

# **St. Patrick Parish**

## **Instructions for Cleaning Altar Linens**

### **1. Overview**

There are Sacred and Non-Sacred Linens used during the Mass. Sacred Linens have special requirements for Cleaning and Ironing. Non-Sacred Linens can be washed as normal and folded without ironing.

### **2. Types and Purpose of Linens and Towels**

#### **Sacred Linens:**

Both the Corporal and Purificator are considered sacred altar linens in the Catholic Church. They are cloths used during Mass that come into direct contact with the consecrated Body and Blood of Christ, and therefore are treated with reverence.

- Corporal: A square linen cloth placed on the altar, on which the chalice, paten, and ciborium are placed during Mass.
- Purificator: A smaller linen cloth, rectangle in shape, with a red or white cross in the center, used to purify the chalice and paten after Communion.

#### **Non-Sacred Linens:**

- Lavabo Towel (Hand): Used by the priest as he dries his hands during the Liturgy of the Eucharist.
- Large Towel: Large towels are used during the Rite of Baptism & Washing of Feet for Holy Thursday.
- Small Washcloth – Used to wipe out the sacred vessels after the liturgies.
- White Cloth – Used to dry the sacred vessels after they are cleansed.

### **3. Location of Soiled Linens and Towels**

The soiled linens are kept in the sacristy, in two separate containers.

- Laundry Basket below the mirror in the sacristy marked: Sacred Altar Linens)
- Small Plastic container marked Non-Sacred Linens.

### **4. Pick-up and Drop-off**

#### **Sacred Linens: Corporals and Purificators:**

- Will be picked-up after Weekend Mass attended by the Altar Linen Minister. They will follow the cleaning and ironing guidelines below.
- Clean Corporal and Purificator linens will be placed in the drawers as marked.

#### **Non-Sacred Linens: Towels and Cloths:**

- Will be picked-up by the Angel Care Team after their weekly cleaning of the Church. They will follow the cleaning and ironing guidelines below.
- Clean Towels and Cloths will be placed in the second large bottom drawer by type.

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#### 5. Purification: To prepare the linens for washing:

##### ***Sacred Linens: Corporals and Purificators:***

- Place the used linens in a large clean bowl or bucket of warm water for about an hour. This will remove any Sacred Species which may remain on the linen.
- Wring out the water and set the linens aside in another container.

**NOTE:** If needed, soak the linens in OXI Clean. Chlorine bleach should never be used not be used, or it may ruin the linens.

Pre-treat any stained linens (lipstick and wine) by soaking them in a separate container of hot water and (Awesome Liquid (about ¼ cup, depending on the size of the container and amount of stained linen or Carbona Stain Devils #6). Soak for about 30 minutes or until the stains disappear.

- Take the remaining water and pour it into the ground where people do not walk. **DO NOT POUR THE PURIFICATION WATER DOWN THE DRAIN.**

