A Glossary of Terms

ACOLYTE: A lay person who assists in worship by performing such functions as carrying the processional cross, torches, flags. etc., and who is usually vested in an alb. Acolytes may be either adults or children; those who assist the priest at the altar are called servers.

ACCLAMATION: A term referring to the seasonal statement and response at the beginning of the Eucharist as well as the response of the congregation later in the prayer consecrating the bread and wine.

BOAT: Small lidded brass container with a spoon used to carry incense before it is placed in a thurible: also the acolyte who carries the boat.

BISHOP: Chief sacramental officer of the church and the office which gives the Episcopal Church its name, from the Latin, *episcopus.* Bishops are the chief pastors of their dioceses and are responsible for ensuring that the faith proclaimed in parishes and missions is the faith of the church. Bishops have the special office to ordain priests and deacons, and together with other bishops, to ordain or consecrate other bishops. Bishops are in what is known as the "Apostolic Succession," meaning they can trace their consecration all the way back to the Apostles.

CANON: One who is on the staff of a cathedral, usually but not required to be an ordained clergyman. Cathedral canons form a staff for the work of the bishop in the diocese and also for the pastoral work of the cathedral itself.

CATHEDRAL: One sign of the office of a bishop is his chair, or cathedra; the church which houses the bishop's cathedra is his cathedral. The cathedral has a staff headed by a dean and clergy on his staff are called canons.

CELEBRANT: In an Episcopal liturgy the priest or bishop presiding at the Eucharist is called the celebrant. This term denotes that giving thanks to God is always a celebration.

COLLECT: From the verb, "to collect," a collect (pronounced coll' ect) is a prayer designed to collect the thoughts of those assembled around a common theme.

CRUCIFER: The acolyte who carries the processional cross.

DEACON: Along with priests and bishops, one of the three offices to which people can be ordained in the Episcopal Church. The sign of office of a deacon is the stole worn over the left shoulder and fastened under the fight arm. Traditionally, it is the duty of the deacon to prepare the table for the Holy Eucharist and to read the Gospel. Those who wish to become priests are ordained deacons first. but those who seek diaconal orders alone to become vocational or permanent deacons are becoming an increasingly important part of the church's ministry, particularly to the weak, the poor, the sick and the lonely.

DEAN: Title given to a person holding any of three positions: 1) head of a cathedral staff, 2) head of seminary faculty, and 3) clergy person elected or appointed to preside over meetings of a geographical division of a diocese, called in the Diocese of Mississippi a convocation. The title of dean is The Very Reverend.

EUCHARIST: The principal worship service of all Christians until the sixteenth century. The Greek word *eu charistia* means, "good gift" or "thanksgiving." It is a series of prayers, readings from scripture, ceremonial actions, and a sermon in which the people of God give thanks for all the gifts coming from God's hands and offer all of their life to God. They pray that in this offering and thanksgiving their lives will be transformed for use in God's reconciling the world to himself.

GENUFLECT: An act of showing reverence. Considered to be a more profound demonstration of reverence than the bow, genuflection is a momentary kneeling so that the right knee touches the floor, followed by standing up again. Genuflection is optional. However, those who use genuflections devotionally do so at the following points: upon entering and leaving the nave when there is consecrated bread and wine reserved in the aumbry, signaled by the burning sanctuary lamp when entering or leaving a pew when consecrated bread or wine is on the altar.

GOSPEL: Meaning, "good news," the gospel is that set of beliefs centered around the gift of Jesus Christ to the world – his life, death, resurrection, and ascension. The word also applies to the first four books of the New Testament, called the gospel according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The word also refers to the last reading of scripture prior to the sermon in a service of Holy Eucharist.

GOSPEL BOOK: A book containing only the Gospel lessons constituting the three year cycle appointed for the Eucharist. Handsomely decorated, it is designed to be a processional, ceremonial book and is prominently displayed on the altar.

HOMILY: From the Greek word meaning discourse, it is another word for sermon.

HOLY TABLE: Also called the Altar, the Table is the focal point of the Eucharistic liturgy in that the holy act of offering the peoples' money bread, and wine takes place there and then consecrated for use in Christ's name.

INTINCTION: Method of receiving the Eucharist in which the parishioner or the person administering the wine takes the bread (usually a wafer) and dips it into the chalice so that the parishioner can eat the moistened bread. Some people do this if they are worried about getting germs from drinking from a common cup; others do it if they have colds to try to avoid spreading their germs through the chalice.

