

Glossary of Terms

Below is a fairly comprehensive list of terms used in church collected over years for confirmation and other courses. If you can't find something please e-mail us.

ALB A white or off-white full length garment worn by clergy, readers and servers during the celebration of the Holy Communion.

ABLUTIONS The ritual cleaning of the sacred vessels after distribution of Holy Communion.

ABSOLUTION The words with which the Priest pronounces the forgiveness of sins. Only those ordained to the priesthood may pronounce an absolution.

ADVENT The season during which the church looks forward, in a spirit of penitence, to the coming of Christ the King in his Kingdom in power. During Advent, the church also prepares to keep the holy festival of the birth of Jesus at Christmas. The season includes four Sundays and extends from ADVENT SUNDAY (the Sunday nearest to the feast of St Andrew, 30 November) to CHRISTMAS EVE.

AGNUS DEI The prayer, "Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world etc" or the modern version "Jesus Lamb of God etc" said before the Communion. (from the Latin for Lamb of God).

ALTAR A table of wood or stone at which the priest presides at the Holy Communion. It is called an altar

because in the Holy Communion we remember the perfect sacrifice Jesus made by his death on the cross.

ALTAR RAIL A rail separating the SANCTUARY from the rest of the church

ANGLICAN COMMUNION The World-wide "Anglican Communion" (Churches deriving from the Church of England across the world) is divided into PROVINCES each of which has its own ARCHBISHOP. The Church of England is part of the Anglican Communion and has two Provinces, those of Canterbury and York. The Archbishop of Canterbury is considered to be the senior of the two Archbishops "Primate of All England".

Each Province is divided into dioceses. There are forty-two dioceses in England. Each diocese is under the care of a BISHOP, who may have assistant Bishops known as SUFFRAGAN Bishops (from Latin, suffraganeus, assisting, supporting).

Each diocese is divided into PARISHES, each under the care of a PARISH PRIEST, who may be known as a VICAR, RECTOR, or PRIEST-IN-CHARGE, depending on the particular history or current situation of that parish. A number of parishes may be linked together under the care of a priest . We are part of a team and so we have a Team Rector.

APOCRYPHA Fourteen books of pre-New Testament writings not included in the Hebrew bible, but found in the Greek Old Testament, the bible used by the early church. Discarded by the Protestants at the Reformation, but present in some versions of the Bible.

AUMBRY A recess or cupboard, for keeping the consecrated host and wine for use in house communions. A light is usually kept burning in front of the aumbry. All three of our churches have an Aumbry

BAPTISM The ceremony in which a person is initiated into the Christian church, as a child or an adult. The baptised person is washed symbolically, usually with water poured on to the forehead as a sign that (s)he is accepted and sealed by God with the Holy Spirit to represent Christ to the world.

BENEDICTION A blessing. Also called Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, it is a service consisting of prayers, and a blessing of the congregation by moving in the form of a cross the ciborium or monstrance containing the Host.

BENEDICTUS "Blessed is he who comes" sung after the Sanctus during Communion. Also a canticle of prophecy sung by Zechariah (Luke 1:68-79).

BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER. The book of liturgical worship first issued in 1549, revised 1552, 1559 and finally in 1662 and still an important foundation for Church of England worship, belief and practice. There were further revisions in 1928.

BURSE A square pocket or case, in which the corporal is kept when not in use.

CASSOCK A full-length robe, black for clergy and readers, black or some other dark colour for servers, and choristers. A bishop's cassock is often purple, although it can be black. Some Cathedrals have special

coloured cassocks (e.g Hereford) and Chaplains to the Queen wear red.

CHRISTMASTIDE It lasts twelve days (the twelve days of Christmas!) and leads to the feast of the EPIPHANY.

CASSOCK ALB The cassock alb is a relatively modern garment and is a combination of the traditional cassock and alb. It developed in the 1970s as a convenient undergarment worn by clergy and as an alternative to the alb for deacons and acolytes.

