

Handbook for Acolytes



The Episcopal Diocese of
Oklahoma

Handbook for Acolytes

The following handbook is intended as a beginning resource for any church in the diocese to take and edit for their own purposes. As such, it may include practices or guidelines that do not apply to your particular mission, parish, or to the cathedral. It also likely will not include some items specific to your community of faith. You should feel free to edit this document so that it fits your context and worship community. Churches are asked to contact the diocesan Director of Christian Formation for the latest revision of this resource or to check the diocesan web site if this is posted to that location.

The primary source documents for this handbook are:

- Instructions for Acolytes: Server, Crucifer and Torchbearer at Saint Augustine of Canterbury. Saint Augustine of Canterbury Episcopal Church, Oklahoma City, OK. October 2012 Edition.
- Smith, Whit. The Acolyte's Handbook. Christ Episcopal Church, Corning, NY. Revision 5.16.
- Additional minor sources from both print and the internet were consulted.

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Intended Audience and Purpose

The intended audience of this handbook is for youth or adults serving as acolytes in the Episcopal Churches of the Diocese of Oklahoma.

The purpose of this *handbook* is to help you understand about being an acolyte in your church. Acolytes play an important role in the worship service.

If you have questions, PLEASE ASK! Ask your Acolyte Master, your clergy or even the diocese. We may even change the *handbook* to make it clearer based on your questions.

The idea is for this *handbook* to be easy to understand and to help in your training as an acolyte – AND to be a **reminder** to the experienced acolytes.

The Role of the Acolyte

In the early days of the church, being an acolyte was the first Order into which new Christians could begin to take on roles assisting or leading the communal worship of the church. The earliest acolytes had two responsibilities: to light and put out the candles or torches (remember the earliest church services were held in closed houses for fear of persecution if they were caught) and to be an extra set of hands for the celebrant or presider who led the service.

The Acolyte's role is to serve – to help in the presentation of the worship service. An acolyte is a **leader** and a **helper**.

Therefore, the **acolyte must learn their role** in the service and pay attention. If something goes amiss, the Priest might ask you to do something a little different. For example, if the Priest forgets their glasses, they may ask you to retrieve them.

A good acolyte also **anticipates** the next step in the service, so you're always "at the ready" when it's time for the next thing to happen in the worship service.

You are a minister! The role of the acolyte is liturgical. This means that acolytes play a formal and important role in worship. It's a ministry and that makes you a minister.

Don't worry about making a mistake. It will get corrected – and you will know how to avoid the mistake the next time. Chances are no one in the congregation noticed anyway. Be comfortable in your role as a leader and a helper. But use the opportunity to pay attention and to learn.

Preparation

- ❖ Before you serve as an Acolyte, make sure you have read and will continue to review this Handbook and any notes your Acolyte Master provides.
- ❖ At your church you will have a person (or two) who serves as the Acolyte Master. This is the person responsible for training you as an acolyte. In different churches, the person may have other jobs or titles in addition to being the Acolyte Master (for example, it could be a Verger or one of the Deacons). This person is there to help you do an excellent job. Ask them questions and pay attention when they are teaching so you will be prepared.
- ❖ During and after your training, your practice and movements should be prayerful and dignified. As one of the ministers up front, you set the example for the congregation. You should always be paying attention and practice being in the moment of worship while also anticipating what will come next.
- ❖ Never be in a hurry. The service should be kept moving, but at a dignified pace.
- ❖ Remember if you make a mistake, simply stop and accept the directions given by the clergy or other ministers.
- ❖ All acolytes will receive a schedule of services for the coming month or season. For young acolytes, this may be sent to your parents. The schedule is made after talking to different ministries to determine the most sensible schedule – based on availability – as best we can. If there is a schedule problem or if plans change (things do come up) the assigned acolytes are responsible trying to find a substitute or notifying the Acolyte Master in your church.
- ❖ The Priest is responsible for conducting the service, but you must remember that as Acolytes you are the Priest's assistant/attendant.

