

AN ALTAR GUILD  
MANUAL



*Revised*

EDITH WEIR PERRY

AN ALTAR GUILD  
MANUAL

BY  
EDITH WEIR PERRY



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## Foreword

*Diocesan and Parochial Altar Guilds are rendering a service of ever greater value at the central point of Christian worship. Their work is both highly specialized and of deep spiritual significance. This little book, the result of long experience and study, is offered by its author for their use as a manual of information and devotion.*

*I commend it to all whose sacred privilege it is to care for the rites and ceremonies of the historic Church.*

JAMES DEWOLF PERRY,  
*Presiding Bishop*

*Providence, Rhode Island  
Eastertide, 1930*

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## Preface



SOME eighty years ago, a need was felt in many parishes in America for a guild or society which could faithfully and devoutly undertake the care of the Altar and its vestments, thus relieving the rector. It also seemed unwise that one woman, no matter how devoted, should not share with others the most sacred and beautiful lay task in our Church. From this need grew the parish Altar Guilds, and from them the Diocesan Altar Guilds of to-day, which are forming all over the country. Where Diocesan Altar Guilds do exist, they have proved to be of the greatest value in drawing Altar Guild members together, in increasing reverence, in setting higher standards, and in assisting the small churches in the mission field. The Diocesan Altar Guild is still in its infancy but the future holds the promise of widespread interest in and appreciation of the value of the work that is now being so quietly and steadily accomplished.

At the present day, each Diocesan Altar Guild makes its own rules and regulations under the sanction of the bishop, and in each Guild we find the kind and scope of work varies according to the needs of that particular region. In one diocese, the directress is appointed each year by the bishop, while she in turn appoints the members of the executive committee as follows: a secretary and an assistant secretary, a

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treasurer and an assistant treasurer, a committee on supplying vestments, a committee on supplying linens, a committee on instruction and visiting, a librarian, and a consulting committee consisting of clergy and laymen with the bishop as chairman. The Altar Guild is also associated with the Diocesan Architectural Committee. The annual meeting is held in November, opening with suitable prayers and a hymn, followed by the roll-call, the reports of the secretary, the treasurer, and the chairman of each committee. The appointments for the year are announced and new business is discussed, as well as plans for future meetings. At this time this Diocesan Altar Guild looks forward to an address by the bishop on some subject of interest to the Guild members and as an inspiration for the new year. At the January and April meetings, exhibitions of linens and embroideries are held as a means of education and instruction in the beauty of Church vestments. Also, speakers are invited to talk on matters of special interest to Altar Guilds. A corporate communion is celebrated on All Saints' Day, members of the Altar Guilds attending their parish churches.

A special library of books on Church architecture and arts, ornaments, etc., is found very useful in connection with a Diocesan Altar Guild.

It is the aim of this Guild that its members should clearly understand the various forms and ceremonies permitted in our American Church, so in case of

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need any member of this Guild can go into any parish church to assist, when so requested before a service, and know what to do, no matter what her own parish traditions may be.

That different parishes have different habits and customs is clearly understood and no attempt whatever is made to standardize a use. The object is to increase the efficiency and devotion of each Guild in carrying out the wishes of the rector.

EDITH L. D. HOWARD, *Directress of the  
Diocesan Altar Guild of Rhode Island*

## Part First

### THE ALTAR

**T**HE Altar is the essential and most sacred object in the church, before which gather priest and people to offer, as before God's throne, the Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving. The Altar is God's Board on which is celebrated the Holy Eucharist, the most sublime act of Christian worship.

Altars may be of either wood or stone. It is said that St. Peter celebrated his first communion on a wooden table, and for many generations this was the custom; but the persecuted Christians, gathering in the seclusion of the catacombs, used the stone tombs of the martyrs as Altars, as we may see to this day. The mensa, the top of the Altar, is marked with five crosses, one in each corner and one in the centre, reminders of the five wounds of our Saviour.

#### *The Footpace*

The Altar stands upon a footpace; next below this is the deacon's step, and the step below is the sub-deacon's.

#### ALTAR VESTMENTS

#### *The Cere-cloth*

This is made of waxed linen, the first cloth to cover the Altar, as a protection from moisture. A plain heavy linen may be substituted.

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### *The Frontal*

The English canon of 1603 ordered for the Altar "A carpet of silk or any other decent stuff, and a Fair Linen at the time of the Ministration." This "carpet," or frontal or Altar cloth, made of silk or linen, hangs in front of the Altar, attached to a piece of linen which fits over the top of the Altar under the fair linen cloth. The frontlet, or superfrontal, either hangs from this linen, also, or may be used without a frontal, with its own linen top.

### *The Fair Linen Cloth*

The rubric in our Prayer Book reads, "At the Communion-time the Holy Table shall have upon it a fair white linen cloth." This cloth is the exact depth of the Altar, hanging over the ends. It usually has five crosses embroidered on it, one in the centre and one in each corner of the top of the Altar, and the ends may be richly embroidered. Altar linen is to be hemmed, not hemstitched, so that there may be no broken thread. The Altar is not left uncovered, except on Good Friday. A "protector" of linen or silk should be placed over the fair linen to protect it between services. It is not a sacred linen, but a protection only, and is to be removed before a service.

### *The Silk Chalice Veil*

This is used to cover the Chalice before the consecration, and also after the service, but never covers

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the Blessed Sacrament itself. This veil is made in a square large enough to cover the Chalice when the Paten is on it and to touch the Altar on all four sides. It is usually of silk or brocade to match the seasonal colour, but may be of linen.