CHASUBLE A priestly vestment worn by the President at the Holy Communion. It is an oval or oblong garment, without sleeves, which goes over the head of the wearer and is open at the sides. The stole and chasuble are usually made from the same fabric.

COPE A type of cloak worn by the priest in processions and at solemn functions, including weddings. It is semi-circular when open, has no shaping to fit the shoulders and is fastened in the front by a clasp. A cope has a flat hood. Copes are frequently ornate.

COTTA A short white garment reaching to just below the waist, with a square neck and full, short sleeves. It is worn over a cassock by some clergy and sometimes by servers.

CHALICE A cup of silver, pottery for holding the wine consecrated at the Holy Communion.

CHALICE ASSISTANTS (sometimes called

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS) are authorised by the bishop, after training, to assist the priest to administer the consecrated bread and wine at the Holy Communion and to take Holy Communion to the housebound. They are licensed to exercise their ministry in a specific parish for a specific period of time.

CHANCEL (where there are often choir stalls); and a **SANCTUARY** containing the high altar, at the very top of the church.

CHRISTMAS TO CANDLEMASS Commemorates the birth of Jesus and his revealing to the nations. During the season of Christmas to Candlemas, the colour used in church (see below) is WHITE. Christmas Day, of course, is on 25th December and CANDLEMASS (The Presentation of Christ in the Temple) falls on 2nd February. Within this five/ six week season there are two smaller seasons: epiphany and the baptism of Christ.

CHURCH A building dedicated for public worship. Churches may be of different sizes, shapes and styles but they often have a NAVE in which the people assemble;

CHURCHWARDENS Each church usually has two churchwardens. Churchwardens are elected by residents of the parish together with non-residents who are on the church electoral roll. Church wardens are commissioned by the Bishop and responsible to him for the good order and running of the church and its property.

CIBORIUM A vessel with a lid for holding consecrated

Altar breads.

COLLECT A short prayer, usually of one sentence, which collects or summarises the petitions of the day. There are set collects for every Sunday and festival of the year.

COMMON WORSHIP The revised forms of liturgical worship for the Church of England introduced in 2000 as a supplement to the Book of Common Prayer.

CONFIRMATION A strengthening of a Christian's spiritual life by the gift of the Holy Spirit, bestowed through the laying on of the hands of a bishop. Confirmation completes the Christian initiation begun at baptism.

CREDESCENCE TABLE A table at the side of the Altar on which the bread, wine and water to be used at the Holy Communion are placed.

CREED (or an AFFIRMATION OF FAITH) A summary of the beliefs of Christians. There are two main creeds, the NICENE CREED, (drawn up at the Council of Nicea, 325A.D.), used at the Holy Communion, and the APOSTLES CREED not drawn up the by Apostles, but of earlier origin than the Nicene creed. The Apostles creed is said at Matins and Evensong. Other Affirmations of Faith, often based on Bible texts are now used during Common Worship Communion.

CRUCIFER The processional cross is carried by the crucifer.

CRUCIFIX A cross on which a figure of Jesus is

hanging. When the figure of Jesus is portrayed as a triumphant king, It is called a CHRISTUS REX (Christ the King)

CRUETS The flasks which contain the wine and water used at the Holy Communion.

DOCTRINE The beliefs and ways of the Church of England is grounded in the Holy Scriptures, and in such teachings of the ancient Fathers and Councils of the Church as are "agreeable to the said Scriptures". In particular such doctrine is to be found in the "Book of Common Prayer" (1662), the "Thirty-nine Articles of Religion" (which are listed in the Book of Common Prayer), and the "Ordinal" (which is the order of service for the ordination (the 'making') of bishop's, priests and deacons (see below).

EASTERTIDE commemorates Christ's joyful resurrection (Colour: WHITE). It begins after sunset on EASTER EVE and lasts for 50 days until PENTECOST (colour: RED; also called WHITSUN or WHITSUNDAY). On the fortieth day after EASTER the church celebrates THE ASCENSION of Jesus into heaven.