Vestments and Attire

- ❖ Acolytes are normally “vested”. This means that you wear a uniform when you are serving. The vestments help people attending the service to know where they can ask questions; so, do not be surprised if visitors or other members ask you questions before the service. You may be asked to answer questions if there is visiting clergy.
- ❖ Acolytes should be dressed appropriately. In some churches this means in a cassock and surplice, and in other churches this will be in an alb or cassock-alb with a rope belt called a cincture. Different vestments may be worn in certain seasons or for special events. Your Acolyte Master or clergy will direct you in selecting the appropriate vestments. Cassocks or albs should ideally be at least ankle length or to top of shoes (if your church does not have one that fits you well select the closest vestment that is available).



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HOW TO TIE A ROPE CINCTURE



Fold cincture in half



Wrap around waist with knots on your right side



Grab end of loop made by the fold and overlap as shown



Using right hand, slip loop over left hand, keeping hold of cincture



Grab knotted end with your right hand



Slip knotted ends through loop (where left hand is making sure that single loop is on top of double cincture.) Feed knotted ends through loop from top to bottom



Drop loop and then tighten around waist



Knot is on left hip

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Acolytes lined up for Procession

Permission granted for use of this photograph

- ❖ Robe quietly, and reverently. Check your vestments. You are preparing to enter the presence of God and to serve at the altar.
- ❖ Do not wear flip-flops or shoes with lights that are noisy or draw attention. Wear comfortable shoes that you can stand in for long periods of time and remain focused on your responsibility. If your shoes hurt your feet after standing for a while, you will be distracted. And if you are distracted, you will distract others who are worshipping.
- ❖ There is no specific dress code for Acolytes for the whole diocese, however, your church may have one. Regardless, you are expected to be neat in appearance. Those who have showered seem to be more awake in the morning. Please make sure your hair is combed.
- ❖ In the winter, never wear heavy or bulky sweaters or thick winter clothes under your robe. Extra layers of clothing can lead to you becoming light-headed or faint. Churches turn their thermostats to accommodate the weather outside, and with heating and church lights, all

contribute to you being very uncomfortable.

- ❖ Please eat something before you serve as an Acolyte to prevent growling stomachs.

Presentation and Behavior

- ❖ Never chew gum.
- ❖ Have your hair combed, your hands and fingernails clean.
- ❖ Your appearance and outward behavior should be devout and reverent.
- ❖ There should be no form of distraction when serving at the Altar.
- ❖ When sitting, you should sit with your knees together, do not cross your legs, be still and be attentive with both feet firmly on the floor in front of you.
- ❖ Do not make unnecessary hand movements. The congregation observes any varying forms of unrest or distraction shown by anyone serving “up front” and this reflects on all the servers.
- ❖ Everyone in the Acolyte party should always start walking on the same foot. If everyone starts on the same foot, the motion of the group looks more coordinated. Take short steps and keep your head erect with eyes straight ahead. Walk in a dignified, unhurried manner in the performance of your duties. Your Acolyte Master will help coordinate which foot to start with.
- ❖ Please discuss IN ADVANCE with your Acolyte Master instructions for leaving the worship space in the event you are sick.

Before the Service

- ❖ Always arrive at least twenty minutes before the worship service is to begin. You should be in your vestments at least fifteen minutes before the service (or earlier as directed by your Acolyte Master for your church).
- ❖ Check the Bulletin for changes and additions to the worship service.



- ❖ Check the Candle lighters to see if the wick/taper is long enough.
- ❖ Check for matches or lighters.
- ❖ When lighting candles, light the Candle lighters first. Hold the Candle lighters in front of you at a slight angle. Light the candles in accordance with the instructions you received in training.
- ❖ If the Pascal

candle is present, this **must be** the first candle lit and the last candle extinguished.