### *The Burse*

This is used to contain the two corporals, *i.e.*, the corporal and the post-communion veil. The burse may be of silk to match the vestments, or, if there be only one burse, it may be of linen or of cloth-of-gold to harmonize with any season's colour. It is 8 or 9 inches square, of a size not too large to lie on the Paten easily without overweighing it, stiffened with cardboard or aluminum interlining. It may have folding sides, or simply have the top and bottom tacked together at one end. The top is usually ornamented with embroidery.

## THE SACRED VESSELS

### *The Chalice*

The most sacred instrument of the Church's worship, the Cup used at the Holy Communion, from the night of the Last Supper until now. The Chalice is made of silver or gold. The bowl of the Chalice, gold lined, must be perfectly plain, with flaring sides, not like a goblet, and without a raised rim at the edge. Such regulation is obviously necessary. The column and base of the Chalice may be beautifully wrought and set with precious stones, but such elaborate work

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should be designed and executed by an artist, not by a factory.

### *The Paten*

The silver or gold plate on which the bread is consecrated. It is most convenient when slightly concave, fitting into the Chalice.

### *The Cruets*

Two cruets of glass or crystal are used on the credence, one for wine and one for water; sometimes these are mounted in gold or silver, but not so as to obscure the contents. They are never placed on the Altar, but the priest or the server carries them back and forth to the Altar during the offertory. A silver flagon is sometimes used for a reserve of wine.

### *The Bread Box*

A vessel of gold or silver to hold the breads.

## ORNAMENTS OF THE ALTAR

### *The Altar Cross*

This was originally a processional cross, which, when the procession was over, was unscrewed from its rod or handle and placed upon the Altar. The crucifix is a cross with the body of Christ portrayed upon it. The earliest known is from Mesopotamia, A. D. 586, now in Florence. The crucifix was occasionally designed in the form of an anchor, signifying hope

## The Altar and Vestments

of redemption. In these early examples the figure of Christ is always represented as triumphant, the head turned upward toward heaven; not until the fourteenth century did the realistic portrayal of the crucifixion finally take place. The crosses of the first thousand years of Christianity were of gold and jeweled, a symbol of Christ rather than the reminder of His passion. In the period of debasement of ecclesiastical art in the nineteenth century brass crosses were made in factories by thousands, of the same hideous designs, always too large, and of the lacquered metal so dear to the mechanic. Wherever possible such should be replaced by a hand-wrought cross of beautiful design and workmanship.

### *Candlesticks*

Ancient pictures show that both before and after the Reformation two candlesticks were permitted to stand on the Altar itself. Standard lights may rest on the pavement, other lights hang from the roof in chandeliers, and others stand on the retable. Lighted candles in candlesticks are often carried in processions, and at a funeral standard lights may be placed beside the coffin. The two Altar candles represent the human and divine natures of Christ. They are of beeswax, emblem of purity. The early Christians carried tapers in the catacombs for their secret services, so the necessary lights of one century became the ceremonial lights of the next. The Paschal candle



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is a standard light near the Altar on the Gospel side, lighted on Easter Even and extinguished on Ascension Day. Lights (by which is always meant candles when speaking of those in the sanctuary) are the most significant of symbols, suggested by our Lord's self-designation as "Light of the World." From the flame of one candle millions of others may be lighted without diminishing the original flame; so with the Holy Spirit, continually being imparted, yet always the same.

### *The Altar Book*

This Book is kept closed until opened by the priest. It sometimes rests on an Altar desk, which should be of low construction and inconspicuous, and, if possible, made of wood, not of brass, as the latter tends to wear out the Book. Cushions, also, are made to hold the Book, sometimes one at the Gospel, the other at the Epistle side of the Altar. Between services the Altar Book is usually kept on the credence or in the sacristy.

### *The Alms Bason*

Sometimes erroneously called the offertory plate. The minister or his assistant stands at the entrance to the chancel with the alms bason to receive the offerings of the people. The Offertory is that part of the service said at the time of the offering of the bread and wine. The alms are presented at this time and the bason remains on the Altar with the offerings

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until after the Prayer for the whole state of Christ's Church after which it is placed on the credence.

### *The Processional Cross*

Carried by a crucifer in procession. There may be several such crosses, including one for festivals, one for Lent and Advent, and one to match the funeral candlesticks, etc. The processional cross dates from the fourth century, originating, it is said, from the vision of Constantine.

### ALTAR LINEN

### *The Corporal*

This was anciently called corporas cloth, symbolizing, as its name implies, one of the linen cloths wrapped around our Lord's body in the tomb. In the beginning, it was one large cloth which was laid upon the Altar as the fair linen and folded over the Chalice. Later, this was for convenience divided into two, the second corporal, the pall or veil, being used solely to cover the Chalice. The corporal nowadays is usually 18 or 21 inches square, with a half-inch hem. It is never embroidered, save for one simple cross in the center of the front third, near the hem. The corporal and the pall are the sacred Altar linens. The corporal should not be an object for fancy work, nor carelessly washed, nor used for other purposes. It is folded right side in, in nine folds, making a square. It is carried in the burse with the second

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corporal or veil, and is kept in the burse after using until washed. "The napkin which was about his head not lying with the linen clothes but wrapped together in a place by itself." These rules for the corporal are to instill reverence; the folding of the corporal in this manner insures the gathering up of any particle of the Blessed Sacrament which may have fallen on it. To those persons who have, upon their knees, just heard the words: "We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy table," such reverence will be comprehended. The corporal must be carefully rinsed in clear water before washing, and the water poured into the piscina or on the ground. At the Holy Eucharist, the priest, on entering the sanctuary, goes up to the Altar, and placing the vessels a little to the left side, removes from the Chalice the burse; he then takes the corporal from the burse and lays it upon the fair linen, right side up, in the centre of the Altar and places the Chalice upon it. No one but an ordained minister should spread the corporal. It must never hang over the front of the Altar, but fit correctly. The burse may stand against the reredos. Sometimes the sacred vessels are kept on the credence until the deacon gives them to the priest at the offertory.

