

# Glossary of Terms

**ABLUTION:** The cleaning of the chalice and paten after Communion.

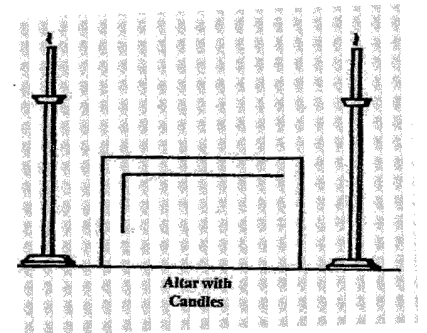
**ADVENT:** The four weeks before Christmas which represent the many centuries of waiting for the coming of Jesus. The color worn by the Celebrant is violet, a color of waiting and preparation.

**ADVENT WREATH:** A Wreath of greens arranged to hold four candles. The candles are lit on the Sundays of Advent. The candles stand for the light of Christ, which gets brighter as we approach Christmas.

**ALB:** The long white robe the Priest wears under the CHASUBLE.

**ALTAR:** The place where the sacrifice of Jesus is offered to the Father and made present to us. The Lord's table where the Eucharist is celebrated. It is treated with respect. It also represents Christ, who is the center of our Parish life.

**ALTAR CLOTH:** The white altar cloth that covers the top of the altar. It is like a tablecloth on a dining room table. It also reminds us of the cloth that was wrapped around the body of Jesus when He was buried. Other cloths used on the altar: CORPORAL, PURIFICATOR, and FINGER TOWEL.



**AMBO:** A stand or lectern where the readings are done. A church may have one or two.

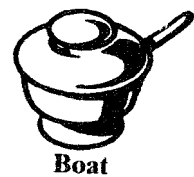
**ASCENSION:** Forty days after Easter, when we celebrate the return of Jesus to heaven.

**ASPERGES:** A Latin word which refers to the opening of Mass when water is blessed and sprinkled on the congregation. This reminds them of their Baptism, and is used on special occasions.

**ASPERGIL:** The “sprinkler”, used to bless the congregation and sacred objects with Holy Water.

**BENEDICTION:** A service of special devotion to the Eucharist. It is different from the Mass, and is used on special occasions, like after Stations of the Cross during Lent.

**BOAT:** A small container that holds the incense. It is usually carried by a BOAT-BEARER, or if one is not assigned, it is carried by the THURIFER in his left hand.



**CANDLES:** Used on the altar and are made of natural wax. They symbolize Christ as our light. Two candles on the altar symbolize the humanity and divinity of Christ.

**CANDLE BEARER:** The servers who carry candles in the procession (A1 and A2). TORCH BEARERS carry our special red glass torches during the processions at special liturgies.

**CASSOCK:** A long robe that reaches from shoulders to ankles and worn by the servers.

**CELEBRANT:** The Priest who offers the Mass.

**CELEBRANT'S CHAIR:** The chair used by the Celebrant during Mass. It is usually in back of the altar. It can also be called the **PRESIDENT'S CHAIR**. When there is another Priest **CONCELEBRATING** he usually sits next to the President's chair, as does the **DEACON**.

**CENSER:** See **THURIBLE**.

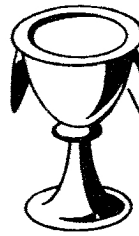
**CHALICE:** The cup used by the Celebrant when he **CONSECRATES** the wine into the Blood of Christ. It is usually made of gold or silver, but it can be made of other materials. Chalices are very expensive, and are very expensive to repair.



**Chalice**



**Purificator  
with Chalice**



**Paten  
with Chalice**



**Pall  
with Chalice**

**CHASUBLE:** A long, flowing robe that goes over the Celebrant's head. This is the vestment that people see. It comes in the colors of the Church Year.

White A sign of joy (resurrection). It is used for Christmas, Easter and Feasts of Our Lord and Mary.

Red A sign of the Holy Spirit and martyrdom.

Green A sign of hope and new life.

Purple A sign of sorrow and repentance.

Gold For solemn feasts and special celebrations such as Christmas or Christ the King.

**CIBORIUM:** A covered chalice or container used to hold the bread during Mass, and in the **TABERNACLE**. The plural of Ciborium is **CIBORIA**.

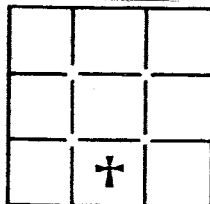
**CONCELEBRATION:** The celebration of one Holy Mass by more than one Priest. This will usually happen during **HOLY WEEK** or at **CONFIRMATION**, or on other special occasions.

**COPE:** A long cape that is worn by the Celebrant when blessing the people with the **MONSTRANCE**. It is open in front and held together with a clasp.