- ❖ Remember Nave candles are the first to be lit and the first to be extinguished. Other candles are taken care of after the Nave candles. (But follow the direction of your Acolyte Master for your church in case there are differences.)
- ❖ Walk up the steps to the Altar with a positive natural movement. When carrying a liturgical implement (tool), such as a cross or torches or candle lighter or a Gospel Book, DO NOT BOW. If you are carrying an item for the service, your attention should be focused on safely carrying the item and not tripping. If your hands are empty or you are only holding a bulletin, then please bow when approaching the altar area. Your Acolyte Master will show you where or how close to be before bowing in your Nave.
- ❖ Always remember to stand directly in front of the candle/candles when lighting or extinguishing. Always turn in toward one another when moving on either side around the sanctuary. When extinguishing candles, remember that the bell-shaped cap needs to cover the candle completely; this may require you to take a step back and hold the extinguisher higher and lean it in more, so it sets flat on top of the candle. But set the cap onto the candle straight up-and-down. Do not pull on the candle when capping or lifting or the candle may tip and fall.
- ❖ Carefully extinguish and return the candle lighters to their place.
- ❖ Take care of any errands the rector may require.



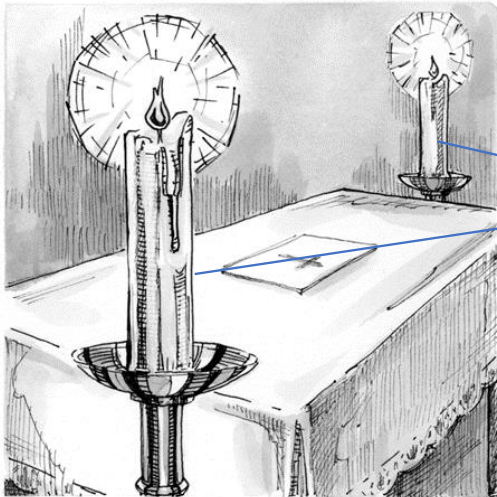
Extinguishing the Pascal Candle

Images for Candle Work



Move to the left side of the altar (Gospel side). Stand directly in front of candle #2 and light it.

Move to the right side of the altar (Epistle side). Stand directly in front of candle #1 and light it.



Lit torches are placed one on each side of the altar.

Lighting the Candles behind the Altar

For 1 Acolyte



9 8 7 6 5 4 3	3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Light this side first in this order	
Altar candles are #1 and 2 and seen on the first page.	



It does not matter the shape of your candelabra or the number of candles. Start on the right-hand side facing the candles, begin with the candle closest to the center or the cross and work your way out.

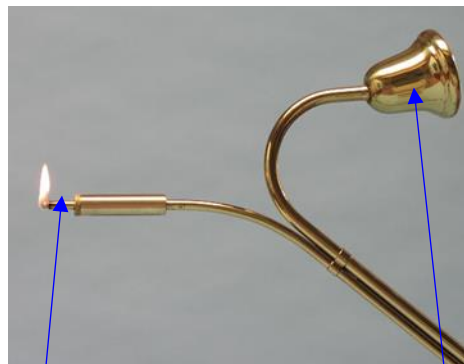
For 2 Acolytes

The same rule for lighting the candles as if there were only 1 person. HOWEVER, you should both be lighting the correct candles simultaneously. Each acolyte should be able to see the other and move at the same time from one candle to the next.



Extinguishing the Candles Behind the Altar

The same rule for lighting the candles as if there were only 1 person. HOWEVER, you should both be lighting the correct candles simultaneously. Each acolyte should be able to see the other and move at the same time from one candle to the next.



Taper

Bell

For 1 Acolyte

The left side is extinguished first.

This time, the candles are extinguished from the outside into the center.

Then go to the right side and extinguish the ones on the right from the outside into the center.

Candles are extinguished in the reverse order as they are lighted.



For 2 Acolytes

Both Acolytes will work together to extinguish the candles. Each acolyte should be able to see the other and move at the same time from one candle to the next.

This time they are extinguished from the outside into the center.

You should both meet in the center at the same time.

Candles are extinguished in the reverse order as they are lighted.

