

ALTAR SERVER SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Prayers Before and After Mass

The following prayers should be prayed before and after serving at Mass. They are posted in the Sacristy and can be prayed while vesting.

Altar Server's Prayer Before Mass

Open my mouth, O Lord, to bless your Holy Name. Cleanse my heart from all evil and distracting thoughts. Enlighten my understanding and inflame my will that I may serve worthily at Your Holy Altar.

O Mary, Mother of Christ, obtain for me the most important grace of knowing my vocation in life. Grant me a true spirit of faith and humble obedience so that I may ever behold the Priest as a representative of God and willingly follow him in the Way, the Truth, and the Life of Christ. Amen.

Altar Server's Prayer After Mass

O Lord, Jesus Christ, Eternal High Priest, I thank You for the privilege of having served at the Holy Altar of Your Sacrifice.

Now, as I put aside the garments of that service, I ask that I may at all times think of You. May I ever seek You and find You; may I always follow You; may Your priestly spirit be in my heart and Your Holy Name on my lips; and to Your praise and glory may every work of mine be done.

Ever ready in Your service, may I always know and do Your will in all things and, by Your grace, persevere unto the end. Amen

Liturgical Colors

The liturgical seasons are there to help us change, grow and become more mature as followers of Jesus Christ. One of the clearest signs of these seasons is the changing liturgical colors. With each change of season, the Church changes the color of vestments as a visible sign of our need to change and grow.

White: The symbol of celebration and triumph, purity and innocence. It is used on all feasts of the joyful and glorious mysteries of Our Lord's life and during Christmas Time and Easter Time; on the celebrations of the Blessed Virgin Mary, of the Holy Angels and of Saints who were not martyrs. White is also used on the Solemnities of the Most Holy Trinity (Sunday after Pentecost) and All Saints (11/1); on the Nativity of St. John the Baptist (6/24) and the Feasts of the Conversion of St. Paul (1/25) and of the Chair of St. Peter (2/22). White may be worn at funerals to celebrate the life of the deceased and pray for their triumphal acceptance into heaven.

Red: The symbol of sacrifice because it is the color of blood. It is used on all celebrations of Our Lord's Cross and Passion – Palm Sunday and Good Friday; on the feasts of the birthdays of Apostles and Evangelists; and celebrations of all Martyred Saints. It is also the color of fire and a symbol of the Holy Spirit when it is used on Pentecost and in Masses of the Holy Spirit, in memory of the tongues of fire of the first Pentecost.

Violet: The symbol of penance and waiting. It is used during the penitential season of Lent, during the season of Advent, and on days of fast. It reminds us of preparation. It may also be worn during funerals to show mourning.

Rose: The symbol of subdued joy. It is authorized only on the 3rd Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday) and on the Fourth Sunday of Lent (Laetare Sunday) as an alternative to violet.

Green: The symbol of hope and growth. It is the color of budding and living vegetation. It is used during Ordinary Time, to show that our common state is one of growing in our relationship with God, longing and hoping for eternal life.

Black: The symbol of mourning and death, it may be used at funerals or a day of commemorating the dead or great loss of life (e.g. All Soul's Day).

Gold/Silver: Gold or silver may be worn on more solemn occasions.

GLOSSARY

Alb - a long, white garment worn by Altar Servers, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion and is the inner vestment worn by the Priest and Deacon. It is a reminder of the baptismal garment worn when the new Christian "puts on Christ." From the Latin word meaning "white."

Altar - the "table" upon which the sacrifice of Christ on the cross is made present under sacramental signs in the Mass. The altar represents two aspects of the mystery of the Eucharist, as the altar of sacrifice where Christ as the sacrificial victim offers himself to God the Father for our sins and as the table of the Lord where Christ gives himself to us as food from heaven

Ambo - looks like a podium and is from where the readings and homily are proclaimed.

Amen - a Hebrew word meaning "truly; it is so; let it be done," signifying agreement with what has been said. The prayers of the New Testament and of the Church's liturgy, and the Creeds, conclude with "amen."

Aspergillum – an instrument used for sprinkling holy water; ordinarily made of metal or straw.

Blessed Sacrament - a name given to the Holy Eucharist, especially the consecrated elements reserved in the tabernacle for adoration, or for the sick.

Boat - lidded vessel with spoon that holds incense that is scooped into the thurible.

Book of the Gospels - the book which contains the Gospel texts, from which the priests or deacon proclaims the Gospel of the day.

Candle Lighter - Tool with adjustable wick used to light and snuff candle flames.

Cantor – a person who leads the singing during the liturgy.

Celebrant - the priest who presides over the assembly and consecrates the Eucharist.

Chalice (CHAL-is) - the large cup used to hold the wine that becomes the Precious Blood of Christ. It is made of durable material and comes in various shapes and sizes.

Chasuble (CHAZ-uh-buhl) - the sleeveless, outer garment that when slipped over the head, hangs down from the shoulder covering the alb and stole of the priest. It is worn by the main celebrant and its color varies according to the feast.

