**Western Rite Liturgical Glossary**

[return to Western Rite Liturgics page](https://web.archive.org/web/20120926065102/http:/www.allmercifulsavior.com/Liturgy/Liturgics.html)

**Note: In this Glossary, L. means "Latin."**

**Acclamations** - or Greater Tropes. Tropes upon the Kyrieleyson, Angelic Hymn (Gloria), Sanctus, and Agnus Dei are sometimes called acclamations. The Royal Acclamations are sung on Nativity, Pascha, and Pentecost, and for especially festive occasions such as the anointing of a monarch. They consist of many doxologic and intercessory prayers and the refrain in tone 4, "Christ doth conquer, Christ doth reign; Christ doth rule the universe."

**Agnus** - or Agnus Dei. The chant ordained by Pope St. Sergius I, the Syrian, to be sung during the breaking of the communion breads for communing the people. Begins "O Lamb of God," and is often embellished with tropes.

**Alb** - A gown of linen or silk worn over the cassock by all the clergy and ministers serving in the chancel, and girded at the waist by the zona. Comes from the Latin for "white," although they were often made of other colours. On Sundays and feasts, apparels adorn the albs of the clergy - the cuffs at the wrists are called maniculae, those at the front and back above the hem are called parurae, those on the front and back just below the neckline spaulae, and those upon the shoulders the spatulariae. This garment has become much altered in shape in recent times; classically, the sleeves are very narrow at the wrist but widen greatly toward the body, so that the zona catches up the great folds of cloth under the arms.

**Alleluya** - A word surviving from the Hebrew, meaning "Praise the Lord." This word is often added to the end of certain chants. Also means the melodic chant, including a verse and repeat, which follows the Gradual. During the season of Pascha, instead of Gradual and Alleluya two Alleluyas are sung. Omitted only during Fore-Lent and Lent.

**Almuce** - a now-defunct garment of W. Rite clergy, a sort of stole made of fur, worn with the black cope for increased warmth during winter services.

**Altar** - the altar table. Does not refer, as in the Byzantine Rite, to the chancel.

**Altar step** - See Step of the Altar.

**Amice** - or superhumeral. Rectangular white vestment which rests over the shoulders of the clergy and ministers serving in the chancel, insulating and protecting the neckline of the other garments. On Sundays and feasts, appareled amices are worn, having a decorative band along one side which folds down over the neckline analogously to a shirt collar. Distinctive of the Western Rite.

**Angelic Hymn** - or Gloria in excelsis. The third chant of the Liturgy, following the Kyrie-Litany. Attributed to the 3rd-c. Pope St. Telesphorus. On feasts, tropes are often sung between the phrases. Pope St. Symmachus of Rome ordained it to be sung at every Sunday and feast day Mass.

**Ante et Retro** - Latin for "before and behind." The reverence made during services, more frequently in monasteries, of a very profound bow to the east, then, in one sweep, a very profound bow to the two sides of the choir or to the people, or to the other clergy.

**Antiphon** - Or anthem. A melodic chant most commonly used to introduce and conclude psalms, but also as an independent anthem in processions and for commemorating Saints or special occasions.

**Apostle** - The term for the Epistle in the older books. Usually the first of the scripture readings chanted at the Liturgy.

**Apocrisarius** - ultra-proper term in Western Rite for the sacristan. The minister responsible for maintaining the vestry and stocking the necessary provisions for conducting services.

**Apostles’ Creed**- or Credo. The short baptismal creed of ancient Orthodox Rome. Its modern form is known to date from at least the 7th century, where there is a trail of evidence from the great Lavra at Lèrins in southern Gaul. Used frequently in services as a softly recited prayer. It mentions the harrowing of hell by Christ, which the Nicene Creed does not.

**Archdeacon** - The highest-ranking Deacon in a diocese, with a specific role in pontifical services. Archdeacons were formerly used by Bishops to assess the skills, learning, and moral standing of the Priests.