Final Thoughts on Candle Work

1. Each church has a pattern for lighting candles. Please check with your Acolyte Master or Clergy for any specific instructions.
2. Lighting the candles – if they are actual wax candles, make sure the wick has a “pre-burn” before the service. The Altar Guild should do this. Sometimes new wax candles are very difficult to light without this pre-burn.

3. There are special ways to use the “bell” end of the candle lighter. You should practice this. You want to make sure you have the oxygen removed from the area so the flame will go out. You will need to keep the bell on the flame longer than you expect.
4. Seasonal Changes – You can expect some liturgical and seasonal candle duties. Your Acolyte Master or Clergy will be able to instruct you on those lighting procedures.
5. This job should be done with as much reverence as when you are processing in. This is not a time to play. You are dealing with fire.

The Acolyte’s Posture

The following are guidelines for how to stand or present yourself in various actions. Your Acolyte Master will instruct you on specifics for your church based on the worship space and the level of formality in your church’s worship.

- ❖ When Standing - Stand up straight, do not lock your knees, hands at your side.
- ❖ When Kneeling - Put all your weight on your knees and kneel upright. Do not squat or slouch. Do not rest back, partially sitting on the pew or chair behind you or sitting back on your heels.
- ❖ When Genuflecting - This is a sign of reverence to the Blessed Sacraments when reserved in the Ambry, Tabernacle or on the Altar. It is done simply with dignity. Stand up straight, bend your right knee until it touches the floor, and keep your back straight. Do not genuflect while carrying a liturgical implement, especially a torch or candle. Your Acolyte Master will instruct you on whether you genuflect while serving, when you will and demonstrate how.
- ❖ When Bowing - There are two types of bows; the solemn and the simple. The solemn bow is from the waist and is used when reverencing the Altar or Cross. The simple bow is made with the head at the name of Jesus and other occasions of reverence such as raising the Host and Chalice. Never bow when carrying a candle or processional cross.
- ❖ When Sitting - Sit up straight in the pew with knees and feet together on the floor.
- ❖ When Walking - Always walk slowly and with reverence when serving at the altar. Your movements should be slow and positive.
- ❖ Your Eyes - Should always be focused on where the congregation should be looking; they look to you as an example and you lead them. You must focus and concentrate on your serving duties.
- ❖ Your Hands - When sitting your hands should always be folded and on your lap. When standing they should be folded and held about the waist level or straight at your side.

The Order of the Worship

The following is a typical Order of Worship for the Holy Eucharist services. Some seasons and churches may vary.

- The Processional entrance - with Hymn or Song.
- The Preparation and Acclamation - with Collect of the Day.
- The Lessons - Old Testament, Psalm, Epistle, Sequence Hymn/Gospel Acclamation Hymn and Gospel.
- The Sermon
- The Nicene Creed
- The Prayers of the People concluding with Confession of Sins and Absolution
- The Peace

- The Offertory – Collection of offerings and Presentation of the Eucharistic elements (Host and Wine) and Washing of Celebrant’s hands with Lavabo.
- The Great Thanksgiving - (Sanctus; Consecration; Lord’s Prayer.)
- The Breaking of the Host- (Invitation to the communicants, the Ministration of the Host and Wine.)
- Post Communion - Prayer of Thanksgiving, Blessing, Recessional, Hymn and the Dismissal.



Gospel Procession

Acolyte Specific Items during the Order of Worship

When acting as the Crucifer you will lead the procession to the Altar (you may follow a verger or thurifer if your church has them but otherwise you are first) with the Processional Cross elevated to a comfortable level as guided by your Acolyte Master. You do not bow or genuflect. You will usually be accompanied by two torch bearers who walk beside you or slightly behind based on the width of your church’s aisle. You will move to place the Cross in its stand (and torches are moved to their places) before you go to your seat. How long you stand up front before taking your place will vary by your church’s tradition and your Acolyte Master will teach you the right timing.

