

# SACRISTAN INTRODUCTION

(Updated Jan. 09)

Thank you for your willingness to serve as a member of our Sacristan's Ministry Team! The sacristans of our church are a group of members who cherish our worship of our Triune God, and are committed to our ministry of Word and Sacrament. It is the responsibility of these members to see that everything is prepared for worship, everything runs smoothly during worship, and everything is returned to its proper place/cleaned up after worship. In order to best fulfill this responsibility, it is necessary to participate in periodic work/educational meetings.

The importance of this responsibility cannot be emphasized enough. At first glance, it would seem to entail simple tasks, hidden behind the scenes...which is true enough. But consider how visible and prominent the work of the sacristan is on Sunday mornings, or whenever the church is gathered for worship of God. The appearance of the altar, pulpit, font...the care of the paraments and the sacred vessels for Holy Communion. All reflect the congregation's respect for worship in general, and for Him whom we worship in particular, God; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Worship is the most important event of the week in our church, and in the lives of those who are our church. How the sanctuary and nave are prepared and cared for can heighten or lower the worship experience of those who have gathered around Christ's presence through Word and Sacrament.

Practically, the Sacristan's Ministry Team is important in that it frees the pastor and other worship leaders from worry and pre-occupation with such questions as: are the communion vessels clean and ready? Are the candles filled and ready to be lighted? Is there sufficient wine for the service? Are the proper paraments vesting the altar? After worship, has the chancel been cleaned and straightened, attractive for those in the church through the week? The more serious and thorough the Sacristan's Ministry Team is in its work, the more relaxed and organized the worship leaders can be in theirs. What are the specific responsibilities of sacristans?

While detailed instructions will follow, you will:

- + serve as sacristan for the entire week, from Saturday to the following Friday, preparing altar and sanctuary for any mid-week services,
- + prepare sanctuary for worship: altar, candles, baptismal and Eucharistic vessels, flowers, paraments, banners, furnishings... everything needed for and used in worship,
- + during worship, see that communion, baptisms, etc. flow smoothly...should anything be needed, (e.g. more wine, bread, missing vessels) get them and take them to the chancel,
- + clean up and set up for next service, between services
- + after worship, clean sanctuary and worship vessels, returning everything to its

proper place,

- + serve when scheduled, checking the schedule each week to see who is scheduled; schedules are in the newsletter, or at [www.saintlukes-cs.org](http://www.saintlukes-cs.org)
- + take responsibility for making sure sanctuary is prepared for worship, working together to assure that someone serves,
- + notify Sacristan's Ministry Team leader, or deaconess if you are unable to serve or if you have traded scheduled days,
- + participate in periodic meetings of the committee for education, cleaning, repair, etc.

## LIST OF DUTIES

### I. Saturday before worship:

#### A. Do general cleaning

1. Dust all chancel furniture, especially altar and pulpit areas, and communion railing, top and bottom.
2. Dust candleholders, baptismal font, etc. Clean black acrylic (candle tops) with soft yellow cloth--no special cleaner is needed. Be sure to remove all fingerprints from black acrylic.
3. Remove old bulletins, etc. from pulpit, Missal (Altar Book) and chairs.

#### B. Change paraments/banners to proper liturgical color. Consult Master Server schedule for appointed color. For your information, we have sets of white paraments (Christmas, Easter, certain festivals); red (for Pentecost, certain saints/martyrs days): blue (Advent): purple (Lent and Holy Week); green (Sundays after Pentecost and Sundays after Epiphany). Please be sure to "steam out" any wrinkles. The small steamer is in the sacristy in the bottom cabinet to the left of the sink. A large, commercial steamer is in the corner of the sacristy bathroom. Be sure to keep the commercial steamer head away from the cloth--it is extremely hot and creates much steam. It works very well held away from the cloth.

#### C. Check oil in altar candles after every service. The brass tops unscrew. If the liquid level is less than half, please fill using liquid paraffin in the jug in the cabinet next to the small refrigerator. After filling oil altar candles, please be sure the wicks are approximately the same size. You may want to light them to make sure they are providing the same size flame. If candelabra are being used, replace candles as needed, and remove excess wax from candle holders and followers. When candelabra are being used, please close furnace floor vents in the chancel, and the first vents in the side aisles. This reduces drippage.

