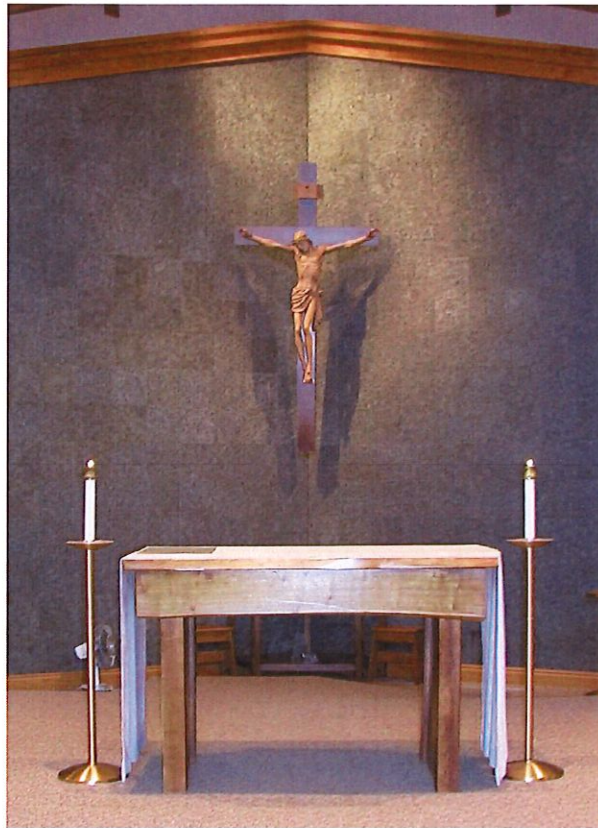


# Sacristan Handbook



**Saint Mary Catholic Church  
Solon, Iowa**

— August 2019 —

## The Sacristan's Responsibilities

Any public event or celebration requires much behind-the-scenes activity. If the event is to have dignity and meaning there must be care and preparation.



Planned events which involve a great number of people do not just “happen.” They only become an event and give inspiration when they have been well-prepared, when the setting and surroundings of the event have been carefully arranged, and when the people involved in the event are themselves aware of their responsibilities.

The parish liturgy is the public event forming the very heart of the whole parish life. Everything that we do and are as a parish leads to and flows from the liturgical celebrations in the parish church.

The liturgy proclaims what we are as a parish and at the same time provides the foundation and the impetus for our working together and growing as a community of worship, or witness and of service. Because of its crucial role in parish life, the liturgy is a *public celebration* requiring considerable behind-the-scenes preparation if it is to fulfill its function.

That is where you come in, because a large part of this preparation belongs to the sacristan. In fact, you are in a sense responsible for everything that is used in the parish liturgy.

Obviously, you are not responsible for the way the liturgy is celebrated nor for the people's participation in the liturgy, which are the responsibilities of the priest and of the people as a whole.

Because the parish liturgy is our communal worship of God our Father, and because this service of worship draws us closer together as a holy people, the environment and materials used in the liturgy must all be conducive toward worship and community.

You as sacristan are generally in charge of this environment and these materials, and you must make sure that your areas of responsibility in the liturgy fulfill these purposes and requirements.

Even though the externals of liturgy will be your primary concern, they are important because they express and promote our whole inner spirit and attitudes as a worshipping community. Your conduct, dress and manner should reflect your appreciation of what it is you are doing.



## SACRISTIES

The **sacristy** is a room or a combination of rooms where the sacred vestments, vessels and all else that is necessary to perform the liturgy are kept.

The first rule of the sacristy is: *a place for everything, and everything in its place*. And the second rule is: *Cleanliness is next to godliness*. Since everything in the sacristies pertain to the service of God, every attention should be given to making the sacristy a place worthy of its use.

At Saint Mary's there are two sacristies: one where the priest vests before Mass; the other behind the altar.

## THE PRIEST'S SACRISTY

**VESTING COUNTER** is the set of upper and lower cabinets to the right as you enter the sacristy.

### COUNTER:

- Ordo booklet

### UPPER CABINET—LEFT

- Communion count slips
- Extra communion pyxes
- Baptism candles (blue boxes)
- Holy Communion pyxes and burses
- Low Gluten Hosts

### UPPER CABINET — MIDDLE

- Tabernacle key
- Wireless microphone pack
- Batteries for wireless mic
- Liturgical ministry booklets
- Palm Sunday supplies (stapler, water viles, etc)
- Binders

**UPPER CABINET — RIGHT**

- Audio tapes
- Holy Water Pot and sprinklers
- Ash Wednesday supplies

**LOWER DRAWER — LEFT**

- Flashlights for Easter Vigil

**LOWER CABINET — LEFT**

- 6 day vigil candles
- Small votive candles for votive stand

**LOWER DRAWERS — MIDDLE**

- #1: Money bags and deposit keys
- #2: Priest stoles
- #3: Funeral Pall and humeral veils
- #4: Misc cloths

**LOWER DRAWER — RIGHT**

- Empty!