The Collect of the Day will be offered, followed by an Old Testament and Psalm reading and finally the Epistle. At the commencement of the Sequence Hymn (also called a Gospel Acclamation Hymn), the Gospel party will prepare. Some churches include the Processional Cross as part of the Gospel

Procession before it is read; other churches allow the Gospel Book to be the center of undivided attention and the Cross is not included.



Reading of the Gospel

Torches almost always accompany the Gospel for the reading. If your church uses incense and a thurifer, they will be in the procession. The Gospel is taken to its place and read and then the procession reforms and returns the Gospel to the altar. This will be one action you will practice a lot in acolyte training and your Acolyte Master will guide you in how this is done in your church. The Gospel is normally read by a Deacon who may carry the Gospel or there may be an acolyte who carries the Gospel and holds it while it is read.

The Preacher (may be the priest, celebrant, a deacon or a guest preacher) will move to the pulpit or ambo for the sermon, which when completed will be followed by the Nicene Creed and the Prayers for the People, and then the prayer of contrition and absolution will be recited. Remember to focus on the preacher and to lead the congregation to stand or kneel at the right times.

The priest will then say the Pax Vobiscum (Peace be with you). Different churches share the Peace differently. Regardless, you need to be in your places as the Peace concludes so you are ready to move to the altar for Communion.

The Celebrant or Presider says an Offertory Sentence (a scripture) and then turns and approaches the Altar. The Celebrant is joined by the ministers who will serve at the Altar. At this time the acolytes who will serve at the altar also enter the Altar sanctuary and close the gates of the Communion rail if your church has them. Normally, there are three acolyte duties inside the altar rail (your church may have more or fewer and some may change with the seasons. In most cases, an acolyte will meet the ushers when they bring the offering plates to the altar and take the plates to the Celebrant. An acolyte will use the Lavabo bowl to wash the hands of the Celebrant before they begin the Eucharistic Prayer. And, an acolyte will ring the Sanctus Bells at the appropriate places in the Eucharist Prayer (as taught by your local Acolyte Master). In Lent, some churches do not ring the Sanctus Bells and that duty goes away. In other churches, acolytes may be assigned to hold the gluten free bread so clergy can reach for it when need to distribute. And still other duties could occur, so pay close attention to your Acolyte Master. Remember to receive Communion, don't let yourself get skipped among your duties.

After Communion, there is a Post-Communion Prayer, a Blessing, and a Dismissal. Some churches perform the Dismissal from the Altar before the Procession out of the church and others perform it from the doors after the Procession out. Still others change with the seasons for various reasons. Your Acolyte Master will guide you in what you need to do in your church.

Once all liturgical implements are put away and candles are extinguished, all Acolytes are then dismissed, and you can return to the Vesting Sacristy and put your vestments away.

Episcopal Liturgical (Worship) Seasons and Colors



Liturgical Calendar indicates seasonal colors

For the most part the Episcopal church follows the Roman Catholic practice or what is called the Sarum Rite, which is the ordering of our liturgy, the Daily Office, and the Liturgical Calendar. The following color guides are provided according to the Sarum Rite, but your Acolyte Master will teach you what is done in your church.

The worship vestments worn by the clergy and lay ministers (Cope, Chasuble, Stole, Alb, Cincture, etc.) and the hangings placed on the altar, pulpit, etc. have a structured order of meaning and color. Acolyte cassock or cinctures may change colors with the seasons. The sequences of these colors have a visual role in celebrating certain Christian festivals and seasons. The seasons and their corresponding colors are as follows:

- **ADVENT – BLUE or PURPLE (one Sunday is ROSE):** Advent is the beginning of the church year and marks the time of our preparation for the birth of the Christ child at the Feast of the Nativity (Christmas). Before the Sarum Rite, Advent's color was Purple (the same as Lent) because in both Advent and Lent we prepare ourselves for Christmas and Easter through Penitence. Over time, Advent was found by many to not be as Penitential as Lent and distinctions between Preparation and Penitence led to the use of Blue as an Advent color rather than Purple which is still used at Lent. One Sunday in both Advent and Lent each (3rd Advent and 4th Lent) were softened and some rules relaxed. Softening the purple meant taking away some of the blue from the purple which left a soft rose color (many priests get touchy when you call it pink). That is why many Advent Wreaths in churches have one pink/rose candle.
- **CHRISTMAS – WHITE or SILVER:** Christmas is not a day but a season in the church. It has twelve days and begins with Christmas and concludes the night before Epiphany (called Twelfth Night in older times). The 12 Days of Christmas do not lead to Christmas but start with Christmas.
- **EPHAPHANY – WHITE or SILVER:** Epiphany is January 6th. The first Sunday after Epiphany every year is the Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord. These are major feasts of the church year and are vested, like Christmas, in white or a similar color.
- **SUNDAYS AFTER EPIPHANY – GREEN (or WHITE):** Most churches, after the Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord, will switch to green for vestments and altar colors until the season after Epiphany ends. Some churches however view the Epiphany season as a single season and keep white vestments until Ash Wednesday just as Christmas colors are kept all 12 days or Easter colors are kept throughout the Easter season.

- **ASH WEDNESDAY and LENT – PURPLE or SACKCLOTH/BURLAP or MUDCLOTH:** Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent. During this time, members of the church focus on



Sample Liturgical colors for chasubles

penitence, things in their lives that are not quite the way God would want them to be and how to fix those things. Lent is a solemn season (even though 4th Lent softens to Rose colors) and you will find crosses being veiled or covered, there may be less music, or the service may switch to using the older Rite I Elizabethan language. These are all efforts to make the space and worship into a place that reminds people of what they should be doing during Lent.

- **HOLY WEEK – BLOOD RED:** Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday, the Sunday before Easter Sunday. Palm Sunday is still in Lent, so

some churches may keep their Purple colors but most mark this week leading to the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Christ with a color change. Some churches may not have a blood red set of vestments and will use the red they use for martyrs' feast days or at Pentecost. Lent ends with the start of the Maundy Thursday service which keeps the blood red or purple used in the rest of Holy Week, up to this point. Maundy Thursday begins a set of three services called the Triduum (three days in Latin). The second is Good Friday (some call it God's Friday) which is frequently vested in BLACK or may keep the blood red. The third service is the Great Vigil of Easter which is vested like Easter described below.

- **EASTER – WHITE or SILVER or GOLD:** Easter season begins during the Great Vigil service and is the most important celebration of the church. Easter is a season that lasts until Pentecost.
- **PENTECOST – RED or FLAME/FIRE colors:** Pentecost is 50 days after Easter and remembers when the Holy Spirit came to the early church after Christ's Ascension to Heaven. Because the disciples were described as having tongues of flame appearing over them, red or other fiery colors are used. The Sunday after Pentecost is Trinity Sunday and many churches keep the Pentecost colors for Trinity Sunday but some change to green for the Sundays after Pentecost.
- **SUNDAYS AFTER PENTECOST – GREEN:** Either on Trinity Sunday or the Sunday after, all churches switch to green and this is the "long green season". For approximately the next half year, other than major feast days, vestments are green.
- **ALL SAINTS DAY – WHITE:** Traditionally ministers when celebrated separately wear WHITE on ALL SAINTS DAY (November 1st) and BLACK on ALL SOULS DAY. It is more usual, however, to celebrate the two together and where WHITE.
- **MAJOR FEASTS, MARTYRS AND ORDINATIONS – WHITE or RED:** For major feast days, colors will change to white unless it is the feast of a martyr in which case red is used. Red is also used for Ordination services of Deacons and Priests unless the Ordination is on a major feast and the bishop declares it a White day.
- **BAPTISMS, FUNERALS, AND WEDDINGS – WHITE:** For baptisms, funerals and weddings white is the traditional color used. However, sometimes BLACK, for requiem masses, and RED are used at funerals. Make sure you check with the acolyte master, clergy, or verger for instructions.

