

Be In The Know: Liturgical Terms

Adoration: Adoring Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament can take on many forms. Simply: stopping in church to pray before the tabernacle. Or, can be an hour of Eucharistic Adoration in silence or as a part of a prayer service.

Ambo: Podium in the sanctuary where Scripture is proclaimed.

Book of the Chair: This book is kept on the small table next between the Presider and Deacon's Chair.

Book of the Gospel: This book contains the Gospel readings (taken from the Lectionary). It is usually carried in the entrance procession by the deacon when there is one present. It is placed on the altar and carried to the ambo at the Gospel reading.

Cantor: Song leader.

Censer: Vessel from which incense is burned; see thurible.

Chalice: Sacred vessel which holds the precious blood of Christ.

Ciborium: Sacred vessel which holds the precious body of Christ.

Corporal: White cloth placed on top of the altar cloth to catch any particles of the precious body or drops of the precious blood.

Eucharist: Means thanksgiving.

Extraordinary Eucharistic Minister: Lay person who assists the priest and/or deacon in the distribution of communion. The priest/deacon are the Ordinary Eucharistic Ministers.

Genuflect: The action of kneeling on the right knee, facing the tabernacle, while making the sign of the cross.

Host Plate: Shallow bowl which hosts the precious body of Christ used for distribution of communion.

Incense Boat: Small vessel which holds the incense.

Intercessions or Petitions: prayers seeking God's assistance

Intinction: The act of dipping the precious body into the precious blood to receive communion. This is not done at St. Theresa.

Lavabo: A small bowl used to cleanse the hands of the priest prior to consecration.

Lectionary: This book contains all the Scripture readings for mass and is placed on the ambo from which the readings are done.

Lectern: The podium/stand from where the cantor introduces and leads songs and hymns. The responsorial psalm, since it is scriptural, is sung from the ambo.

Luna: The center of the Monstrance which holds the Blessed Sacrament. The Luna is removed from the monstrance and retained in the tabernacle.

Roman Missal: A large and heavy book that contains all the words and prayers the priest uses during the mass, except the readings.

Monstrance: A liturgical vessel used to display the Real Presence of our Lord Jesus Christ in the form of the Sacred Host for its adoration and veneration.

Pall: Square, stiff cloth placed over the chalice and ciborium before the bread and wine have been consecrated.

Paten: A small, shallow, saucer-shaped plate made of precious metal that is used during Mass to hold the consecrated Host and the bread offered to God.

Petitions or Intercessions: Also known as prayers of the faithful; requests to God for assistance.

Purificator: White cloth used by eucharistic ministers to wipe the edge of the chalice after each communicant receives the precious blood.

Pyx: Small vessel which holds the precious body of Christ; used to transport to a homebound or hospitalized parishioner.

Sacristan: This ministry prepares the sanctuary for Mass. This includes preparing vessels needed, unconsecrated hosts, purificators, etc.

Sacristy: Room(s) for preparation of Mass. At St Theresa, we have a vesting sacristy (back of the church, east side) where the priest, deacon and altar servers dress in their liturgical garments. The working sacristy (behind the choir) contains vessels and other supplies for Mass.

Sanctuary: The elevated area where the altar, tabernacle, ambo, presider's chair are located.

Sanctuary Candle: This candle, in a red glass globe, is positioned near the tabernacle and, when lit, makes known that Jesus is present. The candle is perpetually light; except after Holy Thursday Mass when the consecrated hosts are removed to the altar of repose. The candle is relit when the sacred hosts are returned to the tabernacle.

Species: The physical properties of bread and wine after they are consecrated during the Eucharist, such as their size, weight, taste, and texture. These properties remain the same after transubstantiation, but they are considered appearances because they lack the substance that was previously in the bread and wine.

Tabernacle: Repository/box or cabinet that holds the Eucharist, which is the body of Christ. The word "tabernacle" means "dwelling place" and comes from the Old Testament tent where the Israelites kept the Ark of the Covenant.

Thurible: Metal censer in which incense is burned during religious services. The thurible is suspended from chains and is gently swung by the priest or thurifer in order to spread the fragrant smoke of the incense.

Thurifer: The person, other than the priest, who carries the thurible.