ELECTORAL ROLL The list of the people eligible to vote at the annual church meeting. All parishioners may be on the roll, whether or not they attend church, and all non-parishioners who regularly attend the church.

ELEMENTS The bread, wine and water used for the Holy Communion.

EPISTLE All the books of the NEW TESTAMENT, except the four GOSPELS, the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES and

REVELATION. Epistles are letters to and from members of the early church (Greek word for letter).

EUCHARIST One of the names given to the sacrament of HOLY COMMUNION or THE LORD'S SUPPER or THE MASS. (Eucharist comes from the Greek word meaning thanksgiving).

EVENSONG A service of praise and the proclamation of the word of God for the evening time.

FONT the receptacle, traditionally of stone, for baptismal water.

GENUFLECTION A temporary bending of one knee, usually in acknowledgement of respect for the Blessed Sacrament.

GLORIA The hymn of praise, "Glory be to God on high" said or sung near the CORPORAL A white linen cloth spread on the Altar upon which the bread and wine are consecrated at the Holy Communion.

GRADUAL The hymn sung before the Gospel in the Holy Communion. (From the Latin, gradus, step, as it was sung at the altar steps).

HANGINGS The fabric coverings which may hang from the book rest in the pulpit and in front of the altar. The colours vary with the liturgical seasons.

HOST The consecrated Altar breads and wafers. (from the Latin, hostia,, meaning a victim).

IHS Three Greek capitals, equivalent to IES the first

three letters of the Greek word for Jesus; said also to be the initials of Jesus hominum Salvator; "Jesus Saviour of Men".

INRI Initials of the Latin version of the accusation over the head of Jesus on the cross, Jesus Nazarenus Rex Judaeorum, (Jesus of Nazareth King of the Jews).

INTROIT The sentence of scripture said, at the entrance of the ministers at the Holy Communion (from the Latin for entrance).

KYRIES (pronounced Kyri-es) The prayer "Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy" (from the Greek Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison,

LAMB OF GOD A title given to Jesus because he gave his life in sacrifice at Passover time, when lambs were sacrificed to commemorate the escape of the Jews from Egypt.

LECTERN A reading desk from which the Bible may be read. Often, as at St John's, in the shape of an Eagle.

LECTIONARY The passages of scripture set for each day of the church's year.

LENT is a season of fasting and penitence in preparation for HOLY WEEK and EASTER. LENT starts on ASH WEDNESDAY and lasts until EASTER EVE. The forty weekdays of LENT are fast days, but the Sundays, although solemn, are not fasts. The colour used in church (see below) for Lent is PURPLE.

The last week in Lent is HOLY WEEK, the first day of which is PALM SUNDAY (colour: RED) commemorating

our Lord's entry into Jerusalem riding a donkey. The last three days of Holy Week (the TRIDUUM) are MAUNDY THURSDAY (colour: WHITE) recalling the day on which Jesus washed his disciples' feet; gave them a new commandment to love one another (the 'Mandatum' from which comes the word 'Maundy') and instituted the Last Supper. GOOD FRIDAY (no colour, or sometimes RED) recalling the trial, crucifixion and burial of Jesus. HOLY SATURDAY, which ends at sunset and is also known as EASTER EVE.(note that the week before Easter is HOLY WEEK. not Easter week)

LESSON READERS are authorised by the Parish Priest to read the set passages from the Bible at acts of worship.

LITURGY The set forms of worship used in church.

MAGNIFICAT. The Magnificat, taken from Luke's Gospel (1:46-55), is the Blessed Virgin Mary's hymn of praise to the Lord. It is also known as the Canticle of Mary usually sung at Evensong Its name comes from the first line of its text in Latin ("Magnificat anima mea Dominum") translated in the first line. Mary proclaims the Lord's greatness with characteristic humility and grace here.

NUNC DIMITTIS The Nunc dimittis is a hymn from the Bible. It was sung by Simeon when he saw the baby Jesus. It is a canticle from the opening words from the Vulgate translation of the New Testament in the second chapter of Luke named after its incipit in Latin, meaning "Now you dismiss". (Luke 2:29-32).

