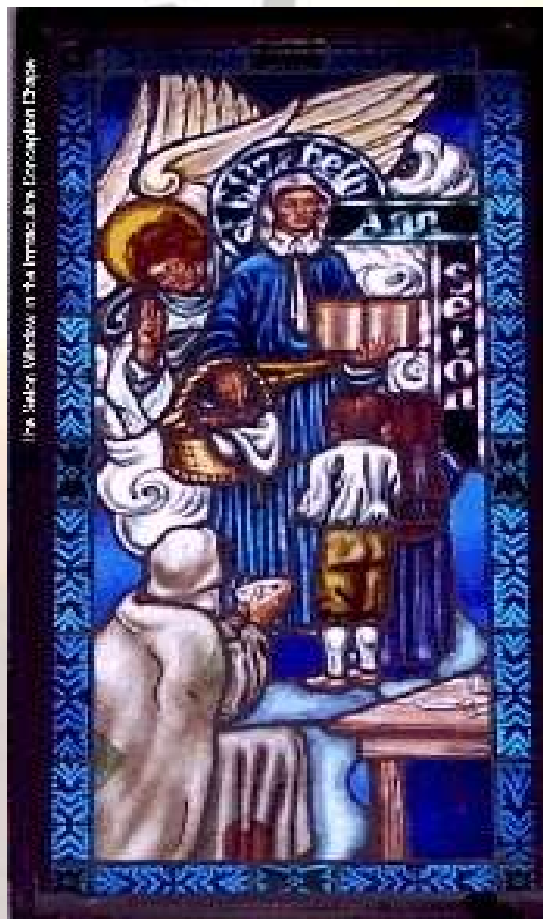


Altar Server Manual

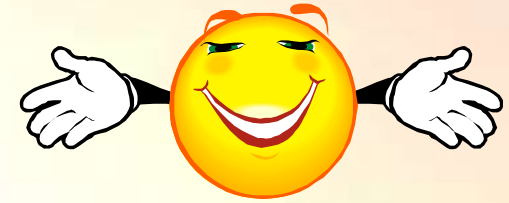
By: The Altar Server Committee

2023





Welcome!



Welcome to the Altar Server Ministry of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. On behalf of the Priests, Deacons, and all church members, we want to thank you for joining the very large group of fellow church goers who work to make our church such a great place to be. You are a very important part of our church, thank you for giving your time and talent to make our church such a great place to be. Now let's start with the basics....

Dress Code

Please wear church appropriate clothing. Now your probably wondering...What's appropriate clothing? Well I'm glad you asked...

Appropriate

Clean
Dress
Shoes



Nails
should
be
nicely
polished
or none
at all



Hair
should
be clean
and
neatly
combed,
if long in
a pony
tail or
bun



Studs or
Earrings
that sit
against
your ear



NOT Appropriate

Sandals



Dirty Shoes.
**Sneakers,
tennis shoes**



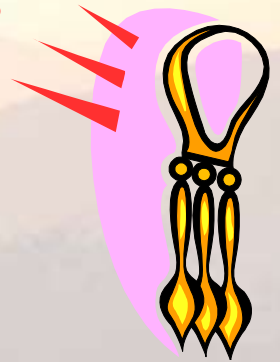
Crazy Hair



Crocs



Dangly
Earrings



No
shorts



Arrival Time



- Arrive at least **15 minutes** before mass if you are scheduled. For example, if you go to Noon you should be there by at least 11:45.
- Fill-ins may sign in and dress at **10 minutes** before Mass time. For example, if you go to Noon you may sign in at 11:50.
- The clock in the server room serves as the official clock.
- For **Easter and Christmas Masses** please arrive **30 minutes** before Mass time. Fill-ins may sign in and dress at **20 minutes** before Mass time. For example, if you go to Christmas Mass at 12:00 then servers that are signed up should be there at 11:30 and fill-ins can sign in at 11:40.

Signing In

- All servers must sign in when serving. Use the sign-in sheet provided in the server room.
- Please write your name clearly so it can easily be read.
- Remember the sign-in sheet is used to award points for advancement, so be sure to sign each time you serve.



Sign-In Sheet

The gang from Spongebob Squarepants (Spongebob and Sandy Cheeks) are scheduled to serve during the Noon Mass. All are present to serve and sign-in accordingly. Since all servers were scheduled, they only have to neatly sign their full name in the 1st column.

Each server will write their name in Name column;

Each server will write the position they will serve in, in serving position column.

At the 5:00 p.m. Mass, some of our friends from Jimmy Neutron (Jimmy Neutron and Carl Wheezer) are scheduled to serve. But Sheen woke up sick from eating too much candy and asks Spongebob Squarepants to substitute for him. Even though Spongebob served at the Noon Mass, he agrees to help Sheen out and substitute for him. When Spongebob signs in for the 5:00 pm Mass:

He puts his name in the 1st column;

He writes in the position he will be serving

He checks the 'Check If Sub' column, and;

He writes Sheen's name in the 'Name of the Person You Are Substituting For' column.

Cindy Vortex comes in at 4:53 p.m. and sees that there's a server position still open. She decides to serve and signs her name in the 1st column and checks the 'Check if Fill-In' column.

Substitutes

- If you cannot serve on a day you are scheduled, it is your responsibility to get a substitute.
- If you get a substitute, you still receive a point for serving if you email one of the Committee members with the name of your substitute.
- If you cannot get a substitute please email an Altar Server Committee member and let them know. Please email only after you have exhausted all means to get a substitute yourself.
- Three unexcused absences will subject you to loss of your status as an Altar Server for the next three (3) month schedule.



Ranks and Points

There are 5 ranks in Altar Serving. You must earn at least 18 points in order to advance to the next rank level. 9 points should come from serving at normally scheduled Masses. 9 points should come from substituting, filling in, training sessions, and serving on holidays and special occasions.



The 5 Ranks are...