**LOWER CABINET — RIGHT**

- Boombox
- Audio cables and supplies

**WARDROBE CLOSET:**

- Deacon vestments (left)
- Server albs (middle)
- Priest vestments (right)

## **PRIEST'S SACRISTY**

Many of the cabinets are used for miscellaneous purposes. Ones pertinent to your ministry are:

- **First cabinet on left, upper drawer : butane lighters**
- **Upper double cabinet: liturgical books**
- **Lower middle drawer: music microphones**

## **SACRISTY BEHIND ALTAR:**

### **Tall cabinet by electrical panel:**

- 14 day sanctuary candles
- Miscellaneous cloths

### **Top cabinet to left of double sink:**

- Charcoal and incense

### **Top drawer to the right of the double sink:**

- Corporals
- Purificators
- Hand towels

### **Counter corner:**

- Bottles of altar wine
- Water jar for soiled purificators

### **Under Sacarium sink:**

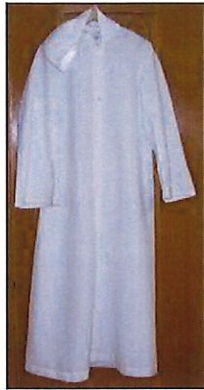
- Altar candles (17")

### **Upper right cabinet above sacarium:**

- Chalices and communion bowls
- Monstrance
- Miscellaneous altarware

## DESCRIPTION OF LITURGICAL ITEMS:

### Priest's Vestments:



#### ALB:

The white garment symbolizing our baptismal garment. Used by the priest and servers. The priest wears this under the chasuble or used only with the stole. It's name is derived from the Latin *albus* — meaning "white."



#### CHASUBLE:

The outer garment used for Mass.

The **STOLE** is the narrow "scarf" worn under the chasuble, or over the alb.

Both convey the liturgical season or special feast day of the church:

WHITE .... Christmas, Easter Season & Saints

RED ..... Pentecost & Martyrs

PURPLE ... Red-purple for Lent  
Blue-purple for Advent

GREEN ... Ordinary Time



### **MISSAL**

The book of the official prayers prayed by the priest at Mass.



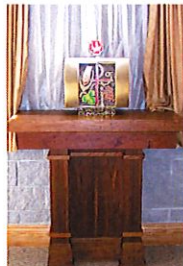
### **BOOK OF THE GOSPELS**

Carried during the Opening Procession by the Deacon or one of the Readers.



### **LECTIONARY**

Collection of Sunday and Holy Day scripture readings.



### **TABERNACLE**

The ornamental "safe" where the consecrated Eucharistic Bread is reserved.



### **SANCTUARY LAMP**

The candle indicating the presence of the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle. The only two days of the year it is NOT lighted is Good Friday and Holy Saturday.



### **AMBRY**

The cabinet by the Baptism Font that holds the Holy Oils used in three sacraments: **Sacred Chrism** for Baptism, Holy Orders and Confirmation. **Oil of Catechumens** for those preparing for Baptism. **Oil of the Infirm** for the sacrament of Anointing the Sick.



### **PASCHAL CANDLE**

(Easter candle): The large decorated candle next to the font. It is blessed and lighted at the Easter Vigil to symbolize Jesus as the light of the world. It is lighted during the Easter season, and at baptisms and funerals.



### **CHALICE**

The cup the priest uses at Mass. It is usually lined with gold or silver since it holds the Blood of Christ.



### **COMMUNION BOWLS**

The pewter dishes used to distribute Holy Communion. The larger bowl is used to bring the bread to the altar during the Presentation of Gifts.



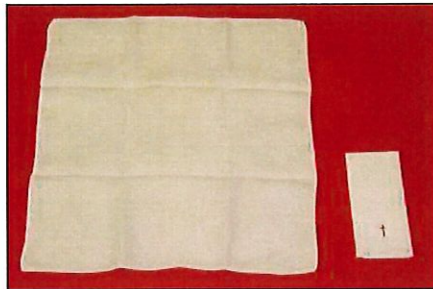
### **CRUET AND CARAFE**

Small cruet is filled with water for the priest to mingle with the wine during the Offertory and purify the vessels after Communion. The wine carafe is processed to the altar during the Offertory.



### **PITCHER AND BOWL**

Ceramic set used to wash the priest's hands.