Words of our Worship (Definitions)

The definitions and explanations given for Church Vestments and Instruments of Worship, in this short description are meant to be user friendly. They are meant to explain the words of language and topics of the Church, with the hope that you will read it, understand it and use it.

- **ABSOLUTION:** Prayer of forgiveness said by the Priest after the prayer of Contrition, the pronouncement of God's forgiveness.
- **ACOLYTE:** One of the minor orders of the ministry, an Altar attendant, a server in public worship.
- **ALB:** A long white garment with narrow sleeves and generally worn over the top of the cassock and Amice or just over normal clothes.
- **ALTAR:** The table or structure on which the Eucharist is celebrated.
- **AMICE:** A rectangular piece of white cloth with tapes attached, worn to protect vestments from perspiration and worn under the Alb as a hood.
- **AUMBRY (or Tabernacle):** A secure place for reservation of sacred elements, which are: wine, Communion hosts and consecrated oils for the sick, baptisms and deaths.
- **BANNS:** Meaning to proclaim, that is a notice of intended marriage, given two or three successive Sundays prior to the wedding. This is optional within the Episcopal Church.
- **BAPTISM:** Religious Rite where water is a sign of purification and of admission to the Church, generally accompanied by name giving.
- **BENEDICTION:** A blessing given by the clergy (Bishop, Priest, Rector or Vicar) at the end of a service of worship.
- **BISHOP:** An ordained minister charged with guarding the Faith, unity and discipline of the Church and Diocese.



- **CANDELABRUM:** Large branched candlestick holder
- **CANON:** There are three meanings you should be aware of:
 - 1- An ecclesiastical law (traditional morals for the Church or the Clergy)
 - 2- Authoritative Books of the Bible.
 - 3- A Cleric appointed to the role as an advisor to the bishop or as supporting the bishop's cathedral.
- **CANTICLE:** Hymn; one of the Episcopal Prayer Book hymns.
- **CASSOCK:** A long narrow garment with narrow sleeves reaching from the shoulders to the ankles. The cassock has varying colors which denote major or minor garbs of Church order.
- **CATECHISM:** means Religious Instruction.
- **CATHEDRAL:** A Church so called because it is the site of the Chair of the Bishop.
- **CHALICE:** A footed cup used for consecration of the wine used for administering communion.
- **CHASUBLE:** Sleeveless vestment of a celebrant at a Eucharistic or Worship service.
- **CIBORIUM:** A covered vessel containing host wafers of the communion.
- **CINCTURE:** Broad flat band of cloth or corded rope, worn sash-wise about the waist over the cassock.



- **COLLECT:** A brief prayer appointed each Sunday at the beginning of a Worship Service, said for and on behalf of the people by the Priest.
- **CORPORAL:** A white linen cloth (approx. 20" square), placed upon the Altar upon which the Chalice and Paten are placed.
- **CREEDS:** The Apostle's and Nicene Creeds are basic statements of the universal Christian Church and personal belief.
- **CREDENCE:** Side table or shelf within the Sanctuary for sacramental elements during the Worship Service.
- **CRUCIFER:** The Acolyte or person who carries the Processional Cross or Crucifix at the head of a procession. The Cross or Crucifix must always be carried with reverence and dignity, fully raised, and straight for all to view.
- **CRUET:** A flask or vessel used for the water and wine.
- **CUSTOMARY:** A publication setting out the requirements and way certain Church Rites and ceremonies are performed.
- **DEACON:** The first order of ordination, charged with a servant role to the Bishop and priests.
- **DEAN:** Head of Cathedral exercising supervision over group of parochial clergy or collegiate-church chapter resident fellow with disciplinary and advisory functions.
- **DIOCESE:** A Geographical area containing a minimum of six parishes under the jurisdiction of a Bishop.
- **DOXOLOGY:** Words said chanted or sung in praise.
- **EPIPHANY:** The feast of Manifestation of our Lord, the period between January and Ash Wednesday.
- **EPISTLE:** Letters of the New Testament, the Acts of the Apostles. The lesson during a Eucharistic Service preceding the Gospel.
- **EUCHARIST:** Means Thanksgiving, it has two parts. The Liturgy and the celebration of Communion. The principle act of worship.
- **EXTREME UNCTION:** The anointing with oil of a person when imminent death is expected. Part of the Last Rites.
- **GENUFLECTION:** The bending of the right knee when reverencing the Blessed Sacraments, also, out of obeisance; an expression of respect and courtesy.
- **GOSPEL:** The word of God taken from one of the four Gospels in the New Testament.
- **HOLY COMMUNION:** The consecration of the Bread and Wine (spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ) – The gift of God.
- **HOLY WATER:** Water blessed by the Bishop or Priest for use in blessing the people or liturgical purposes such as Baptism of Weddings and at the discretion of the Priest for funerals.
- **LAVABO:** The washing basin for the celebrant's fingers prior to the consecration of the sacramental bread and wine.
- **LENT:** The season of penitence (approx. 40 days) which begins on Ash Wednesday in preparation for the Holy Week of Easter and ends Palm Sunday.
- **LITANY:** Any form of prayer with petitions and responses.
- **LITURGY:** The "work of the people" at any public celebration of the Church, such as the Holy Eucharist.
- **MANIPLE:** A band of cloth worn over the left arm by the celebrant at the Eucharistic Service and is the same color as the Stole and Chasuble.
- **MITRE:** The triangular shaped head covering worn by a Bishop.



