

## Catechism on the Liturgy II, 2

### **Archpriest**

An ordained, experienced priest who helps the newly ordained with his first Mass. The Archpriest is vested in a cope. The word is from the Greek; *archos* (leader) and *presbyter* (old man or elder).

### **Ashes, Blessed**

A sign of penance, blessed ashes are made from the burning of palms from the previous year's Palm Sunday. Blessed on Ash Wednesday, they are a sacramental which imparts grace to the recipient, and this grace is given to enable the recipient to make a good Lent.

### **Asperges**

A prayer and rite which refers to the sprinkling of Holy Water at the principle Mass of the parish only on Sundays. The words recall the cutting of the original covenant by Moses, where he dipped a branch of hyssop (a bush which grows there) into the blood of the sacrificed bull, and sprinkled the blood over the heads of the Hebrews. It reminds us of the New Covenant, to which we were admitted by baptism.

### **Aspergillum and Bucket**

The aspergillum (from the Latin *aspergere*, to "sprinkle") is a metal stick of various lengths and thickness, and which can hold holy water to sprinkle over the heads of the faithful, or to bless objects. The bucket is used to hold the holy water. These are made of good metal to be used at the Mass.

### **Baldachin**

From the Italian *baldacco* (Bagdad), it is a canopy of rich fabric, carried by four poles, to cover the Blessed Sacrament or relics in an outdoor procession. The word is also used (improperly) to describe a permanent canopy over an altar.

### **Balsam**

A resinous fluid acquired by cutting certain trees or plants. Together with olive oil, it comprises one of the ingredients of the Chrism, blessed on Holy Tuesday and used for the administration of Baptism and Confirmation.

### **Banns**

Banns are official announcements from a parish about an upcoming wedding, which enabled other members of the parish to inform the clergy if there is an impediment to the marriage. They are no longer required, but do continue as a custom in some parishes.

### **Baptistry**

A small chapel within the church used only for baptisms.

### **Basilica**

The word is from the Greek meaning "ruler." Romans called a room for meeting and conversation a basilica. In each town there was a public basilica in which business was transacted and lawsuits heard. It was usually a rectangular room opening onto a porch (narthex); it had an apse at the further end and was usually divided by pillars. The early churches were built in this style though expressly for worship. Today the word refers to a church which has received special privileges for the Mass of a Pope.

### **Bells**

Used to elicit joy and attention from the faithful, they predate the 6c for use at Mass though not much before, due to the Roman persecutions. They are also used to indicate great events of joy or sorrow. The distance which the sound of a bell travelled would determine the parish boundaries in the Middle Ages. They are also used to ward off evil, as devils hate the sound of bells. The origin of the word is fascinating – from the Old Eng-

lish *bellan*, meaning “to roar.”

### **Benediction**

This refers to a solemn blessing of the faithful with the Holy Eucharist enthroned in a monstrance. The word is from the Latin, meaning “to speak well of.”

### **Betrothal**

A solemn promise to marry made between a man and a woman. It is made before and blessed by a priest, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. It is the liturgical expression of engagement, and obliges the couple by natural law to keep the engagement in conscience and in justice. But it does not impose the obligation to marry.

### **Bination**

This refers to a priest celebrating the Mass more than once a day. The ancient rule is *nec bis in die*, “not twice in a day.” The priest may celebrate twice in one day without permission, but three times a day requires permission of his religious superior.

### **Blessing**

This has several meanings:

1. An action of God in which He grants favors or gifts to people.

2. Acts of praising God by prayer or song, i.e. “Let us bless the Lord.”

3. A sacred rite by which the Church draws Divine favors down upon people and objects to sanctify them. The power to do this was granted to the Apostles, and is passed down to priests by ordination.

4. There are two types of liturgical blessings:

a. Constitutive, which permanently bring about the dedication of a person or object in the service of God, such as an altar or the consecration of a woman as a nun.

b. Invocative, which asks God to help those who are in need or who use blessed objects, such as a rosary.