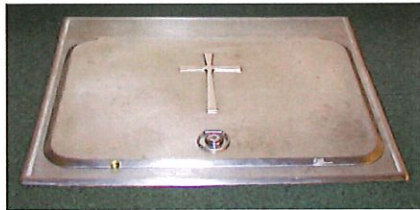


### **CORPORAL**

Large white "placemat."

### **PURIFICATOR**

White "napkin."



### **SACRARIUM**

The sink used to wash the chalice and other sacred vessels, as well as used purificators and corporals. It has a drain to the ground

so that the water used may flow directly into the earth.

### **PROCESSIONAL CROSS**



Used to lead processions during Mass and devotions.

### **MONSTRANCE:**

Vessel used to hold the Blessed Sacrament during Adoration.





### **PYX and BURSE**

Upper left door of priest sacristy.

**PYX** Round metal container used to take Holy Communion to parishioners at home.

**BURSE** Leather pouch to carry the Pyx. It is worn around the minister's neck so that the Blessed Sacrament is over the heart.

.....

### **HOW TO ....**

#### **CHANGE VOTIVE CANDLES:**

Small candles for the votive stand and the 6 day candles for the red votive lamp are in the priest's sacristy — bottom left double doors under the vesting counter.



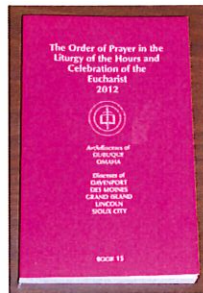
Metal votive cups need to be cleaned before inserting new candles. Use a screwdriver to loosen the small round metal tab from the previous candle. Freezing the cup helps, too.

#### **HOSTS—ALTAR BREAD:**



- Located in the refrigerator freezer in the Bride's Room.
- Each bag holds 250 small hosts.
- Large 5" hosts go in the round Tupperware container on usher's table behind last pew.
- Small 3" hosts go in the metal


## ARRANGING THE LITURGICAL BOOKS FOR MASS




In the sacristy you will find a paperback book called the Order of Prayer — also called the “ORDO.”

It is the handbook describing the liturgy (Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours) on any particular day of the year.

For example, this is the description for December 8, 2011:

**8**        **Thursday: THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**  
**S**                                    **OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY. Patronal**  
**Wh**                                **Feast Day of the USA [holyday of obligation]**  
   **HOURS**  
   **MASS    Prop    Gl    Cr    Prop Pf**  
   **RDGS    689: Gen 3:9-15,20. Ps 98:1-4**  
   **Eph 1:3-6,11-12. Lk 1:26-38**

-  = A Sunday or Holyday of Obligation
- S** = Today is classified as a “Solemnity”
- Wh** = Priest wears white vestments
- Prop** = Proper prayers in the Missal to use
- Gl** = Glory to God to be sung/recited
- Cr** = Creed is to be recited
- Prop Pf** = A proper preface is in the missal for today.
- 689** = Reference number to the readings in the Lectionary.  
Each day of the year has a reference number.

Cover page of the ORDO indicates which of the three year Sunday cycle of readings to use. Also which of the two weekday cycle of readings to use.

Other abbreviations used in the ORDO are explained in the front of the book.

## HOW TO ARRANGE THE RIBBONS

### IN THE MISSAL....

- Check the ORDO to determine the proper Sunday, Holyday, etc.
- Place one ribbon for the Opening Prayer, etc.
- Place one ribbon for the Preface

### IN THE BOOK OF THE GOSPELS....

- Check the ORDO to determine the proper Sunday, Holyday, etc. It will also list the scripture reference.
- Place ribbon for proper Gospel. Remember that there is a three year cycle to the Gospel readings.

---

### KEY TO OTHER SYMBOLS IN THE ORDO:

<b>F</b>	Feast
<b>M</b>	Obligatory Memorial
<b><i>m</i></b>	<i>Optional Memorial</i>
<b>V</b>	Votive (ritual) Masses permitted
<b>R</b>	Requiem (funeral) Mass permitted

*Italics* = Indicates whatever is optional.