- **NAVE:** The body of the Church where people congregate for the liturgy and celebration of the Eucharistic Service.
- **OFFERTORY:** The preparation for the consecration of the Sacraments, the beginning of the Eucharist and Communion presentation.
- **PALL:** A stiffened square of linen or white cloth that is placed over the Chalice to keep objects from falling into the wine. It also refers to the cloth covering the casket or the container holding ashes during a Burial Service for the Dead within the body of the Church.
- **PASCHAL CANDLE:** A large white candle which may be decorated with a Cross, the year of blessing, alpha and omega, and other symbols of the Resurrection. It is used at the beginning of the Great VIGIL of Easter (approx. 50 days), when a Baptism is performed and may be placed near the casket at the burial of the Dead.



- **PATEN:** A metal plate on which the hosts for the Eucharist is used by the Priest for presentation to members of the congregation at the communion rail.
- **PSALM:** A portion from the ancient Jewish hymn book found in Scripture and in the Book of Common Prayer (pp 585-808).
- **PURIFICATOR:** A linen or white cloth used for cleansing the Chalice during the ablutions, or for wiping the Chalice during the administration of Communion.
- **PYX:** A receptacle for reserving the Blessed Sacraments for use in administering Communion to the Sick.
- **RITE I:** The liturgies in The Book of Common Prayer that are in traditional language.
- **RITE II:** The liturgies in The Book of Common Prayer that are in modern language.
- **SACRISTY:** A room or rooms where vessels, vestments and other liturgical objects are kept, and where the celebrant and assistants vest before the liturgy.
- **SANCTUARY:** The area of the Church surrounding the Altar.
- **SEQUENCE HYMN:** A hymn sung between the Epistle and Gospel and would normally relate to the lesson appointed for that day.
- **SIMPLE BOW:** The inclination of one's head and shoulders as a sign of respect.
- **SOLEMN BOW:** An inclination from the waist as a sign of reverence.
- **STOLE:** A long strip of material worn by Bishops, Priests and Deacons when officiating at the Eucharist or other sacramental functions.
- **SURPLICE:** An ample white vestment worn over a cassock. It has full sleeves, round or square (neck) yoke, and is at least mid-calf in length.
- **TE DEUM:** A song of Praise at the Eucharist or on days of special Thanksgiving, usually with morning prayers.
- **THURIBLE:** A ceremonial container in which incense is burned.
- **TORCH BEARERS:** Acolytes who carry torches or processional candles.
- **VESTMENT:** Any article of liturgical clothing worn over street clothing by those officiating or assisting at a liturgical celebration.