LAY READER: A non-ordained person licensed by the bishop to lead public worship.

LAY EUCHARISTIC MINISTER: A non-ordained person licensed by the bishop to administer the consecrated bread or wine at a service of Holy Eucharist. An ordained minister may also administer the chalice. Lay Eucharistic Ministers of a different type also take communion to those who because of illness could not attend the liturgy. This is done immediately after a celebration of the Eucharist.

LECTOR: One who reads the lessons from the Lectionary at the lectern. From the Old Testament or Epistles, the lessons may be read by a lay or ordained person.

LENT: The season of forty weekdays prior to Easter Sunday. Lent always begins on a Wednesday, called Ash Wednesday.

LITURGY: Deriving from two Greek words meaning "the work of the people," the word refers to the prayer, thoughts, feelings, and actions comprising the corporate worship offered by the people. It also refers to the work of the people done in the world in the name of Christ, motivated by corporate worship. Finally, it refers to the written texts used by the people of God in their corporate worship.

MISSION

NICENE CREED: In great part developed in 325 A.D. at the Council of Nicea, it is with the Apostle's Creed, the definitive statement of Christian faith. Whereas, the Apostle's Creed is used at services of baptism, the Nicene Creed is used at services of the Eucharist.

OFFICE (The Daily): the daily services of Morning Prayer, Noonday Prayer, Evening Prayer and Compline provided in the Book of Common Prayer (Prayer Book). These services consist primarily of psalms, scripture reading and prayer. The Daily Office lectionary prescribes the reading of the psalter every seven weeks, the annual reading of the New Testament and biannual reading of the Old Testament.

PARISH: Traditionally the geographic area under the spiritual care of a Church of England clergyman. Now used synonymously with "congregation".

THE PEACE: Jesus commanded his followers to leave their gifts at the altar prior to offering them and go make peace with their neighbors. During the celebration of Holy Eucharist, the worshipers who have just received the peace of God through the absolution of their confessed sins then exchange God's peace with one another in obedience to Jesus' command. The Peace is in reality a prayer: "The Peace of the Lord be with you" and is exchanged by saying the words, "God's Peace be with you," or "The Peace of the Lord," or simply "Peace." At this time it is appropriate to exchange a handshake, a kiss and/or an embrace.

PROCESSIONAL CROSS: The most frequently used symbol in Christianity is the Cross. In Episcopal liturgies, a cross fixed atop a standard leads all processionals. This symbolically calls contemporary Christians to "take up their cross and follow" Christ as Jesus of Nazareth commanded the first century Christians.

RECTOR: Usually, the chief sacramental officer and professional ordained person in a parish, who is called by the vestry. Other clergy who work for a parish are on the staff of the rector.

RUBRICS: From the Latin word meaning "red", the rubrics are the directions in the Prayer Book, usually written in italics, about the conduct of worship. They are called rubrics because at one time they were universally written in red to make them stand out from the black type of the rites themselves.

SEXTON: Traditionally the sexton was the assistant of the parish clerk. Now commonly understood as "The Anglican word for janitor".

SIGN OF THE CROSS: An optional act of devotion made by the hand tracing the sign of the cross upon one's person. One form is made by the celebrant at baptism on the baptized person's forehead, showing that they are claimed or branded by God as they are "marked as Christ's own forever." This same form of the sign of the cross is made at confirmation, anointing with oil at healing services, imposing ashes on Ash Wednesday, and at the administration of Last Rites at death. A second form is made with the thumb tracing a small cross on one's forehead, then one's lips, and then one's chest at the announcement of the gospel reading in the context of the liturgy. This signing is a prayer that the Gospel will be in our thinking, our speaking, and in our feeling and acting. A third form of the sign is made by using the right fingertips to touch the forehead, the diaphragm, the left shoulder and then the right shoulder. This personal sign is made by anyone as a kind of manual "Amen" whenever the persons of the Trinity are named, at the end of the Gloria, and the end of the Creeds, when a priest or bishop offers his or her blessing at the words "bless us also" during the Eucharist, and before and after one receives communion. A final form of the sign is when a priest or bishop traces the cross in the air at the point of absolution and final blessing.