### *The Pall*

The pall and the corporal are the sacred linens. Some Anglican priests use a second corporal folded in nine squares, right side out, as a pall to cover the Chalice

## The Altar and Vestments

during the celebration, and unfolded as a veil during the post-communion. Such a second corporal has a cross in the centre to distinguish it from the corporal, and is also carried in the burse. The rubric in our Prayer Book reads: "Reverently place upon it what remaineth of the consecrated Elements, covering the same with a fair linen cloth."

It is perhaps more generally the custom to make the pall of a piece of linen sewed tight like a bag over a square of glass, celluloid, or aluminum, not cardboard, 7 inches in diameter, or large enough to cover the Paten. This pall, if so desired, has a piece of linen tacked to the top, embroidered, sufficiently larger than the glass to hang down and satisfy the requirements of the rubric as a cover for the Chalice when a linen post-communion veil is not used. Also, a piece of plain hemmed linen is tacked to the underside which must be changed frequently to keep it spotless. As the stains come from the consecrated Chalice, great care should be taken in rinsing it, pouring the water upon the ground; and if the stains will not come out, this linen should be burned. The pall is used to protect the Blessed Sacrament, and must be of linen, not silk. When all have communicated, the priest places the Chalice upon the corporal, the Paten on the Chalice, and covers them with the pall or linen veil until the ablutions, after which he rearranges all in the manner in which they were brought to the Altar.

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### *The Post-Communion Veil*

Sometimes the priest uses, in addition to the stiffened pall, a small veil of fine embroidered linen, large enough to cover the bowl of the Chalice when the Paten is on it. This is the second corporal, and is carried in the burse.

### *The Purificator*

A napkin of soft absorbent linen or fine linen diaper cloth for cleansing the Chalice, about 11 or 13 inches square, with the smallest possible hem. It may have a simple cross near the hem in the corner or in the centre of the front third. Embroidery in the middle may scratch the Chalice. A purificator is used but once and then laundered, the rinsing water being poured on the ground. It is folded in nine squares, right side out.

When vesting the Chalice, the purificator should be folded lengthwise over the Chalice under the Paten, the folds hanging across the Chalice, not in front. There may be another purificator in the burse, and one on the credence.

### *The Lavabo Towel or Mundatory*

A linen napkin, about 12 x 18 inches, hemmed all around, often with an emblem embroidered upon it in outline stitch to distinguish it. It represents the linen mentioned in the Gospel at the washing before the Last Supper. It is for the lavabo, or cleansing of the priest's hands during the celebration, immedi-

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ately before the Prayer for Christ's Church, and after the service.

### *The Baptismal Towel*

One of these towels should be placed on the edge of the font for the service of Holy Baptism. It makes for convenience to embroider this towel with the words "Holy Baptism," or some such distinctive sign.

## OTHER ORNAMENTS

### *The Pulpit Fall*

A square or oblong piece of silk, often decorated, which sometimes hangs from the reading desk on the pulpit. As it is not an Altar vestment, it is not necessary to have it follow the liturgical colours; but if only one pulpit fall is used in a church, great care must be taken to have it harmonize with red, green, and violet. It is less conspicuous to have it follow the colour of the season.

### *The Lectern Cloth*

This sometimes hangs over the lectern, matching the pulpit fall.

Bookmarkers need not follow the colour of the season, and should be of soft ribbon so as not to wear out the books. A fringe is found useful to weight them. For the Altar Book, one-third-inch ribbon of different colours may be used for markers, such as dark red for Holy Communion, yellow for Collect for the Day, and green for Proper Preface, etc.

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### *The Funeral Pall*

This pall is of silk or velvet, about 10 x 6 feet, large enough to cover easily and completely the coffin and bier. It may be of black velvet, with a silver cross from end to end, and silver fringe; or purple and green; blue and red, etc. A child's pall may be white or light-coloured. "Few people will desire to use flowers when they have seen such a beautiful and costly pall as every church ought to possess." The symbolism that Holy Church covers all her children alike is very fine. The pall is thrown over the coffin when it reaches the church door, after the coffin has been permanently closed, and is removed from the coffin at the door after the service.

### *Banners*

These are desirable for every parish, for processions, Church schools, etc. A banner should be designed by an artist, not bought from a commercial house.

### *Lenten Veils*

The "Lenten Array" in many parishes is hung on Shrove Tuesday for Ash Wednesday and Lent. Veils of unbleached white mull or voile are hung before crosses, pictures, etc. This ancient custom dates from the twelfth century. Often the veils are violet, and are used from Evensong on the Saturday before Passion Sunday until the same service on Easter Even.

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### *Confirmation Veils*

A 27-inch square of mull or voile, with 8 inches of elastic or tape run through a hem and fastened under the hair. Veils are worn by women and girls for Confirmation. They add greatly to the dignity and beauty of appearance, and are a convenience to the bishop, differentiating clearly between the girls and boys who kneel before him. These veils have not the slightest significance of any form, and should be used in all churches if possible. St. Paul commanded in his Epistle that women should have their heads covered in church.