NOVICE	0-18 POINTS
JUNIOR	19-36 POINTS
EXPERIENCED	37-54 POINTS
SENIOR	55 – 72 points
MASTER	72 points and must pass Master Server Test

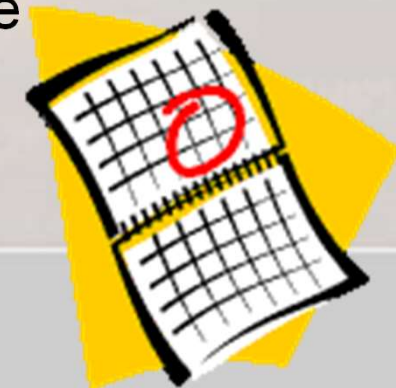
Conduct on The Altar

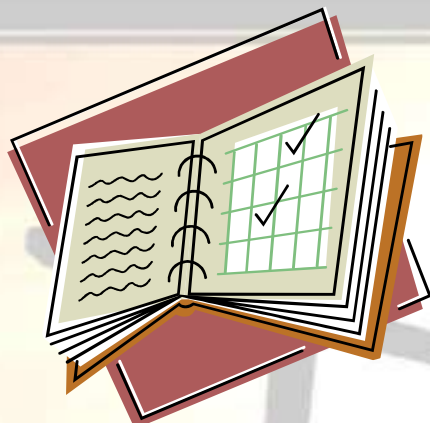
- Always act in a reverent manner.
- Hands should always be folded neatly and pointed upwards.
- Kneel straight. Do not lean back on your feet.
- Sit up straight in the pew.
- Avoid unnecessary movement and talking.



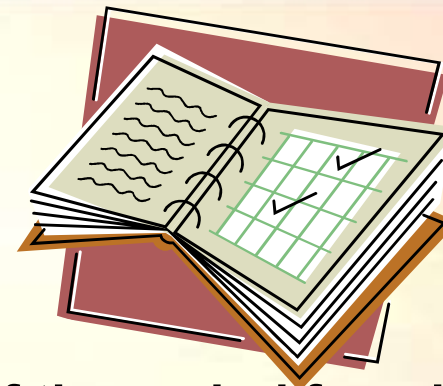
Training

- Periodically you will be required to attend a training session.
- These sessions are mandatory in order that all servers will learn what is required to do their job correctly.
- We will try to accommodate everyone's schedule as best as possible.





Schedules



- Schedules will be available 1 week in advance of the period for which they are in effect.
- Schedules are also available on the parish website www.setonparish.org. On the bottom of the homepage, under schedules click on the ‘ ‘Altar Server Schedule” link.
- Servers are responsible for finding a substitute in the event that they are unable to serve and emailing the Altar Server Committee Member to let them know about the substitution.



Parental Responsibility

- Parents are a big part of helping make our ministry work.
- Please keep your parents informed of your schedule.
- Please share the Server Newsletter with your parents and/or guardians.
- Parents can help by getting you to church on time and helping you study your manual.
- Remember, without their help we can't do it.



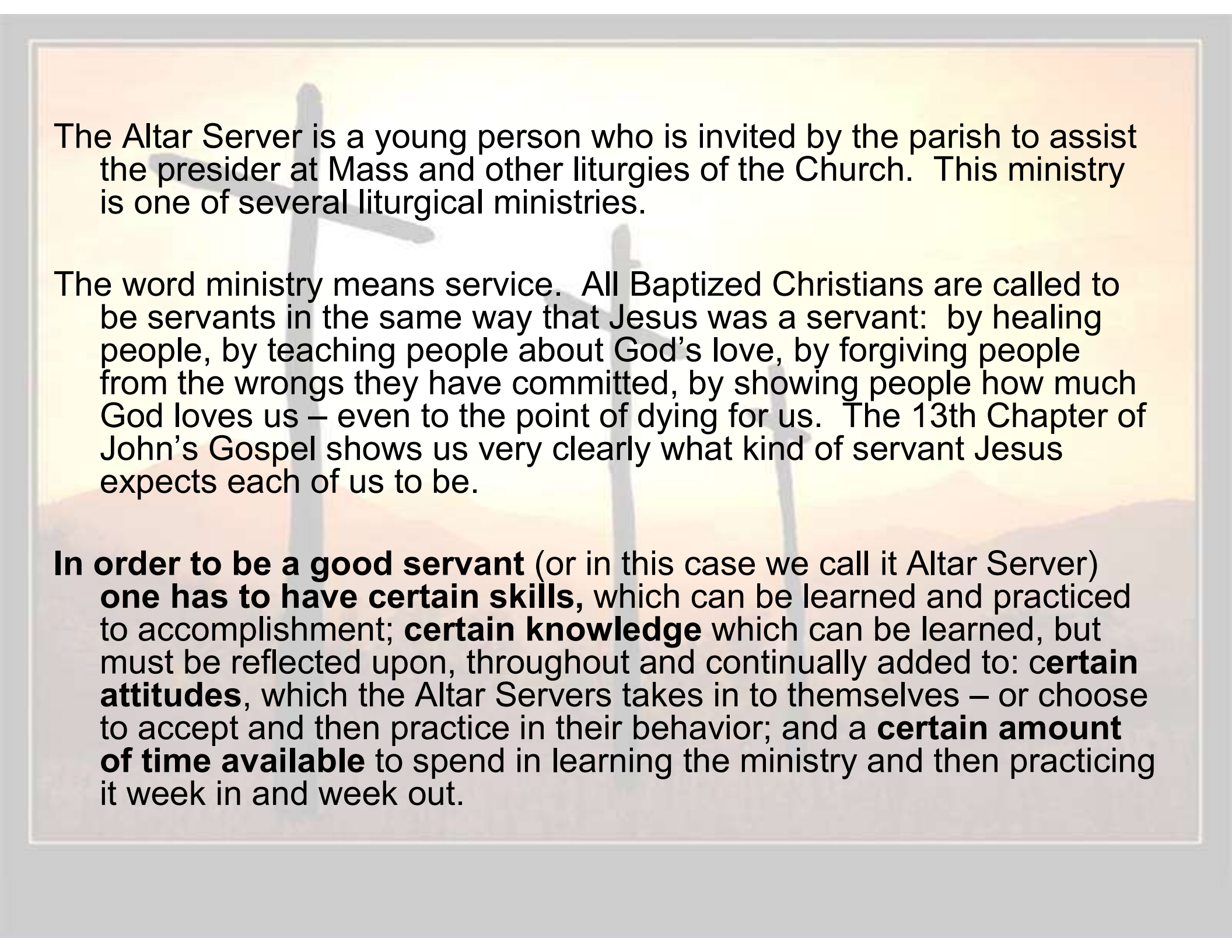
Altar Server Committee

- The Altar Server program is administered by the Altar Server Committee. Its members are responsible for making sure everything runs smoothly. If for any reason you need help or have a concern about your participation in this ministry, please call any member to address your situation. The committee is there to help in any way possible.
- Consult your schedule for member names and numbers.



The Role or Ministry of Altar Servers at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton





The Altar Server is a young person who is invited by the parish to assist the presider at Mass and other liturgies of the Church. This ministry is one of several liturgical ministries.

The word ministry means service. All Baptized Christians are called to be servants in the same way that Jesus was a servant: by healing people, by teaching people about God's love, by forgiving people from the wrongs they have committed, by showing people how much God loves us – even to the point of dying for us. The 13th Chapter of John's Gospel shows us very clearly what kind of servant Jesus expects each of us to be.