***Non-Sacred Linens: Towels and Cloths:*** Do not require any purification.

#### 6. Laundering:

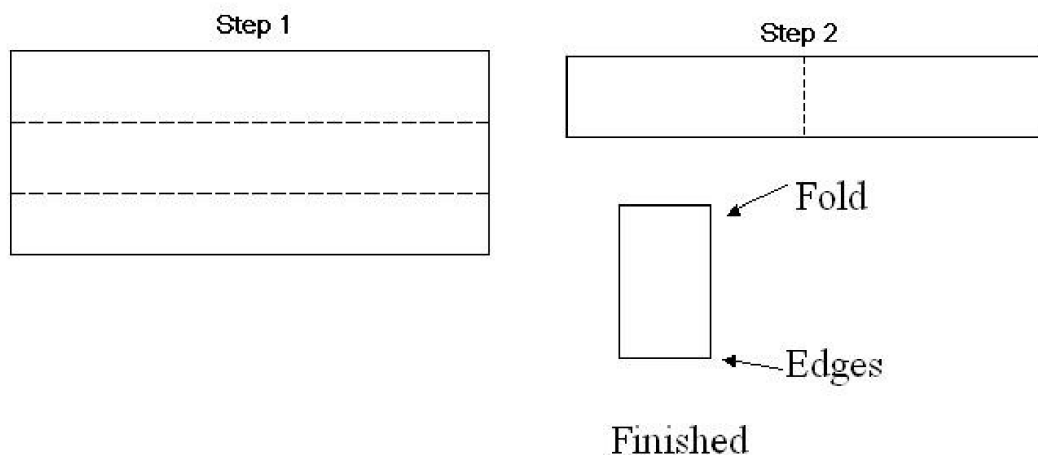
- Wash linens in a gentle detergent being sure all soap is removed. Washing the linens on warm and rinsing on cold works fine.
- Wash all linens and towels separately from your household laundry.
- Dry linens (Delicate Cycle) They are much easier to press when slightly damp.

#### 7. Ironing and Folding: Sacred Linens: Corporals and Purificators:

Either begin with slight damp linens or lightly spray each linen with water before ironing.  
**Do Not Use any Starch**

***Purificators:*** To press a purificator:

- Fold in thirds lengthwise, with the little red cross on the *outside* – right side out.
- Fold in thirds so that all corners are inside, with the red cross centered facing you.



**View Caring for Altar Linens Video:**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r\\_Fi06vL9yc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r_Fi06vL9yc)

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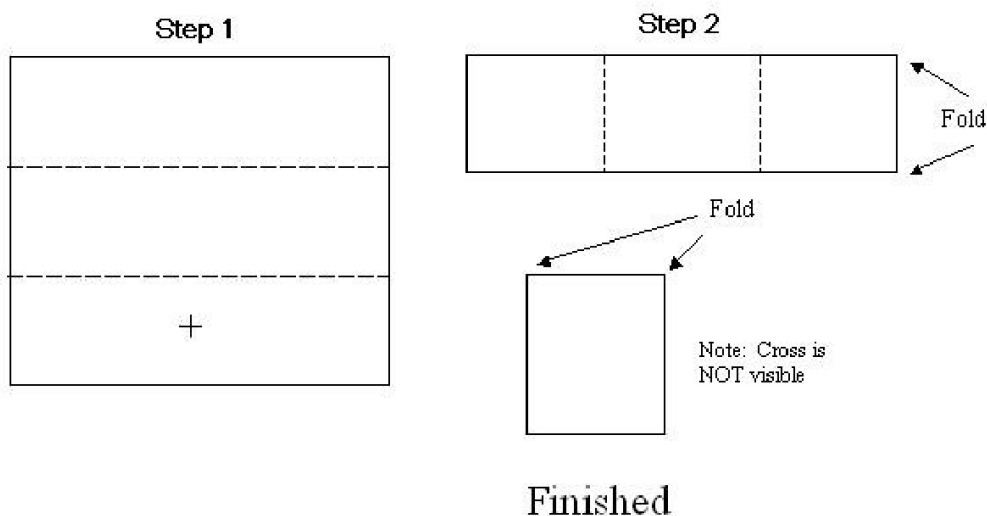
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#### **7. Ironing and Folding: Sacred Linens: Corporals and Purificators: Cont'd Corporals**

The corporal is protection against any particles of the Sacred Species being left on the altar when Mass is over. The corporal is folded *in*, so as to collect any crumbs.

To press a corporal:

- Fold in thirds lengthwise, with the little red cross on the *inside* – wrong side out.
- Fold in thirds so that all corners are inside. Red cross will be on the *inside*, with the wrong side of the cross visible, through the corporal, from the outside.



#### **8. Non-Sacred Linens: Towels and Cloths:**

To prepare a washcloth:

- Wash in mild detergent.
- Dry as a normal towel.
- Do not iron.
- Just fold in half twice:

