

ALTAR SERVERS DICTIONARY OF EQUIPMENT IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

- **Aarti** – Because of its rich meaning Aarti makes the liturgy more meaningful. It is a traditional Indian ritual used by the Hindus in their liturgies to honour God and important people. To perform the act of Aarti light, flowers, incense or all three are laid on a tray which is then held out at arms length and three circular clockwise movements are made. The first circle being the smallest represents the individual, the second slightly larger circle represents the entire universe and finally the biggest circle represents God who has all of us under his care.
- **Acolytes** – The two servers who carry the acolyte candlesticks which are used in mass processions. The acolyte candlesticks are also used for the Gospel.
- **Alb** – A full length white linen gown with sleeves and sometimes a hood. It is always worn by a priest at mass and by servers in some churches. The name comes from the Latin word 'albus' meaning white and has been worn since the fourth century.
- **Altar** – The stone or wooden table where the most important part of the Mass is celebrated. The Altar contains relics of the Saints which are placed in the Altar. The relics are of the Saint or Saints to whom the particular church is dedicated.
- **Amice** – An oblong, white cloth with two tapes which the priest sometimes wears around his shoulders, underneath the alb.
- **Baptismal Font** – This is a vessel of water in which people are baptised. It reminds us of OUR baptism, when we were washed clean of sin and became a member of God's family. You will also find small fonts in the entrance to church to bless yourself as you enter.
- **Bell** – A small hand bell used at the consecration and at communion to invite communicants to come down the aisle to receive communion.
- **Block** – The wooden block in which the cross is placed.
- **Boat** – The small brass vessel containing incense and a brass spoon.
- **Book** – Contains the prayers of the day.
- **Chalice** – A silver goblet in which the wine is poured prior to the Consecration. Unlike the Ciborium, the Chalice does not have a lid. (The cup that contains the precious blood of Christ.)
- **Chasuble** – The outer garment worn by the priest at mass. There are different colours for the different seasons and feasts.
- **Ciborium** – A silver goblet in which the hosts are placed. Unlike the Chalice, the Ciborium has a lid.
- **Cincture** – A rope belt that is tied around the waist by those who wear an Alb.
- **Confessional Box** – Here we meet with the priest to confess our sins and through the Sacrament of Reconciliation or Penance, receive God's forgiveness in the prayer of absolution.
- **Cope** – A vestment placed over the priest's shoulder during benediction when the priest holds up the Monstrance.

- **Corporal** – Its name comes from the Latin word 'corpus' meaning a body. It is a square of white linen cloth, on which the Chalice, Ciborium and Paten are placed during the mass, to catch particles of the Blessed Sacrament, should any fall from the vessels.
- **Credence Table** – The little wooden side table on which all the things that are necessary for the mass are placed.
- **Crozier** – Carried by a bishop. It looks like a shepherd's crook and reminds us that the bishop is chief shepherd of the flock of Christ in any given area.
- **Crucifer** – The server who carries the Cross.
- **Crucifix** – A cross on which Jesus is crucified.
- **Cruets** – Two small jugs that contain water & wine for the mass. Usually placed on a small silver plate and covered over with the finger towel when not being used.
- **Finger Towel** – The small towel used to cover the Cruets and used by the priest to dry his hands after the Preparation of the Gifts.
- **Garland** - Used to welcome and as a mark of respect to important dignitaries. In the liturgy we Garland the word of God to show due reverence and respect.
- **Host** – Strictly speaking, the consecrated bread. (The Body of Christ) In practice, the name is often used for the unconsecrated Altar bread.
- **Incense** – A substance that gives off clouds of sweet smelling smoke when sprinkled onto burning charcoal.
- **Lavabo Bowl** – The small silver bowl containing tap water. At the preparation of the gifts the priest washes his hands to ceremoniously signify the cleaning of the sins of those gathered and to prepare himself for what he is about to do.
- **Lectern** – The desk from which the readers, deacon and priest proclaim the readings.
- **Lectionary** – A large book containing all the readings from the Bible for the Liturgy of the word. It is placed on the lectern before mass begins.
- **M.C.** - Means Master of Ceremonies. At every Mass or Service, the senior server should be the MC. Their job is to ensure all items are in the correct place prior to Mass. To make sure that everyone knows what job has been appointed to them and to quietly assist them during Mass if they are unsure. To assist the priest in anything he may require during the Mass. The M.C. should not carry the Cross or Acolytes or do any other job unless there are not enough servers.
- **Maha Aarti** – Mother of Aarti. The performance of Aarti with the use of fire, bell, flowers and incense.
- **Mitre** – A tall pointed hat worn by a bishop which divides to form two pointed peaks. This represents 'tongues of fire' that seemed to light upon the apostles on the first day of Pentecost.
- **Monstrance** – A gold container on a stand in which the Host is placed. It is used at expositions and benedictions of the Blessed Sacrament. It may be plain or very elaborate, but it always has a little glass window through which you can see the host.

- **Nave** - The part of the church where the people sit. The passage ways are called Aisles.
- **Notice Book** - The book used by the priest to read out notices for the week at the end of mass.
- **Pall** - A square board covered in white linen to cover the Chalice.
- **Paschal Candle** - A very large, decorated candle, blessed at Easter. It represents the risen Christ, the light of the world. During the Easter season this paschal candle has its place in the sanctuary. Thereafter it is used during baptisms.
- **Paten** - A shallow metal plate often made of gold or silver, on which the priest places the Host at the celebration of Communion.
- **Presidential Chair** - The chair on which the priest sits to signify that he is the leader of the congregation.
- **Purificator** - A white linen cloth which is placed on the Chalice. The priest uses the Purificator to clean and purify the Chalice after use.
- **Pyx** - A small metal container, used to take Holy Communion to the sick and housebound.
- **Roman Missal** - The book from which the prayers of the mass are read by the priest.
- **Sacristy** - The room where the servers prepare themselves for the service.
- **Sanctuary** - Sacred part of the church where the Altar, Lectern and Priest's (Presidential) chair are.
- **Sanctuary Lamp** - The lamp that is kept burning near the Tabernacle to show that the Blessed Sacrament is present. (Blessed Sacrament is the presence of Jesus).
- **Sprinkler** - The brass vessel containing Holy Water and the device for sprinkling Holy Water at certain ceremonies.
- **Stations of the Cross** - These depict, usually in fourteen stages, the journey of Jesus to Calvary, his crucifixion on the cross and his laying in the tomb.
- **Stole** - This important vestment, worn around the neck, shows that the priest is celebrating one of the Sacraments. It also shows that the priest has the duty to preach the Word of God.
- **Tabernacle** - A decorated, secure cupboard with an internal veil where we keep the consecrated bread.
- **Thurible** - The silver container with a lid and a long chain in which lighted charcoal and incense are placed.
- **Thurifer** - The server who holds the Thurible.
- **Vestry** - The room where the priest prepares himself for the services.