In order to be a good servant (or in this case we call it Altar Server) **one has to have certain skills**, which can be learned and practiced to accomplishment; **certain knowledge** which can be learned, but must be reflected upon, throughout and continually added to: **certain attitudes**, which the Altar Servers takes in to themselves – or choose to accept and then practice in their behavior; and a **certain amount of time available** to spend in learning the ministry and then practicing it week in and week out.

Skills

The easiest part of being an Altar Server is the skills that one learns to do. These include walking gracefully in procession and about the sanctuary, sitting and standing very still in front of large crowds for many minutes, pouring water from a larger vessel into a smaller one in front of large crowds, holding large book out in front of oneself so that the text can be read by a priest or deacon, lighting candles with candle-lighters and extinguishing them without spilling hot wax, lighting, carrying and swinging a censor properly, and a host of other tasks that are part of the ritual action of the Catholic liturgy.

Generally, if one is physically able, one can learn these skills, but they take practice to do them well.



Knowledge

The knowledge that an Altar Server must acquire includes first and foremost becoming familiar and completely comfortable with all the parts of the Mass and other liturgies, learning by heart the major prayers of the Mass that are the “people’s parts” (The Gloria, the Creed, the Lord’s Prayer etc.), knowing why we do what we do in our liturgical prayer, knowing all the vestments, vessels and other sacred objects we use for liturgy and where they are kept and know how to set some of them up. The Altar Server needs to have some knowledge of the Altar Server ministry, its history, its place in the Church, the Altar Server should be familiar with the priests, deacons and other servers. In short, the Altar Server has much to learn to become a really good and knowledgeable Altar Server. The Altar Servers will not learn all of this at the beginning, but are expected to continue to learn as they mature in this ministry.





Attitudes



Perhaps having the right attitude about serving is more important than having all the skills and knowledge. Almost anyone can practice the skills and learn the knowledge, but it takes a special young person to have and sustain the right attitudes to be a good Altar Server.

1. **Generous:** Altar Servers have to be willing to give generously of their time and talent to learn what they must know, to be available when they are needed at the altar.
2. **Respectful:** of themselves, of adults, and of their peers, of the sacred objects they will handle, of the assembly they will serve. The Altar Server has to be a person that is ready to listen, to answer respectfully when talking with the priests, deacons, the other ministers of the parish, fellow Altar Servers, etc. They know how important and sacred are the people and objects of our parish's prayer life.
3. **Obedient:** They must be prepared to listen to directives given and to follow the rules and guidelines laid down for the Altar Server ministry, because they are given to help them be the best kind of servants of the Lord.

Attitudes (con't)

4. **Attentive:** They must be alert and paying attention when they are serving, not daydreaming or sleeping, or “zoning out” – they will often be needed to respond on very short notice to a need that arises that only they might see.
5. **Participative:** They must want to be an Altar Server, not doing it because someone is making them or pushing them to become one.
6. **Eager to learn:** They must be excited about the role of the Altar Server and all the various aspects of serving that they will need to learn. If one is bored or too tired to learn, one will not give the time and energy necessary to this very important task.
7. **Able to be serious and able to have fun:** They must be people who can relax and enjoy fun when it is time to have fun, to build community among the Altar Servers, to laugh and joke when appropriate, to have a good sense of humor, but also to know when to be serious, when to be silent, thoughtful and prayerful.
8. **Prayerful:** Since Altar Servers are servants of the community prayer, they must want to know and love God enough to be persons of prayer themselves.

Altar Server Character

As an Altar Server, you are a minister of the Church, called by the Lord to serve Him in the Catholic Community of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton.

Your behavior on the streets, in schools, shopping malls, extra-curricular activities etc. should demonstrate that you are a committed follower of Jesus Christ. **RESPECT FOR OTHER PEOPLE – FOR THEIR PERSONS, AND THEIR PROPERTY –** is one of the marks of Christian.

~GOOD~



Before Mass

When you enter the Altar Server room and other ministers are there, greet them. If you arrive first, greet other ministers when they arrive.

Sign-in on the Altar Server attendance sheet and select a position.

Put on your alb (*be sure to check inside the collar to make sure you have the correct size – sometimes they aren't always where they should be in the closet*), cincture, the appropriate cross, and 1 position badge (*even if you're performing two or more positions, use only one badge*). Albs should be 1" to 2" above your shoes.

The Altar Server with the most experience asks the presider if there is anything different at Mass. All Altar Servers should greet the presider before Mass starts.

The background of the slide features a soft-focus image of three crosses standing on a hill. The scene is set during sunset or sunrise, with a warm, orange and yellow sky. The crosses are silhouetted against the bright sky, and the hills in the background are also softly lit by the low sun.

During Mass

If you feel faint or ill, you should leave the sanctuary and find your parent or ask an Usher for assistance.

After Mass

Handle your alb, cincture, and cross with reverence and respect. Hang up albs in order of short to tall (right to left). Hang up your cross and place position badge in the proper drawer.

Prayers & Order of the Mass



Prayer Before Serving

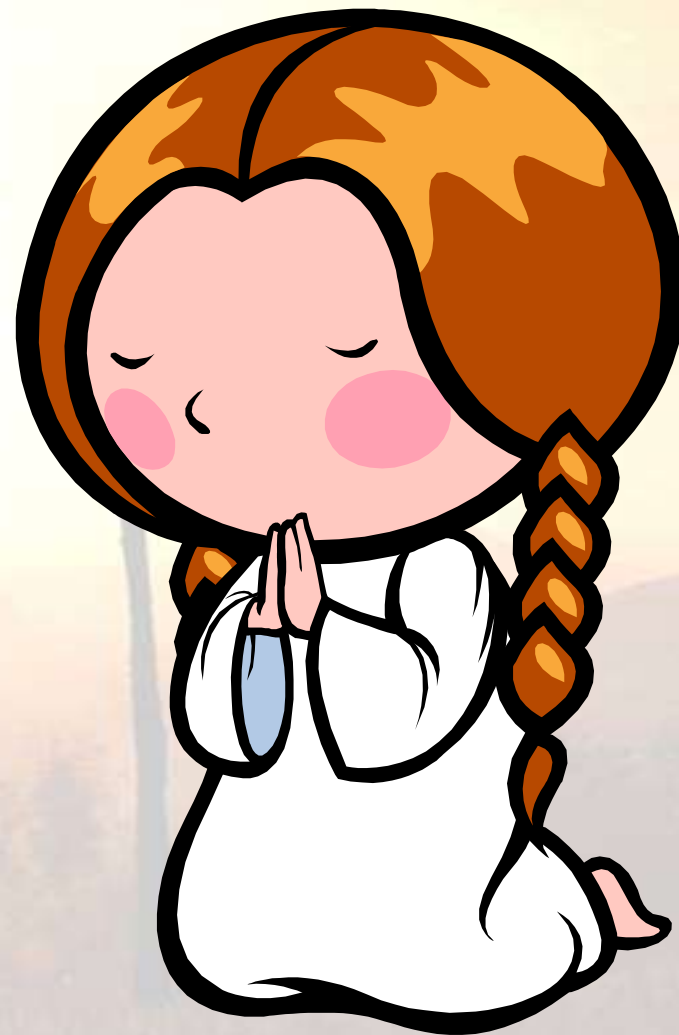
Father in heaven,
Your Son, Jesus Christ,
Showed his love for you
By serving his needy brothers and sisters.

I now ask you to give me your help
as I serve you and your people.

Open my mouth to praise you
in word and song.
Open my ears to hear your word.
Open my hands to do your work as well.

Take from my heart all evil and
distracting thoughts.
Help me know what I should do,
and do it well.

Help me to serve reverently at
your holy altar,
And to give you praise and glory,
Now and forever. Amen.

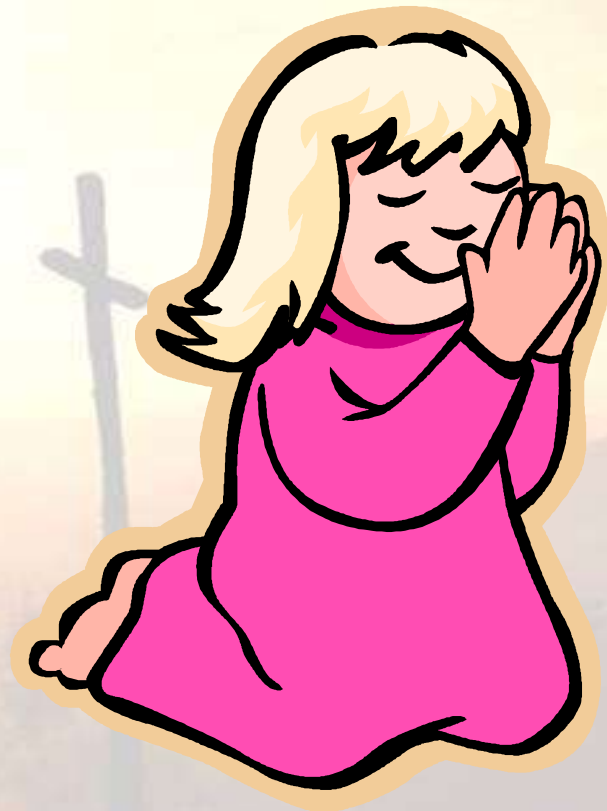


I Confess

I confess to almighty God,
and to you, my brothers and sisters,
that I have greatly sinned,
in my thoughts and in my words;
in what I have done and in what I have
failed to do,

We strike our breast during the next two lines:

Through my fault, through my fault,
Through my most grievous fault;
therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,
all the Angels and Saints,
and you, my brothers and sisters,
to pray for me to the Lord our God.



Gloria

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,

we bless you,

we adore you,

we glorify you,

we give you thanks for your great glory,

Lord God, heavenly King,

O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,

Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,

you take away the sins of the world,

have mercy on us;

you take away the sins of the world,

receive our prayer;

you are seated at the right hand of the Father,

have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,

you alone are the Lord,

you alone are the Most High,

Jesus Christ,

with the Holy Spirit,

in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Nicene Creed

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the
Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,

***At the words that follow up to and including and
became man, all bow.***

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the
Virgin Mary,
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius
Pilate,

he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of
life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored and
glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic
Church.

I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father,
who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
Thy kingdom come;
Thy will be done on earth as it is in
heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against
us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver
us from evil.

Priest: Deliver us, from every evil,
and grant us peace in our day. In
your mercy keep us free from sin
and protect us from all anxiety as
we wait in joyful hope for the
coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Our response: For the kingdom, the
power and the glory are yours, now
and for ever.

Order of the Mass

Introductory Rites

- Procession and Gathering Hymn
- Greeting – The Sign of the Cross & Greeting
- Penitential Act or Sprinkling Rite
- Gloria (Omitted during Advent & Lent)
- Collect

Liturgy of the Word

- First Reading (Old Testament)
- Responsorial Psalm (Sung)
- Second Reading (New Testament)
- Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia (Sung)
[During Lent Alleluia is omitted and we sing “Praise to you, Lord Jesus, king of endless glory, Savior of the world, Savior of the world.”]
- Gospel (Read by Priest or Deacon)
- Homily
- Profession of Faith (Nicene Creed)
- Prayer of the Faithful

Liturgy of the Eucharist

- Preparation of the Altar
- Presentation of the Gifts
- Preparation of the Gifts
- Prayer over the Gifts
- Eucharistic Preface
- Holy, Holy, Holy (Sung)
- Mystery of Faith (Sung)
- Great Amen (Sung)

Communion Rite

- Lord's Prayer
- Doxology
- Sign of Peace
- Lamb of God
- Communion
- Prayer after Communion

Concluding Rite

- Blessing
- Dismissal, Recessional and Closing Hymn

The background of the slide features a photograph of three wooden crosses standing on a grassy hill. The scene is set during a sunset or sunrise, with a warm, orange and yellow sky. The crosses are arranged in a line, receding into the distance. The overall mood is solemn and reflective.

Altar Server Procedures

BEFORE MASS

Arrive at the church at least **15 minutes** early and sign in on the sign-in sheet. In all matters concerning time, the clock in the server's room is the rule. Arrive **30 minutes** early for **Easter and Christmas**

Put on your vestments.

- White Alb (*be sure to check inside the collar to make sure you have the correct size – sometimes they aren't always where they should be in the closet*)
- Cincture
- One Position Badge (*even if you're performing two or more positions, use only one badge*)
- Server's cross

Each scheduled server or substitute server must sign in and choose a position.

- The servers with the highest rank should help the less experienced servers if needed.
- If a server scheduled to serve is not at the church at **10 minutes** before Mass, they must take whatever position is left. They may not take away a position from a less senior server who was there before the **15 minute** deadline.
- Fill-in servers choose their position based on those positions remaining after the **10 minute** before Mass deadline.

If a scheduled server is not at the church **10 minutes** before Mass is scheduled to begin, a fill-in server may take the place of the absent server. Fill-ins take whatever position is left. They cannot take a position away from a scheduled server who is already signed in.

Once dressed, the server with the most seniority checks with the Priest and/or Deacon to see if there are any special instructions or procedures which the servers need to know about.

Once dressed, wait quietly in the church foyer for the lector, Deacon and Priest. Use this time to reflect on what you are to do and prepare mentally and spiritually to serve.

Candle Servers will light the candles that will be used in procession. They are located at the gift table and will be lighted at the beginning of the Call to Worship.

Properly Vested Altar Server

One Position Badge (even if you're performing two positions, use only one badge).



Alb should be to your ankles.

Ritual Actions & Special Liturgies



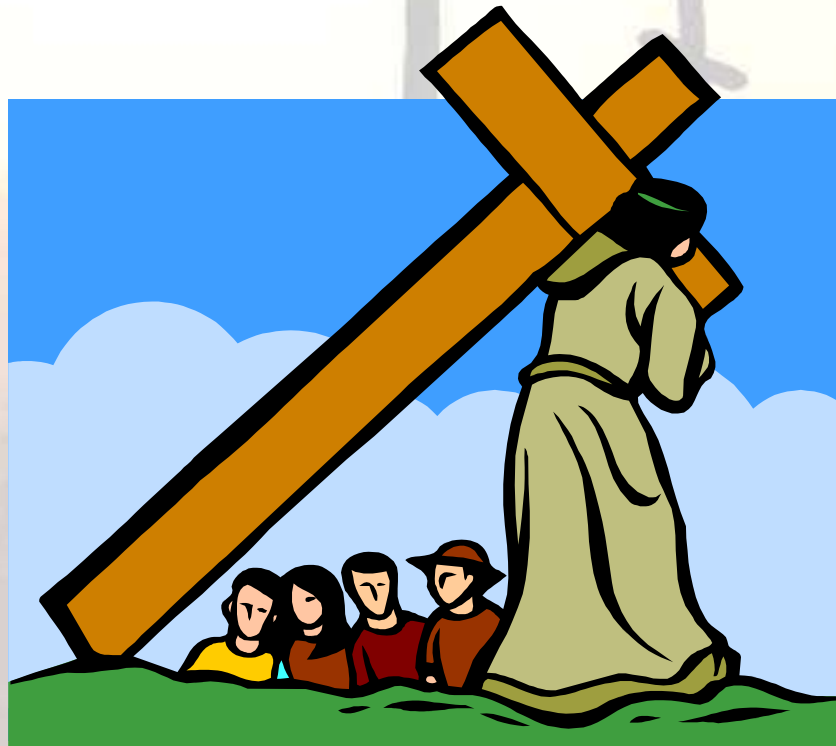
Incense

Incense is used during the Triduum and on special occasions.
Master and Senior servers are invited to serve at the Triduum.



Stations of the Cross

Servers are invited to serve for Stations of the Cross, which take place on Fridays during Lent at 7 PM. Rehearsal is at 6:30 PM. Sign-up sheets are posted in Altar Servers room.



The background of the slide is a painting of three crosses on a hill. The crosses are made of dark, weathered wood and are arranged in a line from left to right, with the leftmost cross being the tallest and the rightmost being the shortest. They stand on a grassy hill with some bushes. In the background, there are rolling hills under a warm, orange and yellow sky, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The word "Definitions" is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

Definitions

Advent

The four weeks before Christmas in which we prepare for Christ's birthday and his final coming.

Advent Wreath

A festive circle of greenery arranged to hold four candles. The Candles are lighted on the Sundays of Advent. The candles represent the Light of Christ which gets brighter as we approach Christmas.



Alb

The long white robe worn by certain ministers at liturgical celebrations.



Altar

The large, high table usually located in the middle of the Sanctuary. Most of the action of the liturgy of the Eucharist takes place near the main Altar.



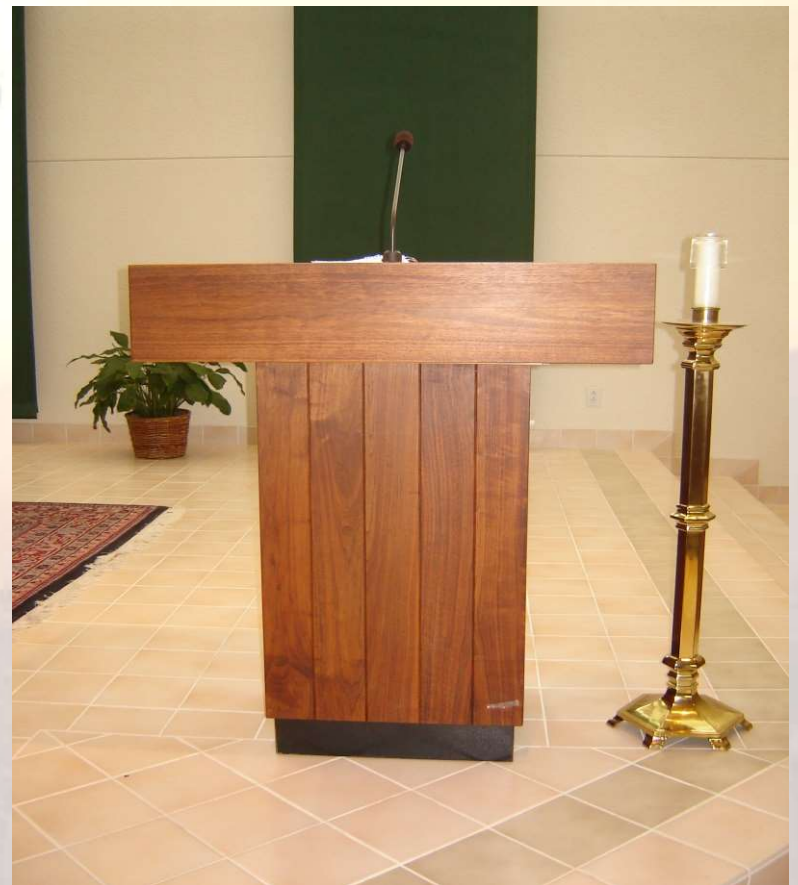
Altar Cloth

The table cloth for the main Altar is always white.



Ambo

The place in the Church from which the Readings are proclaimed at Mass.