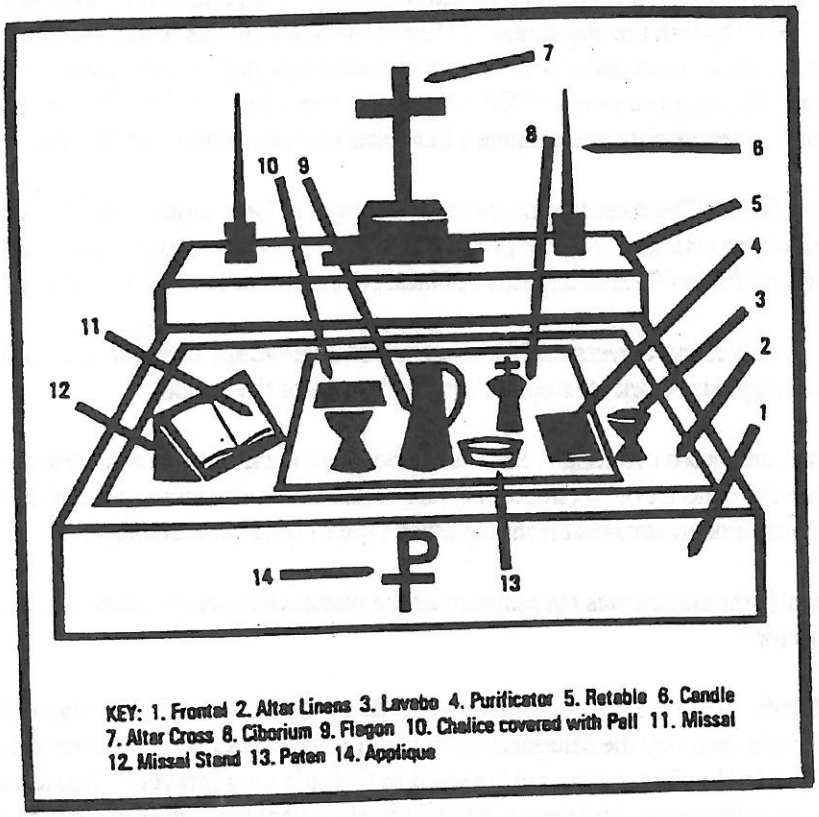
THURIFER AND THURIBLE: The Thurifer is the acolyte who swings the thurible or incense censor. The thurible itself is made of brass and contains an iron tray in which burning charcoal is placed with the incense granules being spooned on top of the burning coals.

VERGER: In historic Anglican lore, originally one who escorted and cleared the way for ecclesiastical dignitaries in procession. Today, the verger is most often seen in his ceremonial role as master of ceremonies and lay liturgical officer. In some parishes, vergers also perform the roles of sexton. sacristan, parish registrar, etc.

VICAR: Chief sacramental officer and professional ordained person in charge of a mission rather than a parish. A mission is distinguished from a parish chiefly in that it is not self-supporting but rather receives a portion of its support from the diocese and is thus under the direct jurisdiction of the diocesan bishop, unlike the rector of a parish who is employed by a vestry.

Vestry/ Mission

WARDEN: The chief elected lay officers of a parish and of the parish's governing body, the vestry. The Junior Warden is usually responsible for maintenance of the building and grounds, while the Senior Warden is the senior lay person of the parish and speaks for it when necessary.



ALTAR TERMS

ALTAR FURNISHINGS: The cross, candlesticks, all altar cloths, the sacramental vessels and linens, vases and missal stand.

ALTAR LINENS: the three cloths used to cover the altar top (mensa). These are: (a) the cerecloth, a cloth treated to make it impervious to moisture, which is placed first on the altar; (b) the protector, which is placed on the cerecloth; and (c) the fair linen, the topmost cloth placed on the altar and always kept there.
CHALICE: cup used in administering wine in Holy Communion.

CIBORIUM: cup-like vessel in which the wafers (Host) are brought to the altar for Holy Communion.

CORPORAL: Square cloth of linen which is placed upon the fair linen. Sacramental vessels are placed upon the corporal for Holy Communion.

FAIR LINEN: Cloth of fine linen covering the entire front of the altar.

FLAGON: a pitcher-like vessel in which the wine is placed for use in celebrating the Holy Communion.

FRONTAL: an altar parament which covers the entire front of the altar.

FRONTLET (SUPERFRONTAL): an altar vestment covering the top of the altar but falling a short distance below the front edge (compare Frontal).