**Ark** - the chest, censed during services, containing holy Relics of the Saints and any other things holy to God.

**Ash Wednesday** - Since the eighth century, the first day of Great Lent in the Rite of St. Gregory. Its proper title is "the Head of the Fast."

**Aumbrey** - a cabinet/shelf in the wall of the chancel for storing church vessels and liturgical supplies.

**Bishop** - from Latin "episcopus," from the Greek for "superintendent." The highest step in the threefold priestly order (Deacon, Priest, Bishop). Only a Bishop can ordain clergy, and they can do nothing without his blessing. When the Bishop celebrates a service, the service is called "pontifical" (from Latin pontificalis, "of the hierarch").

**Black Cope** - L. capa nigra. The plain cope of black cloth which is the usual dress of all ranks of clergy, in services when full liturgical vestments are not worn. Also called in L. capa pluviale ("raincoat"!).

**Book of Life**- The volume with an ongoing list of names for commemoration, which may number in the hundreds or thousands. The book is kept upon the altar and the names are commemorated, but not all in the same service.

**Burse**- A pouch-like drawer of beaten gold or rich, stiffened cloth, in which the sindon, sudarium, and holy spoon are kept. The houseling cloth and a purificator may also be kept in the burse. L. for "purse."

**Canon** - or "unchanging [rule of] prayer," similar to "anaphora." The core part of the Mass wherein is enacted the whole remembrance of Christ’s ministry, suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension, including the consecration of the Body and Blood of Christ. In W. Rite, it does not begin until the "Thee, therefore," since the preface after "Lift up your hearts" continually changes. It concludes with the singing of the Our Father.

**Cassock** - not a vestment, but a tight-fitting black robe of the clergy worn in daily life and at services, over which the vestments go. Formerly, in N. Europe, many were lined with furs, from which the garment got the name "pellisse."

**Censer**- see Thurible.

**Chalice** - the precious cup or goblet in which the wine and water for Mass are placed. It usually has at least the components of cup, stem, and base. Early chalices often had a pair of handles. If a Deacon performs the ablutions after Communion, a second chalice is brought for the ablutions of the Priest’s fingers. In large communities, the chalices were washed and cleaned mid-week.

**Chancel** - Literally, the "area behind the screens." The eastern part of the church building where the clergy celebrate the Mass. Originally, screens surrounded this area on all four sides, with doors to the north and south (see Presbytery) and in the large screen separating the chancel from the nave.

**Chapter** - Refers to (1) the short scripture excerpt sung by the Priest in all the Hours of the Divine Office; (2) the chamber where a daily meeting and less formal services are held by a community; (3) the meeting itself; (4) the body of those so meeting. A Mass "in chapter" refers to the early morning Liturgy done in very large communities before the main Liturgy of the day, and at another church or altar.

**Chasuble** - or planeta. The over-vestment, answering to the Byzantine phelonion, which the Priest wears at Mass. This garment has become much altered in shape in recent times; classically, it is bell-shaped, stretching down to the shins in the front and the ankles in the back, although in England in the 10th c. there was a brief fashion of cutting away the length in the front as in the Byzantine parallel. By a very ancient custom, Deacon and Subdeacon wear chasubles as well as the Priest—in Advent and Lent only. Originally the patener also wore a modified chasuble called the chlamys.

**Chlamys** - Vestment like a chasuble, but turned 90 degrees so that the long parts fall over the arms, worn by the Patener at Mass. Resembles a humeral veil, but very full.

**Choir**- Refers to both the body of singers and the enclosure where they take their places. Sometimes the screen dividing chancel and nave was to the east of the choir, but more often to the west of them.

**Choir step** - See Step of the Choir.

**Chrismal**- white baptismal robe.

**Chrismal band -**white band of cloth tied around the head of the newly-chrismated and worn for seven days (according to some books, only three) out of reverence for the sacred Chrism.