OFFERTORY (from Medieval Latin offertorium and Late Latin offerre) is the part of a Eucharistic service when

the bread and wine for use in the service are ceremonially placed on the altar. A monetary offering is also made for the work of the church

ORGANIST AND CHOIRMASTER The organist and choirmaster are responsible for the church music to the Parish Priest, who appoints them.

PALL A square of linen stretched over a card, and used to cover the chalice.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is responsible with the Parish Priest for the ordering of worship, the repair and upkeep of the church and other matters relating to the life of the Parish church. Members must be on the church electoral roll and are elected annually (although some, like churchwardens, are ex-officio). All members of the PCC are jointly responsible in law for matters relating to the church.

PASCHAL CANDLE A very large candle first lit on Easter Eve to signify the risen Christ as Light of the World. It is lit at every service in Eastertide and at baptisms and funerals throughout the year.

PASSOVER A Jewish festival celebrating and remembering the time when the Jews were led out of slavery in Egypt by Moses.

PATEN The plate of silver or pottery on which the Altar breads are consecrated.

PCC SECRETARY The Secretary is appointed by the PCC to prepare the agenda and to keep the minutes for

meetings and to receive and deal with correspondence.

PCC TREASURER The treasurer is appointed by the PCC to be responsible for recording all financial transactions and for informing and advising the PCC on its monetary commitments. In addition each church in our team has its own treasurer appointed by its council (The DCC)

PENTECOST. (colour: RED) Commemorates the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the disciples during the Jewish harvest thanksgiving festival, also called 'Pentecost'.

PREFACE The first part of the Eucharistic prayer. On festivals special PROPER PREFACES are used.

PROPERS Readings and other sentences provided for each day. In the Revised Common Lectionary (see below) the readings for the 'ordinary' Sundays (Sundays between Epiphany 4 and 2 before Lent and after Trinity to All Saints Sunday) are designated Propers 1- 25.

PULPIT The raised structure from which the sermons may be delivered.

PURIFICATOR A white linen cloth used for wiping the Communion vessels.

READERS (already mentioned) are licensed by the Bishop, after a period of training, to preach, teach and to lead worship; to do pastoral visiting; to assist in administering the Holy Communion in church and in house communions. With the Bishop's permission they

may take funerals and they may lead services in which, in the absence of a priest, Holy Communion from the reserved sacrament is offered (Extended communion). Readers are licensed to a specific parish or benefice, but may exercise their ministry in other parishes in the diocese when asked to do so.

REQUIEM A Holy Communion to give thanks for, and pray for, the dead.

REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY (RCL) The three year cycle of readings used by many Christian denominations. Adopted for use, (with some variations) by the Church of England in 1997.

SACRAMENT An outward and visible sign, which indicates to, and reassures those involved that they are receiving an inward and spiritual grace. The two main sacraments are baptism and Holy Communion.

SACRISTAN The person, appointed by the Parish Priest to care for the Holy Communion vessels, the vestments, the altar linen and furnishings and to see that the correct vestments, linen and vessels are laid out for each celebration of the Holy Communion or other service. He/ she is often helped by ASSISTANT SACRISTANS.

SANCTUARY from the rest of the church is usually at the EAST end of the church, the direction of the rising sun, in recognition of Jesus as the light of the world.

SANCTUS The hymn of praise, "Holy, Holy, Holy etc" included in the Eucharistic prayer (From the Latin word for holy).

SERVERS are authorised by the Parish Priest to assist at the celebrations of the Holy Communion. Servers arrange the credence table (see below), light the candles, hand the bread, wine and water to the President, receive the collection and lead the congregational responses. Servers who carry candles may also be called ACOLYTES.

SIDESMEN AND WOMEN are elected at the annual parochial church meeting to assist the churchwardens in welcoming the congregation, handing out service books, showing visitors to seats and taking the collection.