**Ciborium**

**CORPORAL:** From the Latin word "Corpus", meaning "Body". A square piece of white cloth which is spread over the altar cloth. It is put on the altar where the Celebrant will say Mass. The **CHALICE** and **PATEN** are placed on it.



**CREDENCE TABLE:** A place in the sanctuary where all the objects used for Mass are put before and after they are actually used.

**CRUCIFIX:** A cross with Christ crucified on it. There are many crucifixes, some of which are called **Resurrection Crosses** because they show Christ as risen from the dead. A cross is always near the altar in the sanctuary to remind us of Jesus' sacrificial love.

**CRUETS:** Covered, small containers that hold the water and wine. They have a small dish under them.

**DEACON:** Someone ordained by the BISHOP to serve the community. Deacons can read the Gospel at Mass, preach the HOMILY, prepare the bread and wine, and help with communion. They can also BAPTIZE, celebrate Marriages, and help at Funerals.

**EASTER VIGIL:** The night before Easter Sunday. This is the most important Mass of the year. Mass is said only after sunset, and includes several different ceremonies. There usually are Baptisms during the Easter Vigil Service.

**EUCHARIST:** A Greek word that means “thanksgiving”. It refers to the bread and wine that have been consecrated. It also refers to the part of the Mass where the consecration takes place, the Liturgy of the Eucharist. We give thanks that God gives us His Son in this SACRAMENT.

**EUCHARISTIC PRAYER;** The long prayer offered by the Celebrant in the name of the congregation. This prayer consecrates the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ. The Celebrant reminds us of the great things God has done for us, especially in giving us the gift of his Son. We give thanks to God, through the Celebrant, in the Eucharistic Prayer.

**GENUFLECT:** To briefly touch the right knee to the floor. This is done by anyone whenever passing in front of the TABERNACLE, as a sign of respect for the Eucharist or when the Blessed Sacrament is exposed on the altar. (Otherwise, bow to the altar when passing.)

**GOOD FRIDAY:** Two days before Easter is the celebration of the Lord’s Passion and Death. There is also VENERATION OF THE CROSS on this day. Mass is not said on Good Friday. The Service is different from Mass, but is very simple and solemn.

**HOLY THURSDAY:** Three days before Easter is the celebration of the Lord’s Supper with His Apostles. This is the night when He gave us the Eucharist. There is usually a PROCESSION following the evening Mass.

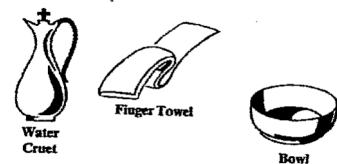
**HOMILY:** An explanation of the readings used at the Mass. This is the talk that comes after the Gospel. The homily is usually given by the Celebrant, but a Deacon may also preach.

**HOST:** The round piece of bread used for Mass. The Priest uses a larger host for everyone to see.

**HUMERAL VEIL:** A long white cloth that goes over the Celebrant’s shoulders and covers his arms. This is attached by a clasp in front. It is usually used during Benediction and in procession when the Celebrant carries the BLESSED SACRAMENT through the Church.

**INCENSE:** A mixture of leaves, bark and other natural materials which gives off a sweet-smelling smoke when burned. This smoke rises and represents our prayers rising to God. The use of incense is always optional in a parish. The Celebrant will tell the servers when it will be used.

**LAVABO:** The ceremonial cleansing of the Celebrant’s hands before the Eucharistic Prayer. The servers bring a bowl, the water CRUET, and finger towel, while the Celebrant prays for forgiveness. The term “Lavabo” is from a Latin term meaning “to wash”.



**LECTERN:** A stand used to hold the Lectionary while the lector, or reader is proclaiming the passages from the Scriptures. (Also called a pulpit).

**LECTIONARY:** The large book containing the Bible readings used at Mass. This is the book used by the Lector, and the Celebrant for the GOSPEL.

**LECTOR:** Also called the “reader”, this is the person who does most of the reading from the Lectionary. The Lector is in both the entrance and departure processions and walks between A1 and A2.

**LENT:** A period of forty days before Easter, beginning with ASH WEDNESDAY. It is a time to prepare for Easter joy by doing extra acts of charity or by giving up something we like. As in Advent, the color is violet, for preparation and penance.

**LUNETTE:** The small round glass container that holds the Sacred Host in the MONSTRANCE.

**MASS:** The principle celebration of Catholic worship. Jesus is present in the reading of the Word of God, in the bread and wine of the Eucharist, and in the worshipping community. We celebrate His presence and give thanks for His life-giving sacrifice.

**MONSTRANCE:** A large metal container used to display or show the Sacred Host. It is usually gold or silver-colored. Benediction is the ceremony when the monstrance is most often used.

**NAVE:** The large part of the church where the congregation is.

**OCTAVE:** The eight days after a major feast day, like Christmas or Easter. These feasts are too big and important for one day, so the celebration lasts all week.