**Chrismation**- see Confirmation.

**Chrismatory** - (1) a set of ampules containing holy oils for the use of the Priest, the ampules being lodged in a sort of carrying-case usually made of silver; (2) that case itself.

**Christmastide** - the twelve days of Christmas, from Nativity to Theophany. Fast-free except for the vigil of Theophany or Epiphany.

**Cleric**- one whose hair has been tonsured again in dedication to God’s service. A predisposition to minor orders.

**Communio** - proper term for the antiphon sung for the communion of the clergy, including its verse(s), Glory be, and repeats. Also, "communion."

**Communion** - Most often appears in this book in the sense of the chant sung by the choir during the Priest’s partaking of the Eucharist. Also, refers directly to the Elements of the Body and Blood of Christ and—less directly—to the partaking of these Elements by the faithful.

**Compline** - The little Hour of the Divine Office, the latest Hour to be adopted (5th century), which closes the day. The theme of this hour is the peaceful sleep of the faithful and, as a parallel, their peaceful falling asleep in a good Christian death.

**Confirmation** - or Chrismation. The anointing with sacred Chrism by a Priest or Bishop immediately after Baptism or, in unusual circumstances, for joining to the Church a person baptised outside Orthodoxy. The Latin word *confirmatio*means "setting the seal," and has been used to describe this rite since the sixth century. St. Gregory the Great of Rome forbade Priests to administer this anointing, as something uniquely episcopal, but he relented when he learned that the custom of Priests confirming was widespread in the West outside of The City.

**Cope** - A full-length silk or brocade vestment like a cloak, open down the front but joined together at the neck by a brooch or band of cloth. Worn except for at Mass by clergy and chanters on Sundays and feasts, by all the monks or canons on great feasts. The black cope is a very simple version of the same, worn in the choir enclosure on ordinary occasions. Priests concelebrating with the Bishop in a pontifical Mass wear copes.

**Corporas cloths** - Three cloths of white linen laid upon the altar for celebrating the Mass. The first has no distinguishing apellation. It is spread over the entire top of the altar by the Servers during Matins. The second is called the sindon. It is spread over the top of the altar by the Deacon before the Gospel reading (see Sindon). The third and topmost is called the sudarium. It is smaller and square; folded fan-style, it is used to veil and unveil the Gifts during the Canon (see Sudarium).

**Cowl** - Refers to the entire overgarment of a monk or nun, often pleated and very long so that it trails a bit. Monks’ cowls have a hood which can veil the head or rest over the shoulders, as appropriate.

**Crozier** - the pastoral staff of a Bishop or Abbot, in the Orthodox period usually topped by a decorative "Tau"-shaped head, although the "shepherd’s crook" style was known even then.

**Crucifer** - or cross-bearer. The Server who carries the cross in processions.

**Cruet** - a small silver decanter, usually glass today, containing wine or water for pouring into the chalice.

**Dalmatic** - the over-vestment of a Deacon, having wide sleeves and reaching to the shins. A dalmatic of thin sky-blue silk fringed with bells is worn by the Bishop under his chasuble.

**Deacon** - from Latin "diaconus," from Greek "diakonos," servant. The first step in the threefold priestly order (Deacon, Priest, Bishop). The Deacon has an important role in most services.

**Divine Office** - The series of Hours or liturgical prayer services which have been used since ancient Christian times to sanctify the times of the day and night. Consists of Vespers (dusk), Compline (night), Matins (early morning), First Hour (6:00 a.m.), Third Hour (9:00 a.m.), Sixth Hour, (Noon) and Ninth Hour (3:00 p.m.). In the Orthodox period, all seven Hours were required to be celebrated every day in parishes as well as monasteries.

**Doorkeeper** - a minister having authority over the church building, to lock it and keep it clean and orderly. A special rank existing in the Western Church since the early 3rd century, to which a Cleric may be elevated by the Bishop in a church rite.