#### D. When sanctuary lamp needs to be replaced, do so using inserts, also in cabinet in sacristy -- this will need to be done weekly.

#### E. Check acolyte lighters, replacing wicks when necessary.

#### F. Holy Communion

1. Place in the center of the altar, the chalice with one purificator, folded, laying over the chalice. The gold paten holding the presider's host is placed on top of the purificator. The pall goes on top of the paten. The veil covers the vested chalice. The folded corporal lies inside the burse, and the burse lays on top of the veil covering the chalice. The small gold crucifix is placed at the top of the altar in the center, so that the pastor may see it while presiding.
2. Normally, on the large credence table behind the altar, place the appropriate

number of pre-filled trays. Also on the credence table place the Missal (Altar Book) on the Missal Stand, usually on the second shelf of the Credence Table. On the top shelf, in front of the communion trays, place a second chalice, covered by a purificator. The large white communion veil should be used to cover the communion trays and extra chalice as they sit on the credence table behind the altar.

3. On the Credence Table in the Atrium between the sanctuary doors, place the flagon of wine (1/2 full), and the paten (bowl for hosts, with designated number of hosts). On festival days, the Lectionary Book and holder may also be placed on this Credence Table, to be carried in procession.
4. Offering plates should be placed on the usher's table in the Atrium.

#### G. Holy Baptism

1. Place the baptismal shell, embroidered baptismal towelette, oil stock, and a Baptismal candle on the baptismal font (in the rear of the sanctuary).
2. Please be sure the ushers light the Paschal Candle before the service where there will be a Baptism.

### **II. On Sunday before worship:**

- A. Check to make sure everything is in place; hosts, wine, offering plates, paraments, banners, candles, communion trays (center ring filled with de-alcoholized wine), chalice, purificator, pall, corporal and communion veil, etc.
- B. Place small glass of water on pulpit and beside pastor's chair.
- C. Watch during worship to see if anything more is needed: more wine, hosts, other vessels, etc.

### **III. On Sunday between worship services:**

- A. After worshipers have left the sanctuary, and after the postlude is concluded, clean communion vessels. Refill trays with wine and de-alcoholized wine. Place trays and vested chalices in appropriate places. Patens, chalices and flagon must be cleaned and polished between services--being especially careful to remove finger prints, and wine spots.
- B. Check corporal used at first service to make sure there are no "hidden" wine stains folded inside. Replace with clean corporal as needed.
- D. Please clean up any Host crumbs or drops from the chalice on and around the altar railing. As these are consecrated elements, please dispose of them in the piscina.
- E. Check with pastor or deaconess to see if anything more is needed.

#### **IV. On Sunday after worship:**

- A. After worshipers have left the sanctuary, and after the poslude is concluded, remove and clean communion vessels, replace in cabinet. Please note: pottery flagon has felt on the bottom, so should not be immersed when washing. Please be very careful when handling gold communionware. Communionware must be cleaned out immediately, to prevent staining. If either scheduled sacristan is unable to clean up immediately after worship, please ask another sacristan to do so, or the deaconess or assisting minister.
- B. Wet with water, any wine stains on purificator (or corporal, if there are any) and squeeze out into piscina, so that consecrated wine remaining in linens may be returned to the earth. Place soiled linens into solution in plastic container in lower cabinet to the left of the sacristy sink.
- C. White linen veil should be pressed each week so that it is crisp and neat. Iron and small ironing board are available in sacristy.
- D. Dust/wipe off/pick up altar, communion rail and surrounding area, ensuring that no crumbs of the Lord's Body remain after people have communed. If so, please collect them and dispose of them properly. (You may use a small amount of water to rinse them down the piscina).
- E. *All consecrated wine or de-alcoholized wine should be poured into the piscina (the drain to the left of the sink). Consumption of remaining consecrated elements must be done reverently and respectfully. Remaining small crumbs of the Lord's Body may also be disposed of in the piscina. A small amount of water should be used to cleanse the piscina after disposing of consecrated elements. Please be mindful of the fact that this is not bread and wine--but the Body and Blood of our Lord. At no time do they revert back, or cease to bear our Lord's presence. Consecrated elements are to be treated as our Lord, Himself. Please help us develop and keep a reverent and appropriate attitude in the sacristy at all times, but especially when our Lord is present in His sacred Body and Blood!*
- F. Clean communion rail with dampened purificator to wipe off consecrated wine. Rinse into piscina as instructed above.
- G. Place flowers into other vase(s) if no one has picked them up after the second service.