Chrism – a perfumed oil, consecrated by the bishop, which signifies the gift of the Holy Spirit. Chrism is used for consecration in the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders.

Ciborium (si-BORE-ee-um) - a vessel used to hold the Hosts which will be used for communion; some are cup-like and others are bowl/plate like; they are also used to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle. Plural = Ciboria

Cincture (SINGK-sure) - a long white cord used for fastening albs at the waist; it tied on the right side.

Communion Cups - when the people receive Christ's blood at communion, they drink from this chalice-like vessel. These cups are kept on the Credence Table and brought to the Altar during the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Confiteor – (Cohn-FEE-tee-ohr) – at Mass, the confession of sins. From the Latin “I confess.”

Concluding Rite - the brief rite at the conclusion of Mass which consists of the celebrant's greeting to all present, final blessing and dismissal.

Corporal - large white linen cloth, usually with a cross in the center of it, unfolded on the altar to collect any particles or drops of Jesus' Body or Precious Blood. The words of consecration are spoken with the bread and wine sitting on the corporal. From the Latin meaning “body.”

Credence Table – the table to the right of the Sanctuary where the chalice, pall, corporals, pyx, ciboria, tray of communion cups, purificators, small water pitcher, bowl and towel are placed.

Cruet – a glass container with stop for holding wine and water.

Dalmatic (dahl-MAT-ik) - a loose-fitting robe with open sides and wide sleeves worn by a deacon on more solemn feasts; it takes its color from the liturgical feast.

Deacon - a third degree of the hierarchy of the Sacrament of Holy Orders, after bishop and priest. The deacon is ordained not to priesthood but for ministry and service. Deacons assist the bishop and priests in the celebration of the divine mysteries, above all the Eucharist, in the distribution of Holy Communion, in assisting at and blessing marriages, in the proclamation of the Gospel and preaching, in presiding over funerals, and in dedicating themselves to the various ministries of charity.

Eucharist - the central sacrament of the church; instituted by Jesus at the last supper; characterized by the transubstantiation (change) of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ; from the Greek word for thanksgiving.

Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion – Ministers who assist the Ordinary Minister (Priest/Deacon) with the distribution of Communion.

Eucharistic Prayer - the prayer of praise, thanksgiving and consecration that is said or sung during the Mass. It is the center of the celebration. During this Prayer, the gifts of bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus.

Great Amen - the acclamation by the people expressing their agreement with all that has been said and done in the Eucharistic prayer.

Gloria – an ancient hymn of praise in which the Church glorifies God. It is used on all Sundays, except for those during Advent and Lent, and at solemn celebrations. The text originates from the Christmas narrative in the Gospel of Luke (2:14 - "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.")

Grace - the free and undeserved gift that God gives us to respond to our vocation to become his adopted children. As sanctifying grace, God shares his divine life and friendship with us in a habitual gift, a stable and supernatural disposition that enables the soul to live with God, to act by his love. As actual grace, God gives us the help to conform our lives to his will. Sacramental grace and special graces are gifts of the Holy Spirit to help us live out our Christian vocation

Greeting - the celebrant greets all present at the liturgy, invoking the presence of the Lord to the assembled community

Holy Days of Obligation - feast days on which, in addition to Sundays, Catholics are obliged by Church law to participate in the Mass.

Holy Water - blessed water, a sacramental whose sprinkling or use is a reminder of Baptism and a means of sanctification.

Holy Water Vessel - a glass or brass bucket-shaped container of Holy Water, used with an aspergillum for blessing people and objects.

Incense - material used to produce a fragrant odor when burned and used as a symbol of the Church's offering and prayer going up to God. Used on major feast days and for funerals, it symbolizes communication with God. The image of smoke rising to the heavens in combination with the fragrance it emits, invoke a connection with the divine.

Intercessions - a form of prayer of petition on behalf of others (e.g. the Church, the world, the Pope, clergy, laity and the dead).

Lavabo Items - bowl, small pitcher of water and a small towel used for washing and drying the Priest's hands.

Lectionary - the official, liturgical book from which the reader proclaims the Scripture readings used in the Liturgy of the Word.

Liturgy - in its original meaning, a "public work" or service done in the name of or on behalf of the people. Through the liturgy, Christ our High Priest continues the work of our redemption through the Church's celebration of the Paschal Mystery by which he accomplished our salvation.

Liturgy of the Word - the occasion during Mass when readings from the Scriptures are proclaimed and reflected upon.

Liturgy of the Eucharist - the section of the celebration when the gifts of bread and wine are prepared and the Eucharistic Prayer is proclaimed by the celebrant, and the Blessed Sacrament is distributed to the assembly.