**HOURS** = Information on the Liturgy of the Hours  
(Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, etc.)

**PN** Pastoral Note

**Left page** lists dates of death of priests and bishops.

### Liturgical Colors:

Vi = Violet	Rd = Red
Wh = White	Gr = Green

**SUNDAY READINGS** have a 3 year cycle (A-B-C)

**WEEKDAY READINGS** have a 2 year cycle (I—II)

## HOW TO ....

### CHANGE ALTAR CANDLES:

- Extra 17" candles are in the cabinet below the sacarium.
- Scrape some of the wax off the brass followers before placing them on the new candle.
- Throw old candle stubs away

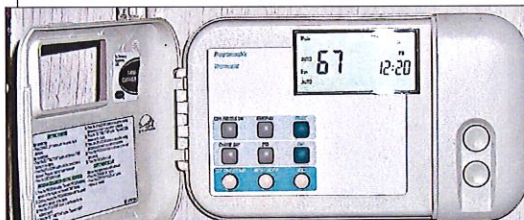
### EUCCHARISTIC CHAPEL LIGHT SWITCHES:

**LEFT SWITCH** controls constant spot lights. Push bottom button for number of hours needed.



**RIGHT SWITCH** is motion sensitive. It can be over-ridden by pushing the oval button if needed.

### THERMOSTAT: [Near the Reconciliation Chapel]



——Rise temperature  
——Lower temperature

Upper right blue button = "MODE" = auto / heat / cool  
Middle right blue button = turn on system fans

If the church becomes stuffy or too warm, turn on the system fans. Push "MODE" button to "COOL." Adjust temperature.

After Mass return thermostat to "AUTO" and turn off system fans.

## HOW TO ....

### CHANGE THE SANCTUARY LAMP CANDLE



- Extra candles are in the tall cabinet next to the double sink in the sacristy behind the altar.
- Grasp the ring under the lamp and pull it down; It is weighted, so it won't stay down on its own;
- Remove the old candle; (throw away)
- Light new candle and replace.

### PUT A NEW WICK IN CANDLE-LIGHTER



- New wicks are in the usher room
- Push lever all the way to release old wick;
- Insert one inch the new wick into the hole at the end of the lighter tab;
- Draw the lever back;
- Trim excess to leave one inch of wick .

### BAPTISM FONT CONTROLS — Usher Room:



**This timer controls the circulating pump.**

It is programmed to operate from 4am—6pm daily. Over-ride it by pushing the long square button on the upper right of the timer.

**HEATER** is controlled by round knob on the left side of the heater box. Turn it all the way clockwise. You will hear/feel a “click” as it turns on. Then turn the knob back counter-clockwise about 1/8 turn. It takes about 6 hours for the font water to heat to 98 degrees.



**NB: If turning on Saturday night for overnight heating be sure to push the timer button so the water flows as the water heats.**

## HOW TO:

### TURN ON CHURCH CEILING LIGHTS:



Ceiling lights are on an automatic dimmer system.

Simply push the button for whichever configuration is needed.

Switch is located on the wall to the right right as you enter the sanctuary.

## EMERGENCY:



## DEFIBULATOR:

- Located in the lobby of the parish life center, near the entry doors.

## FIRE EXTINGUISHERS:

- Sacristy behind altar near electrical panel;
- East hallway across from church office;
- West hallway near water fountains;
- Lobby of the parish life center;
- Next to nursery in parish life center;
- Next to west doors of parish life center.

**NOTES:**

**NOTES:**

## CHECKLIST FOR MASS:

- \_\_\_ Door locks are on automatic timers and should be open at appropriate times. Check if doors open from outside and crank open if necessary. Do not over-tighten cranks. Push switch on top of handicap door to on position.
- \_\_\_ Turn on all lobby lights and church lights.
- \_\_\_ Put ribbon in Book of Gospels for proper day and place book on small table by light switch.
- \_\_\_ Put Missal on server pew
- \_\_\_ Set lectionary at lectern, open to the appropriate reading. If multiple readings, check with Fr. & mark ones to be used.
- \_\_\_ Count hosts in Tabernacle. Fr. would like 50 to 100 in the tabernacle. Fill out host count sheet accordingly.
- \_\_\_ Check items on servers' credence table:
  - 2 chalices (Do NOT fill with wine.)
  - 4 purificators (extra one is for spills)
  - 2 corporals (large and small)
  - 4 small communion bowls
  - Ceramic bowl and pitcher with water
  - Hand towel
  - Water cruet
- \_\_\_ Plastic bookstand on altar
- \_\_\_ Check items on Ushers' table:
  - Large communion bowl
  - Carafe of wine
  - Host count sheet
- \_\_\_ White loose-leaf binder with intercessions at priest's chair
- \_\_\_ PA system turned on
- \_\_\_ Cantor welcome sheet on music stand and piano/organ.
- \_\_\_ Intercession sheet on lectern and Book of Gospels
- \_\_\_ Check body mic pack for good battery charge. Change batteries if necessary.
- \_\_\_ Double check for lay ministers, especially servers & ushers. Find extra ministers if necessary.
- \_\_\_ After last Mass of the day, if there are no functions in the church/gathering space and everyone is gone:
  - Turn off all lights in church, lobby, hallway.
  - Turn handicap door switch to "off"