#### **V. Other Items of Concern**

- A. We continue to work to inculcate a sense of reverence and respect for God, His House, the Altar, and our Lord's presence in the Sacrament of the Altar. When entering the chancel for the first time, it is appropriate to reverence the altar with a

solemn bow (from the waist). After that, when going "to and fro" from chancel to sacristy, a simple bow (nod of the head and shoulders) is appropriate. When leaving the chancel for the final time, a solemn bow is again appropriate. These customs help us to be mindful that this is not just any space, nor is the altar simply a table. This is where our almighty, all-powerful Triune God comes to meet us--feeding us with His Word, and our Lord's Body and Blood. Although serving as a sacristan has some practical tasks associated with it, as much as any area of service in the church, the ministry of sacristans is just that--a ministry that is worship--requiring prayer, devotion, dedication and commitment to our Lord. Anything and everything you can do to foster this sense of ministry is appreciated.

- B. Although there are Saturday evening services, simply prepare as you would for Sunday services with two exceptions. Place small flagon of wine with 15 hosts in paten on credence table in Atrium between sanctuary doors. Pastor and deaconess will refill paten, clean up after Saturday service and make sure all is ready for Sunday services.
- C. Please check on the Sunday you serve to see if there are enough hosts and wine for the following Sunday. If not, please call the Sacristan's chairperson, pastor, deaconess, or parish secretary. In the unlikely event there is not enough on the Saturday when you are setting up for communion, please call the above people as early as possible on Saturday so that arrangements may be made.
- D. The Sacristan's chairperson will normally pick up altar flowers and arrange them in vases. Scheduled weekly sacristans should simply check to make sure they are here, are arranged in vases, and that vases are placed on flower shelves in the chancel.
- E. Should you have any problems/questions when you are serving, please call the chairperson, pastor or deaconess. Do not hesitate to call--it is much better to solve problems on Saturday than to wait until Sunday morning.

## GLOSSARY

**ACOLYTE**--A term specifically applied to one who carries a processional candle, lights candles, assists with the liturgies of the Church.

**ADVENT**--The beginning of the Church Year, and the four weeks leading up to the celebration of Christ-mass.

**ADVENT WREATH**--A circle of brass, gold, silver, perhaps adorned with greens, with four candles, which is placed in the chancel during Advent. The candles are lighted consecutively week by week until all four are burning on the Fourth Sunday in Advent. Candles may be all purple, all blue, or all white, or may be of three colors, with one candle rose. The rose candle is lighted the Third Sunday in Advent (Gaudete (Joy) Sunday).

**ALB**--A long, white, sleeved vestment normally worn by ministers for a celebration of Holy Communion.

**ALTAR**--table from which the Eucharistic meal is celebrated and served.

**ALLELUIA**--An exclamation of praise and joy, used in various parts of the liturgy, except during Lent.

**AGNUS DEI**--One of the hymns at the Fraction, or the beginning of the distribution of the Lord's Body and Blood. "Agnus Dei" is Latin for "Lamb of God".

**ANTEPENDIUM**--square or rectangular paraments that do not extend the entire width of the altar or pulpit.

**AUMBRY**--A receptacle or shelf to hold the Reserved Sacrament. May also be referred to as a "Tabernacle".

**BAPTISM**--The sacrament of initiation by which a person is born anew by Water and the Holy Spirit, and made a member of Christ's body, the Church.

**BAPTISMAL FONT**--The bowl, basin or tub holding water for the administration of the Sacrament of Holy Baptism.

**CASKET**--A long wooden or metal box holding the body of the deceased.

**CASSOCK**--A long garment with sleeves, normally black, worn over street clothes when one serves at the altar. It should be long enough to cover the ankles, but not reach the floor.

**CHALICE**--A metal or ceramic cup into which the wine for the Eucharist is poured.

**CHANCEL**--the part of the nave that traditionally included the pulpit, font, and altar.

**CHASUBLE**--A long, wide sleeveless garment worn by the presiding minister at the Holy Communion. It is of the liturgical color of the day or season, and is worn over all other vestments.