### *Warden's Wand*

A painted stick with silver or gilt top, emblem of the warden's office. It stands in the warden's pew, or is carried by him in procession.

## VESTMENTS OF THE CLERGY

### BISHOP'S VESTMENTS, ETC.

#### *The Cassock*

Bishops and cathedral clergy wear purple cassocks.

#### *The Rochet*

A long white linen vestment, derived from the alb, with sleeves gathered into a band at the wrist, over which is a narrow black satin band with fluted linen

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cuffs in the fashion of the eighteenth century; or with a broad black satin band like a cuff with a narrow edge of white linen, as may be seen in the old portraits of bishops. Some rochets have alb sleeves.

### *The Chimere*

A black or scarlet satin or silk gown, without sleeves, worn over a rochet, made in the fashion of the outdoor habit of a doctor of divinity of the sixteenth century.

### *The Stole*

This is worn under the chimere. When a bishop wears an alb, he does not cross the stole but lets it hang in front, as he already wears the pectoral cross upon his breast.

### *The Tippet*

A wide scarf, always black, worn over the chimere.

### *The Hood*

An academic hood may be worn over the chimere for any service other than one of the Sacraments of Church.

### *The Cope*

A vestment worn by the clergy, originally an outdoor garment with a hood. It is a long semi-circular cloak of silk, the open front fastened at the neck by a morse. The shield-shaped embroidery at the back is reminiscent of the former hood. It also has an

## The Altar and Vestments

orphrey, or border, of embroidery or velvet. The cope is worn over a rochet, or a surplice, for solemn processions, and at the service of Holy Communion. It may be removed for the sermon. A bishop may also wear Eucharistic vestments.

### *The Mitre*

A bishop's official head-dress, worn with cope or chasuble. It is worn in procession; at Morning or Evening Prayer the wearing is optional; at the Holy Communion it is worn during the Epistle, from the Creed to *Sursum Corda*, and for the Blessing.

### *The Pectoral Cross and Episcopal Ring*

The cross which hangs upon the breast of a bishop. He also wears a signet ring, sign of his Office. In Apostolic times a bishop at his consecration was given his ring and pastoral staff.

### *The Crozier or Pastoral Staff*

This is made in the form of a shepherd's crook, denoting a bishop as head of his flock. He holds it in his left hand during the reading of the Gospel and while he says the Absolution and Blessing. When he carries it in procession, the crook is turned outward toward his flock. In a diocese other than his own, he carries the crook pointing inward, in token of his limited authority. When a chaplain carries the staff he bears it in his right hand.

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## EUCCHARISTIC VESTMENTS

### *The Alb*

A long white linen robe reaching to the hem of the cassock, with straight sleeves. The alb is of Greek origin and is the oldest Christian vestment. It represents the white robe worn by our Lord, and is worn with a girdle of linen rope or a band about the waist, a reminder that our Lord was bound by a rope.

### *The Amice*

An oblong piece of linen worn about the neck over the cassock. It was in the ninth century a hood, signifying the "helmet of salvation."

### *The Stole*

A silk band, following the colour of the season, worn about the neck of the priest over the amice and crossed in front, the ends passed through the girdle of the alb. It symbolizes the yoke of obedience to Christ.

### *The Maniple*

A narrow strip of silk or linen, worn over the left arm of the priest, slightly above the wrist. Probably originally a napkin.

### *The Chasuble*

The last vestment put on by the priest who is to celebrate the Holy Eucharist, and never worn at any other service. It may be of silk or brocade, following the colour of the season, or of white linen. In the

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primitive Church it was a mantle circular in shape, but now is pointed at the bottom both in the front and the back. It has no opening save for the head, representing the seamless robe of Christ. It is usually ornamented with orphreys (strips) about 2½ inches wide, placed like a "Y" cross both in front and at the back; sometimes this "Y" is only in the back, and a straight strip called a "pillar" ornaments the front.

## PRIEST'S AND DEACON'S VESTMENTS

### *The Cassock*

A long black garment of serge or silk, worn by all clergy under surplice, rochet, or alb. It is held together at the waist by a cincture, or a cord, or girdle, signifying self-discipline. The cassock is said to be derived from the tunic of a Roman soldier.

### *The Surplice*

A full white linen vestment derived from the alb, worn by priests and deacons for choir offices, and by many in preference to Eucharistic vestments.

### *The Stole*

The essential insignia of Holy Orders. The narrow band of silk worn over the shoulders of a bishop and a priest for the Eucharist, but worn over the left shoulder only of a deacon, crossed under his right arm. Properly it should be worn for Sacramental offices, and when preaching. Its use dates from the sixth century.

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## *The Tippet*

The black scarf worn over the surplice for choir offices. The ends may be embroidered with arms or emblems.

## *The Hood*

This is worn about the neck and hangs down the back over the surplice, but never at Sacramental offices, as it is a personal adornment only, denoting an academic degree.

## OTHER VESTMENTS

FOR CHORISTERS, SERVERS, ETC.

## *The Cassock*

Choristers and acolytes wear either black or red cassocks. In a cathedral the cassock may be purple.

## *The Cotta*

A short white heavy linen garment worn over the cassock.

## *The Alb*

This may be worn by an acolyte, with coloured girdle and amice.

## *The Verger's Gown*

This is of black serge or silk.

# Part Second

## LITURGICAL COLOURS

OR COLOURS OF THE CHURCH YEAR OR SEASON  
AS GENERALLY USED IN AMERICA

The four Sundays  
in Advent

*Violet*, signifying penitence; rarely, *blue*, signifying truth, eternity.