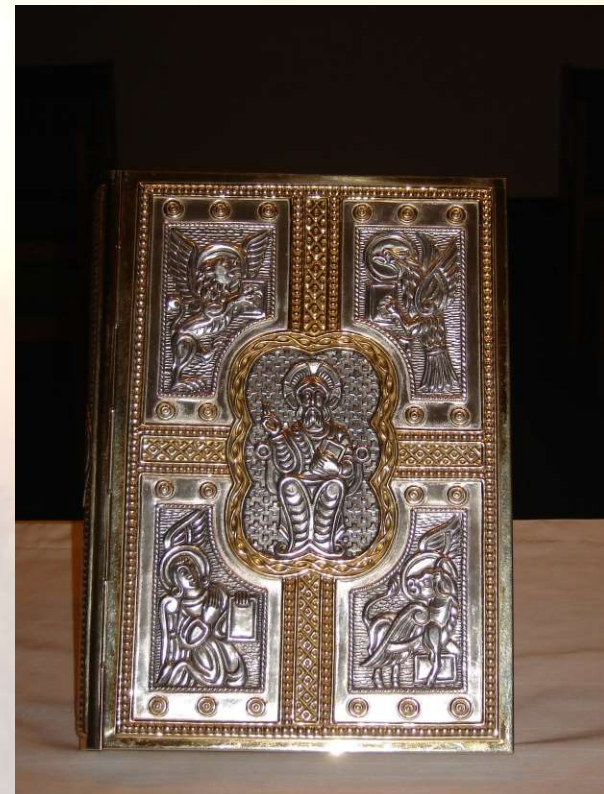
Baptismal Font

The place where people are baptized. In our church it is the large marble structure on the right hand side of the Altar.



Book of the Gospels

The large Book which contains the Sunday Gospel readings and is carried in the procession by the Deacon.



Candle Lighter

The long instrument used to light and put out the candles.



Celebrant

The person who leads the ceremony. This is usually the Priest. In some celebrations other than Mass, the celebrant could be the Deacon.



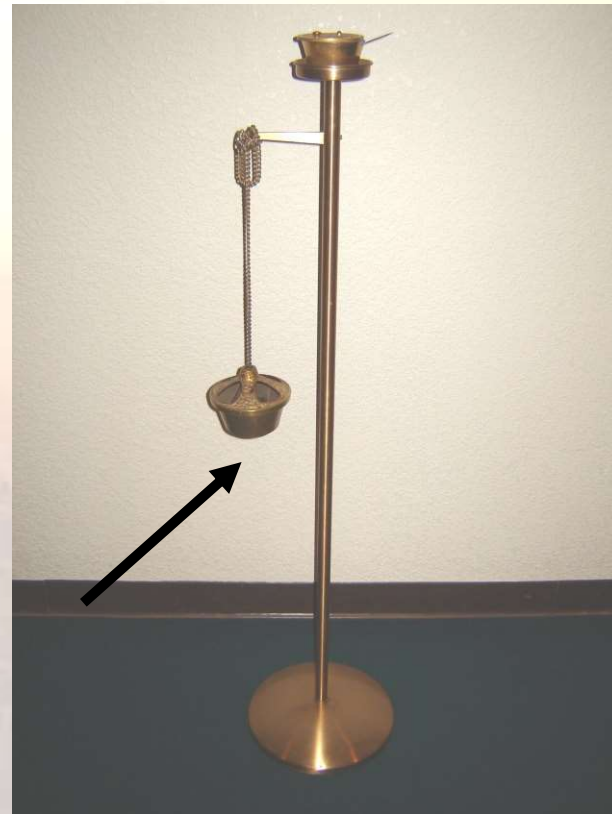
Celebrant's Chair

The central chair which is used by the celebrant during Mass. It is also called the Presidential Chair.



Censer

A metal container that holds the hot charcoal for the incense. It is usually held by a long chain. It is also called a Thurible.



Chalice

The gold cup which is used by the Priest and holds the wine at Mass.



Charcoal

When lit, it burns and melts the incense.



Chasuble

A colored poncho-like vestment worn by the Priest at Mass.



Christmas

The celebration of the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem, when Christ came to us as true God and true man.



Ciborium

Gold cup-like containers for holding the bread at Mass and the Body of Christ in the Tabernacle.



Cincture

A rope which is worn around the Alb like a belt. This is tied on the left side.



Corporal

A square cloth which is placed on center of the Altar and on which the Paten, Chalice, and ciborii are placed.



Credence Table

The small table on which is kept the things which are used during Mass.



Cross-Bearer

The person assigned to carry the processional cross during procession.

Cruets

The two glass containers which hold the wine and water.