**CHURCH YEAR**--The order of Sundays and Seasons by which the Church celebrates the Life of Christ (Advent through Ascension) and the Life of the Church (Ascension through Christ the King Sunday)

**CINCTURE**--A rope, usually white, worn with the alb, tied with a knot at the right side of the waist, allowed to hang down the right side. The ends of the rope may have knots or tassels. This rope is sometimes called a girdle.

**CORPORAL**--square or rectangular piece of linen on which the eucharistic elements are placed on the altar.

**CREDENCE SHELF**--shelf attached to front wall of sanctuary, behind altar, usually to hold flowers, cross, or candles.

**CREDENCE TABLE**--small tables used in nave or sanctuary to hold appointments, vessels, elements or other items to be used in worship.

**CRUCIFER**--A server who carries the processional cross. Also referred to as a Crossbearer.

**ELEMENTS**--The bread and wine to be consecrated at the Eucharist.

**EUCCHARIST**--The principal act of worship on Sundays and other Festivals; the Holy Communion; the Lord's Supper. The word comes from the Latin for "thanksgiving".

**EWER**--pitcher used to hold and pour baptismal water.

**FAIR LINEN**--linen used to cover altar.

**FLAGON**--pitcher used to hold and pour wine for Holy Communion.

**GLORIA IN EXCELSIS**--The most common hymn of praise during the Sunday liturgy, from the song of the angels at Christ's birth, "Glory to God in the Highest".

**GLORIA PATRI**--The words of praise added at the end of psalms, and at other times in the liturgy, beginning with the words, "Glory be to the Father..."

**GOSPEL PROCESSION**--The movement of the crucifer, acolytes with processional candles, and presiding minister to the center of the congregation for the reading of the Gospel, emphasizing the Word made flesh, Christ among us.

**KYRIE ELEISON**--The litany sung between the Apostolic Greeting and the Hymn of Praise, from the Latin, "Lord, have mercy."

**MENSA**--top of altar.

**MISSAL**--altar book containing liturgical material for worship leaders.

**MISSAL STAND**--stand used to hold missal during worship.

NAVE--part of church building where worshipers sit/stand during worship.

PALL--a stiffened piece of cloth used cover the chalice prior to the celebration of Holy Communion; also the cloth used to cover the casket during the Burial of the Dead.

PASCHAL CANDLE--A large white candle which may be decorated with symbols of the resurrection. It is lighted at Easter and burns for all services throughout the Fifty Days of Easter. At other times, it is kept near the Baptismal Font and is lighted for Baptisms. It may also be placed at the head of a casket or urn for the Burial of the Dead, calling to mind the promise of Resurrection.

PARAMENTS--cloths, usually of liturgical colors which adorn altar and pulpit.

PULPIT--reading desk, lectern or other furnishing from which lessons are read and sermon preached.

PURIFICATOR--a linen napkin used to wipe the rim of the chalice during administration of Holy Communion.

SANCTUARY--area of the church building within the communion rail.

SANCTUS--From the Latin, the hymn "Holy, Holy, Holy", sung at the conclusion of the Preface of the Great Thanksgiving.

SIGN OF THE CROSS--The tracing of one's forehead, chest and both shoulders in the outline of the Cross, in remembrance of Baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

STOLE--A long strip of material worn by bishops, pastors and deacons/deaconesses, indicating office. Bishop or pastor wears the stole around the neck hanging down in front; deacon wears the stole over the left shoulder and crossed under the right arm. The stole is normally the color of the day or season. The stole represents the yoke of Christ.

SURPLICE--An ample white vestment worn over a cassock. As the black cassock represents our sinful nature, the surplice represents "putting on Christ", taking on His purity and forgiveness.

TORCH--Another name for a processional candle.

URN--A receptacle containing the remains (cremains--cremated remains) of a body that has been cremated.

VESTMENTS--garb worn by the clergy, i.e., clerical shirt, alb, stole, cassock, surplice, cincture, chasuble.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION--That part of the Eucharistic Prayer recalling the words and actions of our Lord, instituting the Lord's Supper.