**Dove** - a vessel of silver or gold, shaped like a dove, used originally in the Western and Eastern Rites to house the Reserved Gifts for communing the sick. Hangs over or near the altar and opens on the side so that a pyx can be placed within. In many smaller churches, a special aumbrey was used for the reservation of the Gifts.

**Eagle** - the stand where the Gospel is read, traditionally shaped like an eagle.

**Ember Days -** the penitential Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday after the first Sunday in Lent, Trinity Sunday, the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (Sept. 14), and the first day of the rigorous portion of the Nativity fast, St. Lucy’s Day (Dec. 13). After the weekly Wednesday and Friday fasts, these are the oldest Christian fasting-vigil-penitential-almsgiving observances known, pre-dating even the conceptualisation of Great Lent. Distinctive of the Western Rite. "Ember" in this sense is etymologically unrelated to English "ember" as in "coal"; it comes from Old English "ymbryne," cycle, since the ember days come ‘round to mark each of the four seasons of the year. For more information, see our publication "Fasts and Feasts in the Western Rite Churches."

**Embolismus**- in the Mass, the prayer following the Our Father, "Deliver us, we beseech Thee, O Lord, from all evils past, present, and to come," etc.

**Epiphany**- see Theophany.

**Epistoler**- the reader of the Epistle or Apostle. In a large community, the Subdeacon serves as epistoler; in smaller churches, an altar server will read.

**Exorcist** - a minor order formerly entailing actual exorcisms; a special rank existing in the Western Church from the early 3rd century onward, to which a Reader may be elevated by the Bishop in a church rite. Nowadays, exorcisms are usually performed by an older monastic Priest, and exorcists usually have a catechetical function, casting out the evils of ignorance and false understanding so that the people may battle in a right manner with the Evil One and his teachings.

**Feria**- a weekday when no Saint’s feast is celebrated liturgically.

**First Hour** - The greater Hour of the Divine Office which follows Matins and is sung about 6:00 or 7:00 a.m. In the Sarum Rite, the First Hour is equal in length to Vespers, especially if the concluding Martyrology reading, Chapter ceremony (community meeting), and spiritual reading are considered together with the First Hour proper. Commemorates the coming of the myrrh-bearing women to Christ’s tomb in the deep dawn.

**Font**- The tub used for Baptisms. Classically, placed towards the west end of the nave, in the centre. Certain processions use the font as a station.

**Genealogy** - an additional Gospel passage, read in a very ornate tone, sung on the vigils of Nativity and Theophany and enumerating the ancestors of Christ.

**Genuflection** - see Kneeling.

**Gloria -** See Angelic Hymn (Gloria in excelsis) or Glory Be (Gloria Patri).

**Glory Be** - A doxology, emanating from the first Ecumenical Councils of the Christian Church, used to conclude psalms, as a verse spurring a repeat of an antiphon or responsory, and in other ways. The form most often used is, "Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, and now and always, and unto the ages of ages. Amen." A shorter form is used within responsory chants.

**Gospel**- The last of the scripture readings chanted at the Liturgy.

**Gospeler**- the reader of the Gospel at Mass. Whenever possible, a Deacon will be gospeler; otherwise, the celebrant or another Priest must declaim the Gospel.

**Gradual**- A variable melodic chant, including a verse and repeat, which follows the Apostle or Lesson.

**Great Week**- The old Western name for Holy Week, the week before Pascha. Hence, the old name for Good Friday is "Feria sexta major"—"Great Friday."

**Hebdomadary**- from Latin, "weekly." Refers to the Priest appointed in a community to lead all the services for a week, until another has his turn.

**Holy Doors**- the doors in the iconostasis or rood-screen. They are the passage from the chancel (the altar area) westward into the nave (the people area). The term "holy doors" is not classical in the West, but coined here as being simple and catchy.

**Host**- from Latin "hostia," meaning a sacrificial animal, e.g., lamb. The most common Western word for the singing-bread after it has become the Body of Christ. Called in the Byzantine Rite, in almost identical fashion, the "Lamb."