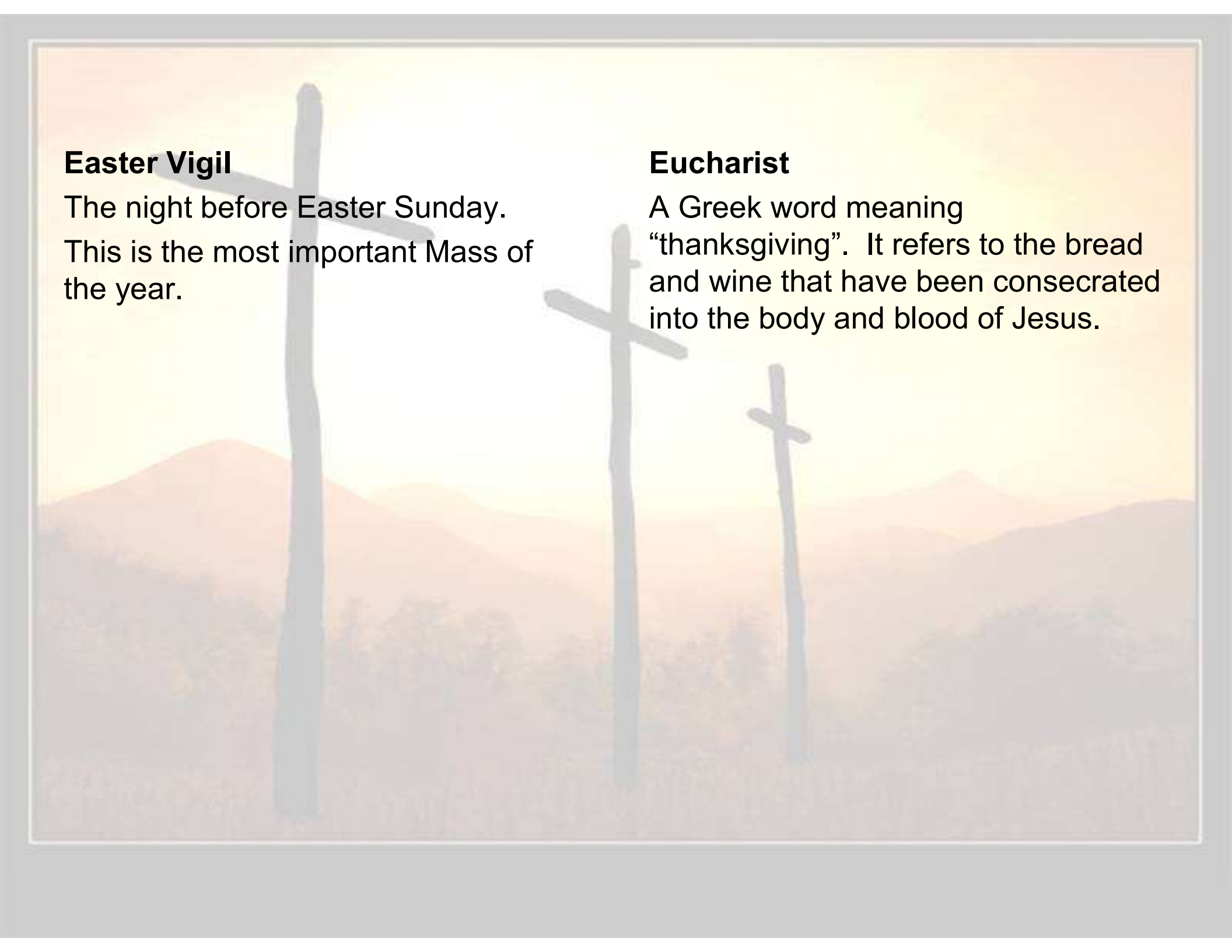
Deacon

Someone who is ordained by the Bishop to serve the whole community. The Deacon can read the Gospel at Mass, preach the Homily, prepare the bread and wine, and give out Communion. They also baptize, celebrate marriages, and assist at funerals. Their main purpose is to serve in any way they can.



Easter

The celebration of Jesus' Resurrection from the dead.

The background of the slide is a photograph of three crosses standing on a grassy hill. The scene is captured during sunset or sunrise, with a warm, orange and yellow sky. The crosses are made of dark wood and are arranged in a line, receding into the distance. The hills in the background are silhouetted against the bright sky.

Easter Vigil

The night before Easter Sunday.

This is the most important Mass of the year.

Eucharist

A Greek word meaning “thanksgiving”. It refers to the bread and wine that have been consecrated into the body and blood of Jesus.

Extraordinary Ministers of Communion

Lay men and women who assist in the distribution of Holy Communion.

Finger Bowl

A bowl for washing the Priest's hands at Mass.



Finger Towel

A cloth which is used for drying the Priest's hands.



Homily

An explanation of the readings at the Mass. This is the talk which comes after the Gospel, given by the Priest or Deacon.

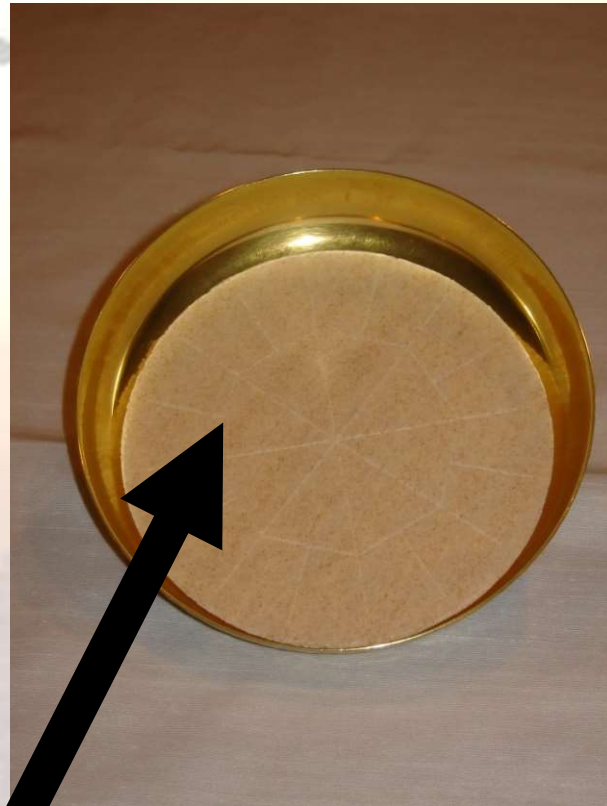
Holy Water Sprinkler

Used to sprinkle the people during certain Liturgies also called an Aspergillum.



Host

The round piece of unleavened bread used for Communion.

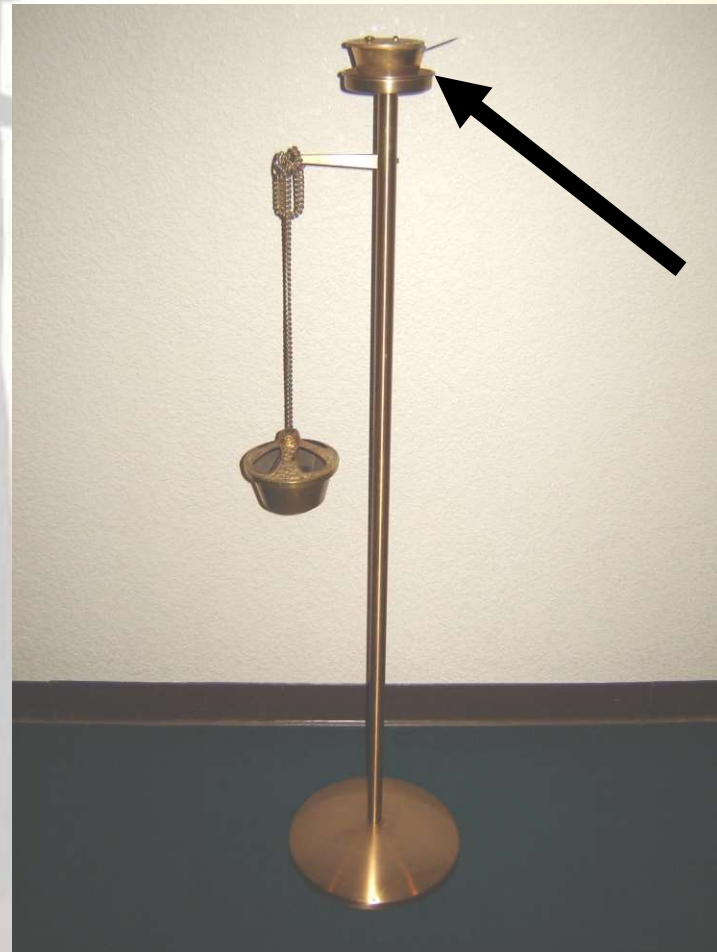


Incense

Tree resin which gives off sweet smelling smoke when burned and is used in honoring God at some liturgical celebrations. The smoke rises and represents our prayers rising to God.

Incense Boat

Container that holds the incense.



Lectionary

The book from which the Scripture readings are read at Mass.



Lector

A lay person who reads the Old Testament, responsorial psalm, and New Testament readings during Mass.

