

Catechism on the Liturgy II, 1

Ablutions

Liturgical actions that consist in washing one's body or part of it. They occur at Baptism, the *Mandatum* (washing of the feet of the faithful on Holy Thursday), and at Mass after communion. The water and wine drunk by the priest after communion is called the ablu-tion. The word is from the Latin *abluere*, "to wash away."

Ablution Cup

A small glass jar with a semi-precious metal lid, kept near the taberna- cle on the gradine of the altar. It is used for a priest who has helped distribute Holy Communion to purify his fingers which have come in contact with the Blessed Sacrament. A small finger towel is placed next to this cup to dry the fin- gers.

Acolyte

One of the Minor Orders, it is the conferral of the privilege of serving the Mass, in any function, whether as a thurifer or Master of Ceremonies. The word is from the Greek *akolouthos*, mean- ing "a follower."

Adoration

Reverences, postures, prayers, sacrifices performed by mind, body and will, recognizing God alone, as the Su- preme Being, from whom all blessings come. The word is from the Latin *ad + orare* "to speak to."

Altar

From the Latin word *altare* meaning "high." Masses were celebrated on the stone lids or sarcophagi of the mar- tyrs. A high altar has several parts ; The *mensa* or table part for the sacrifice, the *gradine* for the candles and reliquaries, a tabernacle for the Holy Eucharist, and a *rerados* for great decoration, containing statues and other art. A side altar refers to

a smaller altar, not used for the main or Sunday celebration of the Mass.

Altar cards

These are used by the priest to help him say the parts of the Mass he needs to when he is away from the Mis- sal. The priest normally memorizes the prayers, but they became the norm in the sixteenth century to help him remember.

Altar cloth

Three swaths of linen are used to cover the *mensa* of the altar.

Alb

From the Latin meaning "white," it was originally the dress of a clown, in which Herod clothed our Lord in contempt. It was also used by neo- phytes in the Faith after their baptism, and is now used by a priest to cover his cassock, underneath the chasuble. It is used only for Mass.

Ambo

Also called a lectern, it is the place from which the Scriptures are read at Mass, and from which a sermon is preached by the parish priest. A bishop normally sits in order to preach. The word is from the Greek *ambon*, meaning "raised edge".

Ambry

This is a niche in the sanctuary in which the holy oils are stored

Amice

From the Latin word meaning "to cover," it refers to a rectangular white cloth with two long strings, which covers up the roman collar from showing under the alb. It serves a practical pur- pose of protecting expensive vestments from sweat, but also serves as a reminder to the priest before he says Mass, to put on the helmet of salvation.

Antependium

From the Latin meaning “hanging in front of,” an antependium is a decorative cloth which acts as a veil for the entire length of the *mensa* of the altar. Its color varies according to the feast or liturgical season. The term is also used for a cloth which hangs from the pulpit or ambo.

Antiphon

From the Greek meaning “one sound against another,” it is a short text sung or recited after a psalm or canticle. It refers to the short prayer which usually consists of a few lines of a Psalm that functions as its own prayer, but relates the prayer at the time with the feast day. For example, the Communion Antiphon of the Mass expresses both the action (Holy Communion) and the feast of the day. When the Divine Office is sung, one side of the choir sings two verses of a psalm,

and the other side responds with the next two verses. This is called antiphonal singing.

Apse

A term in architecture which refers to the part of the church building that covers the sanctuary. The word is from the Latin *apsis* meaning “arch.”

Archeologism

An error in liturgical theology which seeks to return to some liturgical practice in the past, and bring it forward into the future, without regard to liturgical development. For example, a scholar finds some practice which he thinks is wonderful, which stopped in the 4c. It is then reintroduced into the 21st c, without regard to why it was discontinued. This error was condemned by Pius XII in his encyclical *Mediator Dei et Hominem*.