Christmas Day  
and octave

*White*, signifying purity, perfection.

$\frac{1}{2}$  Feast of the Epiphany  
and octave

*White*.

Sundays after Epiphany

*Green*, signifying hope, regeneration, immortality.

Purification of the  
Blessed Virgin Mary  
(Candlemas), February 2

*White*.

Septuagesima to Lent

*Violet*.

Ash Wednesday  
and Lent

*Violet*. *Brown* linen is sometimes used for the first four weeks of Lent, and *violet* or *red* for Passion Week and Holy Week.

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Palm Sunday	<i>Violet or red.</i>
Maundy Thursday	<i>White</i> for the Eucharist.
Good Friday	The altar is bare.
Easter Even	<i>White.</i>
Easter Day and until Whitsunday	<i>White.</i>
Ascension Day and octave	<i>White.</i>
Whitsunday, Pentecost and octave	<i>Red</i> , the colour of the Holy Spirit; also signi- fying martyrdom and love for God.
Trinity Sunday	<i>White.</i>
Sundays after Trinity	<i>Green.</i>
All Saints' Day and octave	<i>White.</i>
Feasts of the Martyrs	<i>Red.</i>
Holy Innocents' Day	<i>Violet or white</i> , unless on Sunday, when it is <i>red</i> .
Other Saints' Days	<i>White.</i>
Festivals, including Bap- tism, Marriage, etc.	<i>White.</i>
Funerals	<i>Black, violet, or white.</i>
Rogation Days, Ember Days, and Vigils	<i>Violet.</i>

## Liturgical Colours

Ordination and Confir- *White or red.*  
mation

Where only one colour is used in a church, gen-  
erally *red*.

Where only one colour is used in a chapel, very  
often *blue*.



## Part Third

### DIRECTIONS FOR THE WORK OF AN ALTAR GUILD

#### *In Preparation for Services*



THE day before there is to be a celebration of Holy Communion, members of the Altar Guild who are in charge should see that the chancel is carefully cleaned; the Chalice, Paten, and bread box polished; the linen clean and fresh; candles in order; and the frontal, etc., of the season on the Altar. If there be a chapel, that also must be cared for.

There should be at least two members working at one time.

Begin all work in the church with prayer.

Do not go into the church with head uncovered.

Do not put anything upon the Altar itself but the Altar vestments, a cross, two candlesticks, and the desk or cushion for the Altar Book. Leave the Book closed after placing the markers.

The Altar is covered with three linens: the under-cloth, the linen top of the frontal, and the fair linen required by canon. Between services this should be covered with a plain linen or silk protector.

When possible, arrange flowers the day before a service. Do not put them upon the Altar itself if there be a retable behind the Altar, which is the suitable place for vases, and never leave empty vases in

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church, as they are not Altar ornaments but merely conveniences.

The corporal must be folded right side in, in nine squares.

Put markers in the Altar Book for Holy Communion, Collect for the Day, and Proper Preface; also in the Bible for First and Second Lessons for Morning and Evening Prayer. Place Prayer Books for the clergy.

Also, put a Bible, Prayer Book, and a Hymnal in the pulpit.

Fill one cruet with wine and one with water, and put the breads in the bread box. If the morning celebration is very early, the Chalice may be vested the day before and put thus in the safe.

### *In the Morning*

Half an hour before the service, enter the church.

Prayer.

Finish all work in the chancel first, that it may be done before the congregation assembles.

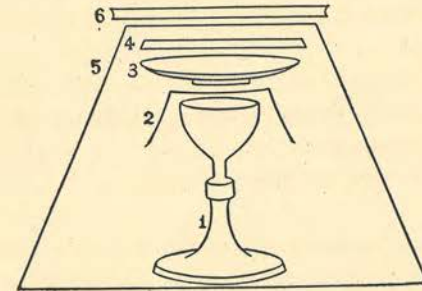
1. Arrange flowers and place on retable.
2. Remove protector linen from the Altar and put fresh linen on the credence.
3. If there be no server to do so, place two glass cruets, one of wine and one of water, on the credence, the box of breads, and the lavabo bason and towel. Also, the alms bason may be placed there. If there be a server, it is his privilege so to place the

## Directions

cruets, etc., upon the credence, and the Guild members will prepare these and place them on the sacristy credence.

### *In the Sacristy*

Place on the sacristy credence the Chalice, covered with a folded purificator; the Paten upon this; on the Paten the pall; over all the silk veil; on top of the



- |                           |                     |                     |
|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1. <i>The Chalice</i>     | 3. <i>The Paten</i> | 5. <i>The veil</i>  |
| 2. <i>The purificator</i> | 4. <i>The pall</i>  | 6. <i>The burse</i> |

veil place the burse, containing the corporal, the second corporal or post-communion veil, if used, and a purificator. If the priest so desires, a priest's wafer may be put on the Paten. Then either the server places the vested Chalice on the Altar before the service, or the priest carries it in, in procession from the sacristy into the sanctuary, not with the choir, but alone or with his assistants for the Eucharist. The

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Guild should not place the Chalice on the Altar, nor spread the corporal; nor should members of the Guild be seen at work by the congregation.

Put the candle-lighter and matches and the extinguisher at hand for the server. A Guild member does not light the candles, but the server or the minister does so.

If there be such a server, have his vestments ready.

If Eucharistic vestments are worn, lay them properly on the table: first the chasuble is placed on it, front side down; on this the maniple, stole, and girdle, so arranged as to form the sacred monogram I.H.S.; on these lay the alb; and on top the amice with strings folded.

