eucharist** – the section of the Mass in which the gifts are prepared and the Eucharistic Prayer, in which the bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ, is proclaimed.
- **Liturgy of the Word** – the section of the Mass in which the Scriptures are proclaimed and reflected upon.
- **Master of Ceremonies** -- One who assists in the preparation of the celebration and its present during it to facilitate the movement of the entire rite.
- **Ministers of Communion** (Eucharistic Ministers) -- those who assist in the distribution of communion.
- **Mitre** (MI'ter) -- the outer hat worn by the bishop as a symbol of his office
- **Ordinary** -- diocesan bishops, religious superiors, and certain other diocesan authorities with jurisdiction over the clergy as a specific geographical area or over the members of a religious order.
- **Mitre** – headdress worn at some liturgical functions by bishops and abbots.
- **Monsignor** – An honorary ecclesiastical title granted by the pope to some diocesan priests.
- **Mozzetta** -- a short cape-like garment worn around the shoulders. May be red or black.
- **Pallium** – special stole made of lamb’s wool worn over the chasuble by the Pope and archbishops. It signifies communion of archbishops with the Holy See.
- **Paten** – the plate used to hold the Body of Christ at Mass.
- **Pectoral Cross** – the crucifix worn on a chain about the neck and over the breast by bishops and abbots as a sign of their office.
- **Penitential Rite** – a general acknowledgment by the entire assembly at Mass, of sinfulness and the need for God’s mercy.
- **Sanctuary** – the part of the church where the altar of sacrifice is located.
- **Stole** – vestment worn around the neck by all ordained ministers.
- **Surplice** – loose flowing vestment of white fabric worn over the cassock.
- **Tabernacle** – receptacle in the church for reserving the Eucharist.
- **Titular sees** – ancient (now defunct) Catholic dioceses and archdioceses whose titles are now given to those bishops who do not occupy residential sees, e.g., in this case, auxiliary bishops.
- **Vestment** – the garb worn by the ministers.
- **Zucchetto** (Zoo'KET'to) – skullcap worn by bishops and other prelates. The Pope wears a white zucchetto, while cardinals wear a red zucchetto. The zucchetto of bishops and archbishops is purple.