Lent

A period of forty days before Easter, starting with Ash Wednesday. It is a time to prepare for the joy of Easter by doing extra acts of charity and by giving up something we enjoy.

Oils

The Holy Oils are blessed during Holy Week by the Bishop. There are three different oils. They are: the Oils of the Sick, Catechumens, and Chrism.



Palm Sunday (Passion Sunday)

The Sunday before Easter. This is the Sunday when we receive palms, and the Passion of Jesus is read.

Paschal Candle

The large Easter candle, used at funerals and baptisms.



Paten

A gold flat plate used for the host by the Priest at Mass.



Pentecost

Fifty days after Easter. This is the celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit to the Apostles.

Procession

A solemn way to walk through the church. We process to the Altar at the beginning of Mass, and process out from the Altar at the end of Mass.

Purificator

A cloth with a cross in the middle, which is used for wiping and purifying the chalice. Purificators used by Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EM's) do not have crosses.



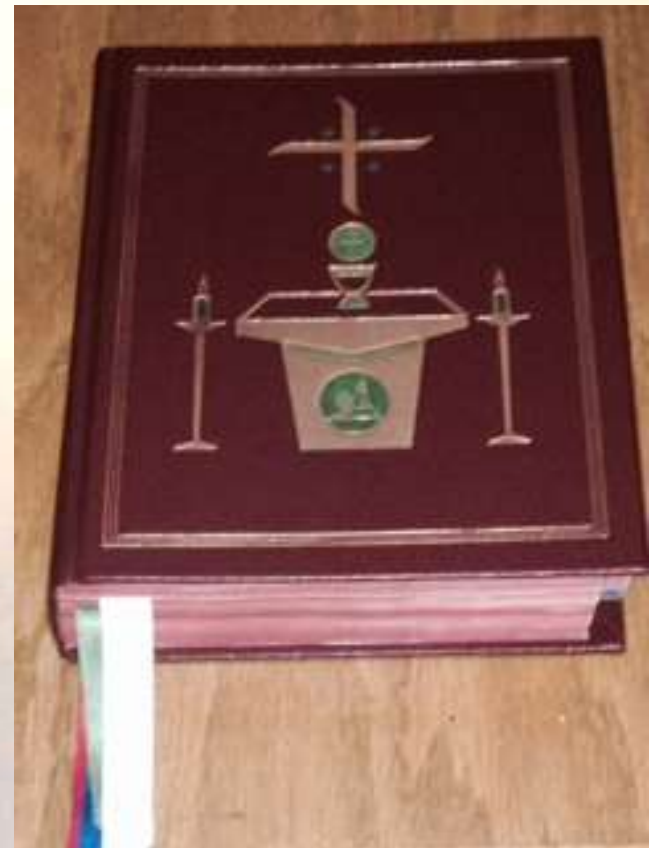
Pyx

The small container used to take communion to the sick.



Roman Missal

The Book from which the Priest reads the prayers for Mass.



Sacristy

The room where the Priest and Deacon dress and prepare for Mass. The server's preparation room can also be called a sacristy.



Sanctuary

The area around the Altar.



Sanctuary Candle

There is always a single candle burning by the tabernacle to show the presence of the Eucharist. This shows the presence of Christ, the Light of the World, in the Church.



Server

Someone who assists the celebrant during a ceremony such as Mass, weddings, funerals, Benediction, etc.

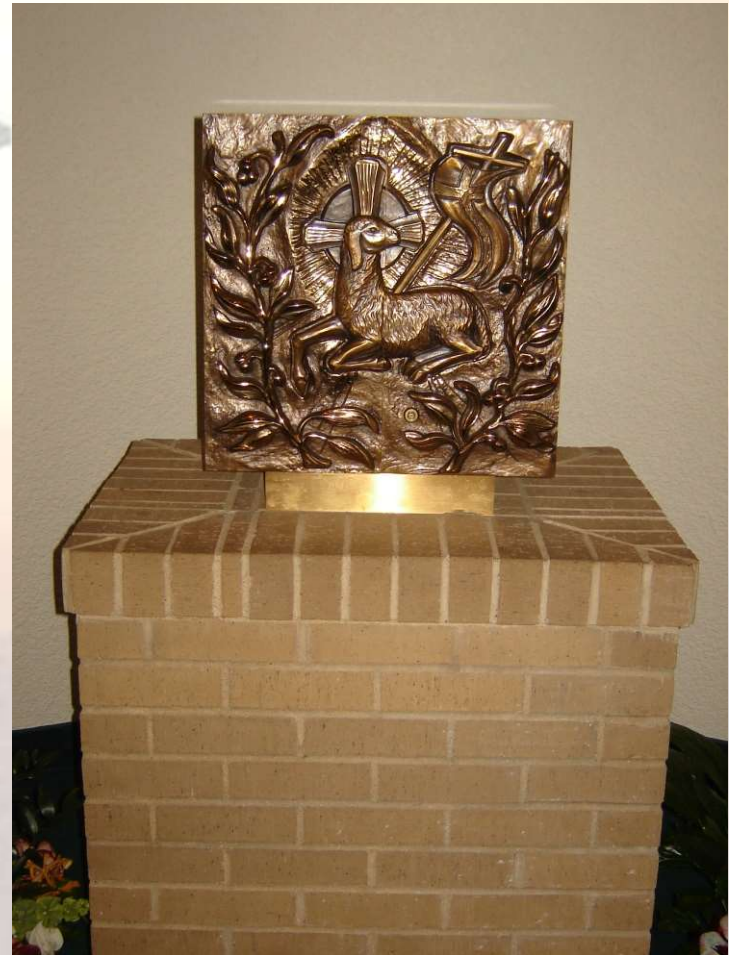
Stole

A scarf-like colored cloth worn by ordained ministers.



Tabernacle

The place in the chapel where the Eucharist is reserved.



The background of the slide features a large, faint, light-colored cross superimposed over a soft-focus landscape. The landscape appears to be a valley or a field with rolling hills in the distance, bathed in a warm, golden light, possibly from a low sun or moon. The overall tone is peaceful and contemplative.

Triduum

The word Triduum comes from the Latin and means “three days”. It is commonly pronounced “TRIH-doo-uhm” and is usually used in reference to the Easter Triduum, the three most sacred days in the church year. The Easter Triduum begins with the evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday, continues with Good Friday and reaches its high point at the Easter Vigil and concludes with evening prayer on Easter Sunday.

Holy Thursday

Three days before Easter when we celebrate Jesus’ Last Supper with his Apostles. This is the night he gave us the Eucharist.

Good Friday

Two days before Easter when we celebrate Jesus’ passion and death on the cross. Mass is not said on this day.

Holy Saturday