Mass - the Eucharist or principal sacramental celebration of the Church, established by Jesus at the Last Supper, in which the mystery of our salvation through participation in the sacrificial death and glorious resurrection of Christ is renewed and accomplished. The Mass renews the paschal sacrifice of Christ as the sacrifice offered by the Church. Originates from the Latin (*missa*) because of the "mission" or "sending" with which the liturgical celebration concludes.

Missal – book used by the celebrant at Mass, containing all the prayers for the liturgy of the Mass, including the opening prayer, prayer over the gifts, prayer after communion, solemn blessings, Eucharistic prayers and prefaces for all of the Masses, including special occasions.

Monstrance - large, ornate vessel to hold the Blessed Sacrament for processions, Benediction and Perpetual Adoration.

Pall - A sacred covering. Most commonly, a stiff square cardboard covered with lined, spread over the top of the chalice at Mass.

Paschal Mystery - Christ's work of redemption accomplished principally by his Passion, death, Resurrection, and glorious Ascension. The Paschal Mystery is celebrated and made present in the liturgy of the Church, and its saving effects are communicated through the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, which renews the paschal sacrifice of Christ as the sacrifice offered by the Church.

Paten (PAT-en) - a saucer-like disk that holds the bread that becomes the Body of Christ.

Penitential Act - a general acknowledgement of sinfulness by the entire assembly, accompanied by requests for God's mercy and forgiveness.

Prayer after Communion - The final prayer by the celebrant in which he petitions that the sacrament be beneficial for all.

Prayer over the Gifts - The prayer by the celebrant asking that the gifts to be offered be made holy and acceptable.

Preface Dialogue - the introductory dialogue between the celebrant and assembly in which all are invited to join in prayer and thanksgiving to God.

Preparation of the Gifts - the time in the Mass when the bread and wine to be used in the celebration are brought to the celebrant, usually by representatives of the faithful.

Procession - The orderly moving of ministers or assembly. Takes place at beginning and end of the Mass, the gift procession and the communion procession.

Profession of Faith - the assembly joins to recall and proclaim the fundamental teachings of the Roman Catholic faith. The Profession of Faith is also called the Creed.

Purgatory - a state of final purification after death and before entrance into heaven for those who died in God's friendship, but were only imperfectly purified; a final cleansing of human imperfection before one is able to enter the joy of heaven.

Purificator - a white cloth used to wipe the chalice and communion cups after each communicant receives the Precious Blood; used to cleanse the chalice after communion.

Pyx - a container in which a consecrated Sacred Host is kept and can be carried to the sick. Pronounced "Pix".

Reader - one who is called upon to proclaim the scriptures during the Liturgy of the Word. A reader may also read the prayers of the faithful at Mass, in the absence of a deacon.

Responsorial Psalm - the psalm that is spoken or sung between the first and second readings. The response is repeated after each verse.

Sacrifice - a ritual offering made to God by a priest on behalf of the people, as a sign of adoration, gratitude, supplication, and communion. The perfect sacrifice was Christ's death on the cross; by this sacrifice, Christ accomplished our redemption as high priest of the new and eternal covenant. The sacrifice of Christ on the cross is commemorated and mysteriously made present in the Eucharistic sacrifice of the Church.

Sacrament: - an efficacious sign of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us through the work of the Holy Spirit. The sacraments are seven in number: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance or Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony.

Sacrarium - located in the working sacristy, a special sink where linens and vessels are washed.

Sanctuary - the raised area where the altar is located and is set apart for the principle rites of worship. Means "holy place."

Sign of Peace - before sharing the Body of Christ, members of the community are invited to express their love and peace with one another.

Sign of the Cross - a sign, ceremonial gesture or movement in the form of a cross by which a person confesses faith in the Holy Trinity and Christ, and intercedes for the blessing of himself, other persons, and things.

Stole - a long, cloth scarf that marks the Office of the priest or deacon according to the manner in which it is worn. A priest wears it around the neck, letting it hang down in front. A deacon wears it over his left shoulder, fastening it at his right side.

Tabernacle - the receptacle in the church in which the consecrated Eucharist is reserved for Communion for the sick and dying. Reservation of the Eucharist in the tabernacle lends itself to private devotional visits and adoration of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament by the faithful.

Transubstantiation - the scholastic term used to designate the unique change of the Eucharistic bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ. "Transubstantiation" indicates that through the consecration of the bread and the wine there occurs the change of the entire substance of the bread into the substance of the Body of Christ, and of the entire substance of the wine into the Blood of Christ--even though the appearances or "species" of bread and wine remain.

Veneration of the Altar - the reverencing of the altar with a kiss or bow and the optional use of incense.

Vest - to get dressed in an alb and other liturgical clothing.

Vesting Sacristy - where the priest, deacon, altar servers, and extraordinary ministers vest.

Washing of Hands - an outward expression of the desire for inward purification. The celebrant washes his hands in symbolic cleansing to prepare himself just as the gifts have been prepared as an offering to the Lord.

Working Sacristy - where vessels used for Mass are stored and prepared for Mass by the Sacristan.