LAVABO: small bowl containing water for the ministrant to wash hands.

MISSAL: the altar service book containing the liturgy of the church.

MISSAL STAND: the small book-rest (missal-rest) on the altar.

OBLATIONS: The gifts of bread and wine presented along with the alms at the Presentation; also known as the Communion Elements.

PALL: a square of white linen usually stiffened with cardboard which is placed over the chalice. It symbolizes the linen in which the body of Christ was enshrouded. A funeral pall is a large violet or black cloth which covers the closed casket while it is in the church.

PATEN: Latin for "dish." A shallow plate or dish for the bread of Holy Communion.

PURIFICATOR: the linen cloth of napkin size used to cleanse the rim of the chalice during the administration of Holy Communion.

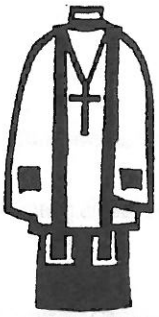
SACRAMENTAL LINENS: linens used at Holy Communion - the corporal, pall and veil.

SACRAMENTAL VESSELS: vessels used at Holy Communion -- the chalice, paten, ciborium and flagon.

VEIL: the cloth that covers the sacramental vessels before and after Holy Communion.

ALB AND CINCTURE

CASSOCK



CASSOCK AND SURPLICE

ALB AND CHASUBLE

Vestment Terms

Vestments worn by the celebrant of Holy Communion currently take three major forms. Simplest is alb, cincture, and stole. Another combination is cassock, surplice and stole. Most elaborate is cassock, amice, alb, cincture, stole and chasuble. (For the sake of comfort many clergymen nowadays omit the cassock from the last combination.) Descriptions of these vestments follow:

ALB: is Latin for "white," a color symbolizing purity. It is an ankle length vestment with sleeves, and traditionally was worn over the cassock. It is secured at the waist with a cincture and customarily is worn with a stole.

CASSOCK (cas'ak): is the basic, black vestment worn by clergy, assisting clergy, acolytes, choristers and organist. It has narrow sleeves and is form-fitting from the neck to the waist.

CHASUBLE (chas'-yoo'b'l): is a sleeveless outer vestment worn over the alb and stole by the ministrant of Holy Communion and High Festivals. It is oval with an opening for the head at the center. Traditionally this vestment symbolizes the royal robe placed on Christ before his crucifixion.

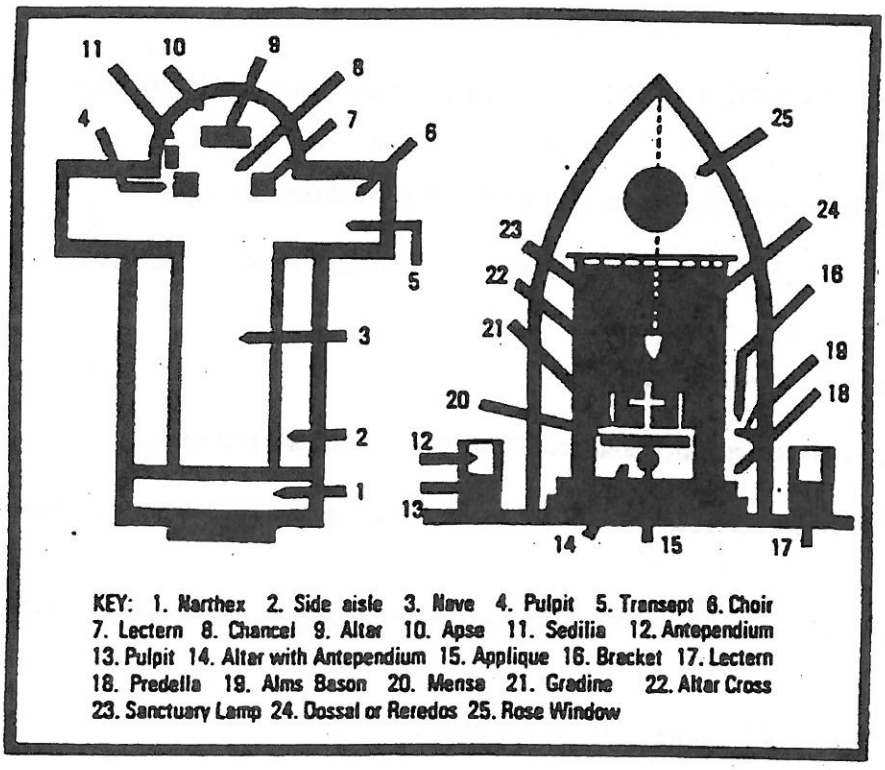
CINCTURE (cinc'-cher): is Latin for "girdle." It can be either a rope with tassels or a four inch wide band of material with fringe. It is worn around the waist over the cassock (black) or the alb (white).

