

A Guide for



Sacristan / Coordinator

**Diocese of Prince Albert
Liturgy Office**



(2017)



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All quotations in this booklet have been taken from the book "Guide for Sacristans: Second Edition" by Corinna Laughlin and Paul Turner.

Being a Sacristan

“You prepare everything in a timely way for the variety of ministers and for the members of the assembly who will worship together at this service.”

“The Coordinator is the person who does the legwork to help other people worship. If Eucharist is going to be celebrated, somebody has to prepare it.”

“The Coordinator prepares the “things necessary” for the celebration of the liturgy: the books, the vestments, the vessels, the bread, and the wine.”

“All the activity with vessels, vestments, books, bread and wine takes place inside a building we call a church because the people who gather there are the Church. Sacristans know their way around the building – and also around the people.”

“Today a sacristy can be a lively room where several ministers gather before and after the service. But the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (GIRM) has requested that silence be observed in the sacristy as much as possible before Mass begins. For the sake of maintaining order and a proper spirit for worship, it helps if someone is designated as the sacristan.”

“Most often, the sacristan’s work is done before the liturgy begins.”



*“The Sacristan,...
diligently arranges
the liturgical books,
the vestments and
other things that are
necessary in the
celebration of Mass.”
(GIRM #105 a)*

Things found in a Sacristy and Why!

Vessels include:

- * *Chalice* / *other Cups* (for the assembly to share wine)
- * *Pitchers* / *Carafes* (to carry wine up at Preparation of Gifts)
- * *Cruets* (mingling of water with wine)
- * *Basins* (washing of hands)
- * *Patens* / *Ciboria* (used for Communion)
- * *Monstrance* (used for Adoration)

Vestments include:

- * *Chasubles* (worn for celebrating the Eucharist)
- * *Stole* (often matches the color of the chasuble)
- * *Dalmatic* (if there is a Deacon)
- * *Diaconal stoles* (these are worn over left shoulder and across the chest)
- * *Cope* (a mantle or cape that clasps at the neck)
- * *Alb* (baptismal garment worn by any baptized person)
- * *Humeral Veils* (for Solemn Exposition / Eucharistic processions)

(How you store these vestments depends on your sacristy, the best way is lying flat in a large drawer, otherwise investing in quality vestment hangers help keep vestments looking nice!)

Linens include:

- **Altar coverings* (various colors, however the main altar cloth must be white / something like a table cloth)
- **Corporals* (smaller cloth / something like a placemat, used when setting the altar for Eucharist, always white)
- **Purificators* (used to wipe Chalice)
- **Hand towels* (for washing of the hands / Baptisms / etc)

(The parish is not limited to what kind of fabric is used for the altar cloth or other linens, only that the main altar cloth is white). The liturgical linens should be set aside and not used for other purposes and should be “signs of reverence.” It would not be reverent to have anything cheap, artificial, stained or ragged. Polyester does not clean well.)

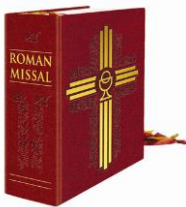
Sacrarium:

*This sink has a special drain that empties directly into the earth, not the sewer system (used when vessels are rinsed and cleaned / etc. This sink is not used for washing hands or regular use.)

Ritual Books include:

- **Roman Missal* (include prayer for every Eucharist celebrated)
- **Lectionary* (contains the readings for the day, there are different Lectionaries for different celebration!)

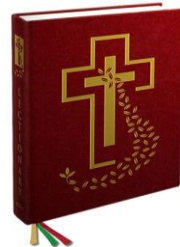
Roman Missal



Ordo 2017



Sunday Lectionary



(Have the *Ordo*, *Liturgical Calendar* on hand! This book helps to mark the pages in both these other books)

*Other Ritual Books (the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, the *Order of Christian Funerals*, the *Rite of Marriage*, the *Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum*, the *Book of Blessings*, the *Sunday Celebration of the Word and Hours*, the *Rite of Confirmation*, etc.)

Candles:

**Processional candles* (also held at the Gospel)

**Altar candles* (these are lit when we celebrate Eucharist)

“The sacristy usually houses a variety of candles. Candles are a sign of the presence of the risen Christ in our midst... Many of the rites of the Church feature candles. A lit candle is presented to the newly baptized, a symbol of the light of Christ, and at funerals, the lighting of the Paschal candle is a reminder of the Resurrection...”

Incense:

**Thurible* (*holds the incense*)

**Incense* (used to incense sacred things)

“With all the options available for incense, it is hard to know what kind of incense to use. In general – all-natural products are best.”

Maintenance & Housekeeping:

“In addition to all the items used for the Mass itself, many other items are needed in a well-supplied sacristy. A good quantity of soft cloths should be on hand for the washing, drying, and polishing of the various vessels. A supply of rags should be handy for heavy-duty cleaning jobs. The sacristy will also need a range of other cleaning supplies. Metal polish, wood polish, and wax remover for the various surfaces; a gentle dishwashing soap for the sacred vessels; an iron and ironing board, spray starch and stain remover for the linens, a sewing kit for basic repairs to albs and other vestments.”

The following outline is very general and different factors will depend on the size of your parish and how the ministry duties are split up. Please check in your own parish for more detailed instructions.

**Simple guide to prepare for a
Eucharistic Celebration**

Roman Missal: (Use the Ordo)

*see that it is set for the correct Sunday – red ribbon

*Preface – set for the season

Lectionary: (use the Ordo)

*set for correct Sunday – all ribbons

Prepare the tray for the Credence Table:

*Water Bowl of tepid water

*Hand towel

*Chalice covered with folded purificator, pall, folded corporal

*Second Chalice with purificator folded inside

*Small Ciborium (empty – if needed)

*Cruet with water

Preparation of gifts for the Welcome Table:

*Fill wine Cruet and set on table before Mass

*In order to have a more accurate number of hosts per celebration: place Ciborium, white bowl and spoon with hosts on table before people arrive so they may transfer hosts into the Ciborium)

*Count people after Mass begins and adjust number of hosts in Ciborium, be sure to have a few extra to take to the sick.