### *After the Service*

The priest or the server carries the vessels into the sacristy, and extinguishes the candles.

Do not go into the church until the congregation is dispersed.

1. Wash in hot water the Chalice and the Paten, pouring the water thus used into the piscina or on the ground. Replace Chalice and Paten in the safe. Under no circumstances may the Chalice be left on the Altar after the service, as if it were an ornament.

2. Rinse purificators and, if necessary, the corporal, pouring the water thus used on the ground.

3. Put all linen to be laundered in a special place.

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4. See that fresh linen for the next service is arranged as ordered in the burse, and put away veil and burse.

5. Cover the fair linen with the protector.

6. Trim candles.

The minister and vestry are responsible for placing the alms in the safe, not the members of the Altar Guild.

When the term of service of a member is over, she must see that everything is left in perfect order for the new members coming in, everything clean, inventories checked up, etc.

### OCCASIONAL SERVICES

AT WHICH AN ALTAR GUILD MAY HELP

#### *Holy Baptism*

Fill the ewer with warm water; place a towel on the edge of the font, after the cover has been removed. Place a Prayer Book, marked at the service, near at hand for the minister; also, some for the sponsors. After the service, empty the font and pour the water on the ground, and replace the cover on the font. The font is placed near the door into the church in token that through Baptism we enter the Christian life.

#### *Confirmation*

Assist with veils if necessary. The white or red frontal should be on the Altar. If the girls do not wear

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veils, they should not remove their hats until just before they go up to the chancel and should resume them on returning to the pew.

### *Ordination*

Use either white or red frontal; burse, veil, and stoles.

### *Marriage*

Use white frontal. With great tact, assist in decorating the church. See that no flowers are placed on the Altar itself unless it is a Sarum Altar with no retable, in which case vases may be placed for the service on the Altar, due and reverent care being taken. No flowers should be placed in the font, nor where they will interfere with the clergy. Do not let workmen lay tools on the Altar. If there is to be a rehearsal of the bridal procession, try, by example only, to influence the party by reverence for the chancel. The old saying is wise: "Where precepts fail, example wins."

### *Funeral*

See that the flowers are suitably placed, and offer the use of the funeral pall, if the church is so fortunate as to possess one. No flowers should be put upon it. The coffin is placed in the aisle of the nave before the chancel steps with the foot toward the Altar, the "east." If the coffin be that of a priest, it is placed in the chancel, with the foot toward the Altar, allowing plenty of room for the clergy to pass round it. The coffin must be permanently closed before the

## Directions

funeral services. If it be desired that the body should lie in state, due notice of this should be given and arrangements made that such a period may be completely over before the time set for the service. The body should never so lie in the vestibule, but in a side chapel of the church.

### *High Festivals*

At Christmas and Easter great care is necessary in arranging decorations so that they do not interfere with the clergy in the chancel, nor be so lavish as to take away from the solemn emphasis of the Altar. The Altar must be protected from falling greens or flowers, and no pots or vases may be put upon the Altar itself or where they can do injury to the permanent fabric of the church. Remember that the season of Advent is one of solemn preparation and penitence; no festivities connected with Christmas should take place before Christmas Eve. The hanging of Christmas greens before Christmas Eve comes from the commercial emphasis on the sale of Christmas gifts, and shop windows are decorated to attract buyers. The real Christmas season is from Christmas Eve through Epiphany to Candlemas. Greens, etc., may be taken down immediately after the Octave of Epiphany, and must be taken down immediately before Candlemas, February second.

### *Communion of the Sick*

Every priest needs a complete set of vessels and linens

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for the Communion of the Sick. The linens must be adapted to these vessels which are sometimes of a size to communicate not more than six people. Sometimes a box or basket is kept in the sacristy or rectory, packed with all things needful for this service in case of emergency. Under these conditions it is more practical for the burse and veil to be of linen, which can be easily washed. The fair linen may be a yard long, with five crosses embroidered upon it, one in the centre and one in each corner. It may be laid over any table. The articles needed for the service are: a Chalice, Paten, and box of wafers; a spoon in case the invalid is incapable of drinking from the Cup; a glass cruet of wine and one of water. Sometimes one cruet is sufficient, the priest mixing the wine and water before he leaves the church. Some priests carry a pyx instead of these. There are needed also: a fair linen, veil, burse, corporal, pall, two purificators, all of a size to fit the Chalice, and a Prayer Book. Other articles which the priest may require must be at hand, as also a wooden cross, two candlesticks and candles, and matches.

### DETAIL OF THE WORK

#### OF AN ALTAR GUILD

##### *The Sacristy or Vestry*

The room where the clergy vest. It is convenient to have this open into the chancel as well as into

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the church. In it should be commodious wardrobes for cassocks and surplices, and where Eucharistic vestments are used ample arrangements should be made for their safe-keeping and care, including a large table for proper laying out of these vestments.

In the closet have a comb, brush, and clothes brush. A small desk should be equipped with pen, pencils, ink, blotter, pads, etc. There must be a sacristy credence or table, on which the Chalice is placed before it is taken into the church.