CLERICAL COLLAR: is the stiff linen or plastic collar worn by the clergy. It is worn with a rabat or with a clergy shirt styled to resemble a rabat.

RABAT (rah-baht'): is a vest-like garment worn with a clerical collar. An abbreviated cassock. At one time cassocks were the non-liturgical daily dress of clergy. For convenience, shortened to suggestion of the black cassock.

STOLE: is a narrow band of silk or other fine material of the various liturgical colors appropriate for the particular season. The stole is worn around the neck and its length is determined by the height of the knee.

SURPLICE: is a knee length, white vestment worn by the minister over the cassock. It falls full and freely with large flowing sleeves. It is symbolic of man renewed in truth.



Architectural Terms

AISLE: space between rows of pews (main aisle and side aisles).

ALMS BASIN: large plate into which offering plates are placed. They are not called "collection plates" in the Episcopal Church.

AMBRY: (also aumbry) a cupboard for keeping consecrated elements (oils, bread, wine). A "sanctuary light" usually signals its location in a sanctuary.

ALTAR: focal point of liturgical churches where worship is conducted and Holy Communion administered.

ALTAR CROSS: cross which is always on the altar.

ALTAR RAIL: railing which encloses sanctuary where worshipers kneel or stand during Holy Communion, Confirmation, Weddings.

APPLIQUE: an embroidered ornament (symbol) applied to paraments (altar hangings).

APSE: Latin for "arch." The rectangular or semi-circular recess at the front of the church in which the altar stands.

BAPTISTERY: where the sacrament of Holy Baptism is administered.

BELFRY: Church tower containing church bells.

BRACKET (SANCTUARY BRACKET): shelf in sanctuary on epistle side for holding alms plate and alms basins

CATHEDRA: The bishop's chair or "throne" usually located within the Sanctuary.

CHANCEL: the area "east" of the Nave that includes the Choir and Sanctuary. (see Nave, Choir and Sanctuary)

CHOIR: the place where the singers sit.

CROSSING: the place at the front of the church where transept and nave intersect.

DOSSAL (OR DORSAL): Latin for "back." A hanging paramount attached to the wall behind the altar (see reredos).

EPISTLE SIDE: the right side of the sanctuary as the congregation faces the altar (called the liturgical south side).

FONT: Latin for "fountain." Contains water for Baptism.

FRONTAL: covering for entire front of altar (see antependium).

GOSPEL SIDE: the left side of sanctuary as the congregation faces altar.

GRADINE: Latin for "step." The retable or shelf at back of altar on which cross and candlesticks are placed.

LECTERN: Latin for "to read." A desk or stand opposite the pulpit for the Bible from which the lessons are read.

MENSA: Latin for "table." The top surface of the altar.

NARTHEX: The vestibule usually across the entire west end of the church containing the main entrance.

NAVE: Latin for "ship." Area that extends from narthex to chancel. This area contains pews or chairs for worshipers. This is not referred to as the sanctuary.

PASCHAL CANDLE: A large white candle that represents "the light of Christ." It is often but not necessarily decorated with a cross, the Greek letters alpha and omega, and nails The Paschal Candle is lit during the Great Vigil of Easter and is kept burning throughout the Great Fifty Days of Easter, through the day of Pentecost. It is also burned during baptisms and funerals throughout the church year.

PREDELLA: top step on which altar stands.

PULPIT: Latin for "raised platform." Place from which the sermon is delivered. Its placement is to the side to show that it is not the central thing in worship but to support us in preparing for the central act in the liturgy.

REREDOS: Framework of wood, stone or marble behind and above altar.

SANCTUARY: Elevated place where altar stands -- often in chancel.

SANCTUARY LAMP: Lamp suspended from ceiling in sanctuary which burns whenever consecrated elements are being kept in the ambry.

SEDILIA: Seats for the clergy officiating at worship service.

TRANSEPT: In a cross-shaped (cruciform) church, the part that corresponds to the arms of the cross. There is the south transept area and the north transept area.