*Place large host in Ciborium once all hosts have been added

“It is most desirable that the faithful, just as the Priest himself is bound to do, receive the Lord’s Body from hosts consecrated at the same Mass and that, in the cases where this is foreseen, they partake of the chalice (cf. no. 283), so that even by means of the signs Communion may stand out more clearly as a participation in the sacrifice actually being celebrated.

(GIRM #85)

*About 5 minutes before Mass is to begin, light the Altar Candle(s) if that is the custom of your parish.

*Make sure the Roman Missal is in place, and that Father has a copy of the Universal Prayer / Prayer of the Faithful.

After Mass

Clean Up and Put Away:

*Servers extinguish their candles and hang up their vestments

*Eucharistic Ministers or Sacristan brings the tray of vessels to the sacristy and proceed to clean and put away all vessels

*It is good to remember to place a cloth between the Chalice and the paten if they are kept together to prevent the gold from wearing off

*Remove battery from the lapel mike and place separately in the cupboard

*Lock cupboard doors, put key away

*Extinguish Altar Candles, turn off ceiling fans, turn off all lights

Purification and Cleaning Vessels

*Ciborium and chalices may be purified by the Eucharistic Ministers before being brought to the Sacristy for cleaning

*The ciborium is wiped with the purificator putting any particles into a chalice, a small amount of water is poured into the chalice, swished around, then consumed by the minister, and the chalice gently wiped with the purificator

*The purificator is then placed so it can be laundered

*The chalices are rinsed with warm soapy water (do not submerge) and gently dried with a soft towel (rubbing hard and using harsh towels will scratch the gold)



Glossary

Alb: A long, white garment, worn by priests, deacons, and by lay ministers as well. It is a reminder of the white garment given in Baptism.

Ambry: The place where the oil of catechumens, the oil of the sick, and the sacred chrism are kept.

Amice: A square, white cloth which is tied around the neck to cover the collar; used when the alb does not cover the collar completely.

Aspergillum: An instrument used for the sprinkling of holy water; a live branch can also be used as an aspergillum.

Chalice: A cup used to hold the Precious Blood during Mass.

Chasuble: The priestly vestment worn only for the celebration of Mass.

Ciborium: A covered vessel used to hold consecrated hosts/bread.

Cincture: A belt, usually white, which is sometimes used with an alb.

Cope: A cape-like vestment worn by a priest or deacon for liturgies outside Mass, like the Liturgy of the Hours; also worn for processions on Palm Sunday and the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (*Corpus Christi*).

Corporal: A square, white cloth placed over the altar cloth on which the chalice and paten are placed at the Presentation and Preparation of the Gifts.

Credence Table: A table, usually located in the sanctuary, where the vessels and other necessary items are placed for the celebration of Mass.

Dalmatic: A vestment that may be worn by the deacon for the celebration of Mass.

Font: A vessel containing holy water used for the celebration of the sacrament of Baptism.

Frontal: A cloth that hangs down the front of an altar, often in the liturgical color, also known as an antependium.

Humeral Veil: A cloth placed around the shoulders of a priest or deacon when he carries the Blessed Sacrament, whether in procession or for benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

Lavabo: A pitcher and basin used for the washing of the priest's hands during Mass.

Lectionary: One of the indispensable liturgical books of the Mass, it contains the readings for Sundays and weekdays for the entire liturgical year. (**In Canada we also have a lectionary for Ritual and Votive Masses)

Monstrance: A transparent vessel in which a consecrated host is to be placed so as to be seen by the faithful.

Nave: The main body of a church, so called from its imagined resemblance to a ship.

Offertory Table: A small table, usually located in the nave, where the gifts of bread and wine are placed to be brought forward in procession by members of the assembly.

Ordo: A book, published locally or regionally, giving detailed information about each day of the liturgical year.

Pall: At funerals, a large cloth, usually white, which is placed over the coffin as a reminder of Baptism. Pall is also the name for a square of fabric sometimes used to cover the chalice and paten on the credence table before the liturgy.

Paten: A small plate used by the priest to hold the hosts. Ciboria are generally used for the distribution of Holy Communion.

Purificator: A small cloth, usually white, used to wipe the rim of the cup during the Communion Rite at Mass.

Pyx: A small container, usually of metal, used for holding consecrated hosts.

The Roman Missal: One of the most important liturgical books used during Mass, it contains all the prayers the priest will need during Mass.

Sacrarium: A special sink installed in a sacristy for the cleaning of sacred vessels. It drains directly into the earth, not into the sewer.

Sanctuary: That area of the church building that contains the altar, ambo, and presidential chair.

Sanctuary Lamp: A candle or oil lamp that both indicates and gives honor to the presence of the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle of a church building.

Stole: A narrow strip of fabric worn by ordained ministers with liturgical vestments. Priests wear the stole around the neck, hanging down in front. Deacons wear it over the left shoulder, across the chest, and pinned at the right side.

Tabernacle: A large, permanent container for the consecrated hosts reserved in a church building.

Vestments: The special garments worn by the ministers of the liturgy.

*This glossary section was taken from the book
‘Guide for Sacristans: Second Edition’
by Laughlin & Turner,
For more Glossary definitions please check out the book!

Thank you for your service at the Eucharist.



For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was handed over, took bread, and, after he had given thanks, broke it and said, “This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26