##### *The Working Sacristy*

If possible this room opens into or is near the clergy sacristy. In many churches, however, the Altar Guild must share with the rector the one small room allowed for the busy time before and after the services. Where a Guild can have its own room great care should be taken in planning utmost convenience. Drawers are necessary, wide and shallow, to hold systematically the various articles of linen and silk, etc.; drawers for candles, soap, and supplies; for special towels for wiping the Chalice, other towels, and dusters. A locked cupboard for the demijohn of wine, and for wafers; cupboards for flower vases, brooms, etc.; a workbox, with needles, threads, pins, silks, buttons, thimble, scissors, tapes, measuring tape, etc. An enamel or tin sink, with running water; if there is no running hot water, a kettle heated by gas or electricity is imperative. A shelf for arranging flowers, and a metal waste basket. An enamel port-

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able basin in which to wash the Chalice, corporal, and purificators, so that the water may be poured into the piscina or on the ground. A pressing-iron and board. A book of directions, or a card, for the work to be done, and a pad and pencil for comments. A Church calendar with the colours of the Church seasons marked. It is well, also, to have a small bottle of aromatic spirits of ammonia, with a glass and spoon, in case of sudden illness of any one in the church. On one side of the room should be a long closet with folding doors, within which on swinging wooden arms are attached by hooks the silk Altar frontals, covered from dust by cotton cloth of the same colour as the frontal. Frontals are badly worn by folding. The care of valuable vestments is a sacred trust.

### *The Altar Guild*

This Guild exists to assist the clergy. Where friction or difference of opinion rises between a member of the Guild and the rector, she should carry out the rector's wishes; if she finds herself unable to do so without displaying her feelings, she should resign from the Guild. The same thing applies to working harmoniously with other members. If she finds she cannot do this, she should resign. Of all groups within the Church, surely the members of the Altar Guild must consecrate themselves truly to their work, placing love for Christ above all personal feeling, working together in perfect agreement and peace. The

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Guild must be loyal to the rector under all conditions for the office he holds, and loyal to fellow members of the Guild, for the sacred work in which they are all engaged.

Realizing the privilege of serving as "God's house-keepers," as one clergyman called the Altar Guild, each member should dedicate herself and her work as an offering to God, to whom nothing but the best can be given. Perfect cleanliness and punctuality are absolutely essential in God's House and are the external manifestation of the spirit of loyalty and devotion.

An Altar Guild can only adequately function when its members are inspired by a spirit of devotion which should be paramount and absorbing.

Remember how very important it is for the work of preparation in the chancel to be inconspicuous. Do not bustle about when the congregation is assembling. Arrange the bread and the wine in the sacristy, never in the church. Do not rush in to straighten the linen at the last moment, nor disturb the clergy when they are trying to compose themselves for the service. The Altar Guild should not be seen by the congregation. The more self-effacing a member is, the more valuable she is.

### *The filling of the Cruet*

The filling of the cruet with wine for the Sacrament should be done with greatest care. A small funnel is necessary, and a dozen squares of hemmed cheese-

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cloth, not too fine, to place in this funnel to strain the wine so no sediment will enter the cruet. The cheesecloth must be washed after each using. No spoon is necessary on the Altar, and a fancy article like a tea strainer must never be used for straining the wine. This must not be left until the hour of the service, as it is a slow process. Only the minister should mix the Chalice.

### *The Bread*

The bread is now generally in the form of wafers, either round or in lined sections of a dozen small squares which the priest breaks at the Altar. No member of the Guild should so break these. If the priest desires, a priest's wafer, a little larger than the others, may be placed on the Paten when the Chalice is vested in the sacristy.

### *The Fair Linen Cloth*

When put away in the drawer this may either be carefully folded, or rolled on a roller; or rolled on two rollers, beginning at each end, leaving the cross in the centre between the two rollers. It must never look mussed when in use.

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*There should be an accurate inventory* of Altar linens, etc., for each member to check up and consult. *Each member must complete her work* to the utmost detail, so that the new member coming in will have

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no embarrassment. Linen, silver, vestments, wine, wafers, candles, etc., must be accounted for and listed for the new member to consult.

*Any member unable to meet her appointment* must report at once to the secretary in time for a substitute to be found.

*Smocks of brown linen* are in some parishes used by the Guild with caps of black velvet or white linen. If there is no cap, hats should always be worn.

*There must be a rigid rule* that no gifts be made to the church of linens, or embroideries of linen or silk, or of any ornaments for the Altar or church without consultation beforehand with the rector or vestry. Let it be definitely understood that the rector and vestry have absolute right to refuse any gift whatsoever, if they do not consider it suitable for the church. If this rule is clearly understood, many unfortunate mistakes may be avoided. People are often very inconsiderate of others when they wish to force a gift upon a church.

EMBROIDERIES, ETC.

### *Altar Cloths*

The frontal is the covering for the front of the Altar, which usually has a superfrontal hanging over the top about 6 inches deep. The superfrontal is sometimes used without a frontal. The frontal is attached to a piece of linen covering the top of the Altar and is held in place by hooks in the reredos or by a flat

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brass rod slipped into the hem of the linen top at the back. The frontal may be of silk, velvet, or brocade, with orphreys (strips) of gold or embroidery, or it may be of beautiful, but inexpensive, coloured figured linen. It is well to have a frontal designed by an artist, as it is composition of line and colour which makes the effect rather than fine needlework. Such a frontal is within the scope of any parish to achieve, for any needlewoman who is a good fitter can make a very beautiful Altar cloth with strips of harmonizing colours in different widths and materials. The handsome guipure or guimp which is now imported makes very decorative orphreys, though expensive, as the real gold thread, which lasts for years, is very costly. Orphreys ought not to be more than 3 inches wide; if wider, they take from the grace of the vestment, whether a frontal or chasuble. Neither should a superfrontal hang too low. Six inches is deep enough. While attaching a frontal to the Altar, great care must be taken to have it fit accurately. Careless vesting of an Altar gives it an unloved look. The material of the frontal must not cover the Altar top, but is attached to a linen top.