STAINED GLASS windows were originally teaching aids of biblical events, for a laity that could not read. Murals and statues had the same function. Most of the decorations were painted out or smashed during the Puritan era, although stained glass survived in many cathedrals. St John's has some fine examples of stained glass.

STEWARDSHIP The response of a Christian to God's love by giving Time, Talents and Treasure (money) towards the maintenance of the church's activities in the parish and diocese.

STOLE A long band of silk or other fabric worn round the neck. by priests or bishops. A stole should be worn when any Sacrament is administered. A stole is always worn underneath a chasuble (see above). Deacons wear stoles over the left shoulder and tied under the right arm.

SURPLICE A full, short, white garment reaching to about the knees with a round neck and full wide sleeves. Worn over a cassock by clergy, readers and choristers.

SCARF Clergy wear a black scarf, and Readers a blue scarf around the neck. This vestment is unique to the Anglican church.

SUNDAYS BEFORE ADVENT In November the church recalls the proclamation of the Old Testament about the coming of a messiah and the coming of the Kingdom of Christ in the New Testament. (colour: GREEN or sometimes red). The church year ends on a triumphant and joyful note with the feast of CHRIST THE KING (colour: RED). Thus the wheel comes full circle, back to ADVENT again.

SUNDAYS BEFORE LENT The number varies according to the date of Easter. The SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE LENT is Creation Sunday. On the SUNDAY BEFORE LENT the readings recall the Transfiguration of our Lord. The colour used in church is GREEN.

TE DEUM An ancient hymn of praise, beginning "We praise you (thee) O God" (from the Latin first line 'Te Deum laudamus')

THE THREEFOLD MINISTRY The Church of England maintains the historic threefold ministry of bishops, priests, and deacons. Its ministers are ordained by bishops according to authorized forms of service, with prayer and the laying on of hands.

- Bishops are ordained or consecrated by at least three other bishops, joining together in the act of

ordination, of whom one is the archbishop of the province or his deputy. In addition to their ministry as priests of the church, bishops ordain priests and deacons, licence readers, and confirm. Bishops pronounce the absolution and the blessing when they are present at an act of worship. Bishops are addressed as "The Right Reverend". The word 'bishop' comes from the Greek word in the New Testament, 'episcope' (overseer).

- Priests are ordained, after training, by the Bishop of the diocese or by his Suffragan. Priests may share with the bishop in laying hands on the heads of those ordained to the order of priesthood. Priests lead worship and preach the gospel, preside at the Holy Communion, baptise, absolve and declare the forgiveness of sins, bless the people, conduct marriages, take funerals and teach and care for the people committed to their charge. The word 'priest' is related to the old English 'prester', which comes from 'presbyter', a derivation of the Greek word from the New Testament 'presbuteros', which means 'elder'. The word 'presbyter' is sometimes used instead of 'priest'.

Deacons are ordained by Bishops, and then act as assistants to the priests in whose parish they work. They lead worship, preach and teach. They may baptise, take funerals and conduct marriages. They assist in administering (but not leading) the Holy Communion in church and in house communions.

- Many deacons are trainee priests, and are deacons for a year, before becoming priests. The word

'deacon' comes from the Greek word in the New Testament 'diaconos' which means 'servant'.

THURIFER The server who is in charge of the THURIBLE, the vessel used for swinging burning incense (used at High Days and Holidays)

TRINITY SUNDAY (celebrating that we know God three ways, as Father, Son and Holy Spirit) starts the long summer season of up to 22 Sundays after Trinity (colour: GREEN) and ends with a white festival on the first Sunday in November, celebrating ALL SAINTS DAY.

VEIL A piece of coloured cloth, usually of the same fabric as the chasuble and hangings, which covers the sacred vessels until they are required for the offertory.

VERGER An official who acts as a caretaker and attendant, particularly at weddings and funerals.

VESTMENTS are special garments worn by the ordained and lay ministers in church. While every person in the church is called to exercise a ministry within the church, there are some specific types of ministry which are explicitly recognised and authorised.

XP Two Greek letters, Kai and Rho, equivalent to CH and R, the first three letters of "Christ".