

A Brief Dictionary of Liturgical Terms for Altar Guilds

- Alb:** The white vestment, worn over the Cassock, by the Celebrant.
- Amice:** A removable linen collar worn with an Alb.
- Basin:** A large plate used to receive the offering plates.
- Burse:** A liturgical “purse,” used for the storage of Communion linens, made from fabric of the appropriate liturgical color and embellished to match the veil.
- Cassock:** The close-fitting, black vestment worn by the Pastor.
- Cerecloth or Cere Linen:** A waxed linen cover placed under the Fair Linen.
- Chalice:** A large stemmed, footed goblet made of precious metal.
- Chancel:** The area of the church located in the liturgical east end, marked by the chancel rail.
- Chasuble:** The ornate, “poncho” like vestment worn by the Celebrant, matching the stole, maniple, and paraments.
- Chrism:** Oil blessed for liturgical use.
- Chrisom:** The baptismal cloth “vestment” presented to the newly baptized.
- Ciborium:** A large stemmed, footed, covered vessel made of precious metal used for the Host.
- Cincture:** The rope or cloth “belt” worn with the Alb or Cassock.
- Close Communion:** The Biblical, Apostolic practice of receiving Holy Communion with only those who publicly confess what we publicly confess.
- Consecration:** The act of a Called and Ordained Pastor speaking the Words of Institution (*Verba Domini*) over the bread and the wine.
- Cope:** The large, ornamental “cape” worn by the President.
- Corporal:** A large square of fine linen, with a cross embroidered in its center, upon which the vessels are placed, and upon which all consecrated elements remain until the Dismissal.
- Credence Table:** A small table to the side of the altar.
- Cruet:** A small, crystal or glass decanter with stopper.

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Dalmatic: The “poncho” like ornamental vestment worn by the Deacon, usually marked by two vertical and two horizontal orphreys.

Dismissal: The act of the Called and Ordained Pastor dismissing the communicants from the Communion rail, ending the Distribution. (“...depart ✠in peace.”)

Distribution: The distribution of the Body and Blood of Christ to the communicants.

Elements: The Bread and Wine used in Holy Communion.

Ewer: The “pitcher” used with the Baptismal font.

Fair Linen: The white linen that covers the altar, adorned with white crosses.

Flagon: A covered vessel made of precious metal that resembles a pitcher.

Gradine: The “shelf” at the back of the altar.

Host: A portion of the Communion Bread.

Celebrant’s Host: (or Presentation Host) The large Host used by the Celebrant in the Consecration.

Lavabo: The rite of hand-washing by the Celebrant during the Mass.

Maniple: The ornamental “towel” the Pastor wears on his left arm, which matches the stole, chasuble, and paraments.

Mensa: The “table” top of the altar.

Missal Stand: The stand that holds the Missal, the altar book.

Nave: The part of the church where the members sit.

Orphrey: A band of silk or fine linen used to adorn a chasuble, dalmatic or tunicle.

Pall: A stiffened square of fine linen that is placed over the Paten.

Pall: The cover placed over the casket at a Christian funeral.

Paraments: Fine linens used to cover and adorn the altar, the pulpit and the lectern, of the appropriate liturgical color and embellished to match one another.

Paschal Candle: The large decorative candle lit first at Vigil, which burns continually until the Feast of the Ascension of our Lord.

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- Paten:** A small plate made of precious metal on which the Host is placed.
- Piscina:** A special “sink” for the disposal of consecrated elements and baptismal water.
- Purificator:** A liturgical napkin, fashioned from fine linen, with a cross embroidered in its center.
- Pyx:** A small, lidded round box in which the Host are kept.
- Reredos:** The ornamental screen over/behind the altar.
- Riddels:** Liturgical “curtains” used at each side of the altar.
- Sacrarium:** A special “sink” for the disposal of consecrated elements and baptismal water.
- Sacristy:** The room used for the preparation of the elements for Holy Communion.
- Sanctuary:** The part of the church where the altar is.
- Sedilia:** The chairs in the sanctuary used by the Pastor and Service Assistants.
- Stole:** The colored “scarf” worn by an ordained Pastor, matching the other vestments and paraments in the liturgical color appropriate to the day.
- Surplice:** A large, flowing white vestment worn over the Cassock.
- Tabernacle:** The special receptacle for consecrated elements held against the next Mass.
- Tunicle:** The “poncho” like ornamental vestment worn by the Subdeacon, usually marked by two vertical and one horizontal orphrey.
- Veil:** A liturgical cover used for the Communion vessels and elements, made from fabric of the appropriate liturgical color and embellished to match the Burse. Also the action of using a piece of fine linen to mark consecrated Elements.
- Vestry:** The room used by the Pastor and Service assistants for vesting.