### *Lace*

For those who appreciate the value of hand-made lace, a festival frontlet of real lace makes deep appeal. Such priceless artistry should be used to decorate the Altar, even though Anglican tradition may

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not include lace on the Altar. Under no circumstances whatever ought machine-made lace to be used, nor cotton lace, crochet, tatting, filet, cut-work, or anything that suggests domestic usage or "pretty frippery." If a point-lace handkerchief is given as a veil, care must be taken, if it has been used personally, to replace the centre with fine hand-made linen, with a cross embroidered in the middle. Lace is kept in blue wrappings, with a piece of beeswax to preserve it. To sew on lace which is frequently changed use fine thread and large stitches.

### *Brocade*

may be found in any good shop of patterns well reproduced from the best ancient designs. "Ecclesiastical brocade," as such, is usually a factory designed affair without real beauty, and to be avoided. White brocade or silk should always be of an ivory tone, never a bluish white.

### *Stoles*

are more beautiful when narrow, 2 inches wide, and slightly splayed at the ends. The Victorian Age, responsible for much that we find ugly now, created precedents for the clumsy broad stoles. When the eye can be accustomed to the grace of the thirteenth century narrow stole, it will be found much more acceptable, as well as more convenient, than the nineteenth century Roman type. The stole is generally 8 or 9 feet long.



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### *A Corporal*

should never be hemstitched or embroidered, save for the simple cross near the hem in the front third. It is dangerous to stand the Chalice on heavy embroidery; also, such embroidery might catch and hold crumbs. Never sew Altar linens by machine, or substitute cotton or damask for pure linen.

### *Linens*

The minimum number of linens required for an Altar are:

Two fair linens, made of good linen, not too thin, with one-inch hem on the sides and two- or three-inch hems on the ends, the linen to be the exact size of the top of the Altar and hang down at the ends 18 inches or so below.

Two corporals of the same linen, 18 or 21 inches square, with a half-inch hem all around, the only embroidery a small cross in the centre of the front third near the hem. Great care must be taken to have the hemming very fine.

Six purificators of fine absorbent linen 11 to 13 inches square, with smallest possible hem.

Two post-communion veils of fine linen, with a cross in the centre.

The pall, about 7 inches square, with two sets of linen covers.

A burse, about 8 or 9 inches square, of linen or

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silk; if only one set of colours is used in a church, this may be of red silk.

A veil, about 20 to 24 inches square, depending on the height of the Chalice, of silk to match the burse and lined with silk or linen.

Two linen credence covers and two sacristy-crecence covers.

Two dust protectors for the fair linen.

### PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

*Gold or silver embroidery* must be protected in the drawer by cotton cloth of the same colour as the vestment it covers. Never use white bleached by sulphur. Do not lay anything heavy on embroidery, and do not fold.

*Linen fringe* is difficult to launder as it shrinks and wrinkles the linen.

*Cloth vestments* of any kind are to be avoided on account of moths. Never leave soiled or mussed linen in the same drawer with fresh linen.

*To remove wine stains*, use cold water or boiling milk.

*To cleanse wine cruet*, use shot or egg-shells with water and gently shake.

*To remove wax* from linen, use cold water, never hot, and rub gently. To remove wax from carpet, scrape, then place blotting or brown paper over the spot and press with hot iron.

*To cleanse white silk or velvet*, use equal parts of

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French chalk and borax on the article, well covered, leave for twenty-four hours, shake off, wipe, or brush with clean brush.

*To remove water stains from wood* a drop of camphor is usually effective. Wipe off immediately.

*To launder lace*, do not rub; soak in cold water, then place in pan lined with a clean cloth, with a little ivory soap, and boil. To dry, wind carefully on a clean milk bottle or the edge of a porcelain tub. If it is necessary to iron it, protect the lace with flannel between it and the iron.

*No starch or bluing* is used in Altar linens. These linens are to be laundered by devoted members of the Guild and never sent to an ordinary laundry. Sometimes such work is given to a member of the parish who accepts financial aid for this, in which instance it is well to include her as a member of the Guild for this work only, that she may benefit from meetings and teachings of the Guild, and do her part with added reverence.

*Old vestments* should be reverently burned.

*The laundering of surplices, albs, and cottas* may be done by regular laundresses.

*Candles* should be very carefully fitted to the candlesticks to be perfectly straight. Things askew on the Altar suggest irreverence. A piece of surgeon's plaster wound on the end helps to fit the candle, but must not show. To clean wax candles, wipe them with a cloth dampened with turpentine.

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*Bobèches* of glass protect candlesticks from dripping wax. Candles for the Altar are made of pure wax. There is no rule for measuring the height of the candle by the Altar cross, for both cross and candle are symbolic of Christ. So a Christmas candle in the window is not a decoration but a symbol, and should be a real candle, and only lighted on Christmas Eve, to light the way of the Christ-child to the home.

*Flowers* ought not to obstruct the real ornaments of the Altar. Do not make too great a display. There is no rule about flowers, except that they harmonize with the colour of the frontal. Red is expected at Whitsunday, but not on Christmas, when white seems more suitable, as it does at Easter. Light pink never looks well unless mixed with various colours. Do not allow flowers to wither in church; also, do not leave empty vases on the retable, as they are not Altar ornaments.

*Altar Flowers* are often given as memorials. Many parishes have the lovely custom of sending flowers from the Altar to the sick with a card such as this:

*These flowers from the Altar of . . . Church are sent to assure you that you are remembered in the prayers offered there. May they bring to you something of the peace and blessing of God's House.*