**OILS:** The holy oils are blessed during Holy Week by the Bishop and the priests of the diocese. One is called OIL OF THE SICK, used for the sacrament called the ANOINTING OF THE SICK. Another is called OIL OF THE CATECHUMENS, used in Baptisms of babies and adults. The last one is called CHRISM, used in Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders.

**PALL:** A large white cloth that is spread over the casket at a funeral. It represents the white garment given by the celebrant to a baby at Baptism, just as the alb does. It is also a cloth-covered square that fits over the chalice.

**PALM SUNDAY:** See Passion Sunday.

**PASCHAL CANDLE:** A large wax candle placed in a tall holder to symbolize the light of the Risen Christ. It is blessed at the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday night. It stays in the SANCTUARY until the end of Pentecost, and is lighted during every ceremony. After PENTECOST it is placed to one side, and used during Baptisms and Funerals.

**PASSION SUNDAY:** The Sunday before Easter, also called Palm Sunday. Palms are given out at Mass, but the important action of the day is the reading of the story of the PASSION AND DEATH OF JESUS.

**PATEN:** A round metal plate that holds the host used by the Celebrant during Mass.

**PENTECOST:** Fifty days after Easter. This is the celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit to the Apostles. It is also called the Birthday of the Church.

**PRESIDENTIAL CHAIR:** The central or main chair, used by the Celebrant during Mass. Also called the Celebrant's Chair.

**PROCESSION:** A solemn way to walk through or around the church. When the servers walk down the aisle at the beginning of Mass with the Celebrant, they are **PROCESSING** in. When the Mass is over, they **PROCESS** out.

**PROCESSIONAL CROSS:** Usually a crucifix but can also be a simple or elaborate cross on a long pole which is held high to lead in a procession to the Church at the beginning and end of Mass, or another liturgical service.

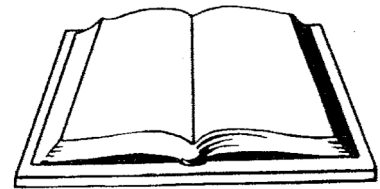
**PULPIT:** The place where the Gospel is proclaimed and where the Homily is given. It is a permanent place. At St. Michael's, the pulpit is also used as the lectern.

**PURIFICATOR:** A small white cloth used to clean the Chalice and Paten after Communion.

**PYX:** A small container used to bring Communion to the sick and housebound. A few are kept in the sacristy for the use of the priests and Eucharistic Ministers.

**RITUAL:** The ceremonies that express and strengthen the faith that we have in our hearts. This word also refers to the books that contain these ceremonies.

**ROMAN MISSAL:** The large book that contains all the prayers said by the Celebrant at Mass. It is the book held by the server at the beginning and end of Mass. It is placed on the Altar for the Eucharistic Prayer.



Roman Missal

**SACRARIUM:** A special sink in the sacristy where the water goes directly to the ground, and not into the sewer system. This sink is used for purifying the ciboria and is not to be used for anything else.

**SACRISTY:** The room in the church where the Celebrant prepares for Mass. Most of the objects used for Mass are kept in this room. The servers usually have a sacristy of their own.

**SANCTUARY:** The area around the altar.

**SANCTUARY CANDLE:** The candle or candles burning in the sanctuary to show the presence of the Eucharist. This shows the presence of Christ, the light of the world, in the church. It also represents our watchfulness before Christ.

**SERVER:** Someone who helps and assists the Celebrant during a ceremony. It is a great honor to help the Celebrant during these times, as the Server is directly involved in the worship service.

**STOLE:** A long band of cloth worn during ceremonies by a Bishop, priest or deacon. It is a symbol of the sacrament of Holy Orders. A Deacon wears the stole over his left shoulder. Priests and Bishops wear their stoles over both shoulders.



Deacon in Alb and Stole



Priest in Alb and Stole

**TABERNACLE:** The place where the **HOLY EUCHARIST** is kept during the week. St. Michael's has a special chapel behind the back wall of the sanctuary where the tabernacle is found. When in the small chapel, all individuals

GENUFLECT (right knee touches the floor) to the BLESSED SACRAMENT in the tabernacle. In the church itself, it is proper to either genuflect or bow low to honor the Body and Blood of Jesus in the tabernacle.

THURIBLE: The metal container that holds the hot charcoal for the incense. This is carried and in certain circumstances swung by the THURIFER. It can also be called a CENSOR.

TRIDUUM: Any religious devotion that lasts for three days; but it is primarily used for the EASTER TRIDUUM of Holy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday.

VESTMENTS: The special clothes that the priest wears at mass all have symbolic meaning. Some of the vestments remind us of the robes that the Romans wore or the capes of the men at the time of Jesus. See the following: ALB, CHASUBLE, STOLE and COPE.