**Houseling Cloth**- the long cloth held between two Servers under the chin of communicants so that no Portions of the Lord’s Body fall to the ground. Priests who implement this practice soon discover how many crumbs of the Lord’s Body, and drops of the Lord’s Blood, **were** falling to the ground.

**Hymn**- A chant consisting of stanzas of 4 or 6 lines which fall into a definite metric pattern so that the same melody repeats every stanza. The first great hymns in the now-typified tradition were written by St. Ambrose and St. Gregory the Great. Rarely sung in connexion with the Liturgy except during Great Week.

**Iconostasis** - not a Western word, but a familiar Orthodox term used often in this volume. See Rood-Screen.

**Kneeling**- In the Sarum Rite, kneeling is only practised on penitential occasions, as a sign of sorrow, and during some special services, such as the consecration of a church. It consists of (1) standing on both knees, and, before getting up, (2) tracing a small cross on the ground with the thumb, (3) bending to kiss the ground at the cross, and (4) .

**Kyrieleyson**- or Kyrie-Litany. The second part of the Officium, consisting of three Kyrieleysons (Lord have mercy’s), three Xristeleysons (Christ have mercy’s), and three more Kyrieleysons. On Sundays and feasts, there are petitions preceding each "eleyson." One of the many parts of the Western Rite preserved in Greek. The Western Rite originally had more of the Kyrie petitions which characterise the Byzantine Rite, but they were mostly abolished by St. Gregory the Great, the Dialogist.

**Lampada**- an oil lamp, used in the Sarum Rite around the chancel and before the great Rood (Cross over the holy doors of the iconostasis).

**Liturgy**- An Eastern term used in the West since the 17th century to describe, primarily, the Eucharist; secondarily, any canonical church service, such as the Divine Office or the special ceremonies of Holy Week. In Eastern Rite, "Liturgy" means exclusively the Eucharist.

**Major Orders**- The steps of the threefold priestly order (Deacon, Priest, Bishop). See also "Minor Orders."

**Maniple**- or fanon, or fanelle. The glorified handkerchief worn on the left wrist of the Priest, Deacon, and Subdeacon. Unique to the Western Rite. Often attaches with a pin to the cuff or sleeve of the alb.

**Mass**- In Latin, "missa." A Western term used since the 5th or 6th century to describe the service of the Eucharist (the term which came into vogue contemporaneously in the Byzantine milieu is "Liturgy"). "Missa" is the feminine form of the past participle "missus," meaning "sent" or "delivered up." The assumed antecedent is, according to the body of early commentators, "oblatio," the offering or oblation. "Mass" translates, then, to "the [oblation] delivered up [to God]." Can also refer to the sending up or offering of the Liturgy’s prayers.

**Matins**- or Ut-song (morning song). In modern practice, refers to both the Nocturns or Night-watches and the Lauds (laudes matutinales: morning praises) which follows them, celebrated early in the morning. Originally, the Nocturns were done separately at intervals throughout the night. One of the greater Hours of the Divine Office, and the one containing the bulk of the didactic material on the Sunday scriptures or the Saint being celebrated. Commemorates the birth of Christ and the coming of the New Testament or covenant. In the Orthodox period, all the people were expected to attend, and did regularly attend, Vespers, Matins, and Mass on the Sundays and important feasts.

**Midlent Sunday**- the fourth Sunday in Lent.

**Minor Orders**- The Western Rite has a unique series of minor orders, in existence since the early 3rd century. In ascending order they are: Doorkeeper, Reader, Exorcist, Acolyte, Subdeacon.

**Mitre**- A crown of rich workmanship worn by Bishops and Abbots; originally quite similar to the Byzantine mitres of today, though the Western ones tend toward two swelling, bulbous shapes on the left and right. Fringed bands called lappets hang down behind the mitre, upon the Bishop’s upper back.

**Morse**- decorative brooch used to join the sides of the cope at the neck.

**Narthex**- or porch. The westernmost part of the church building, where certain ceremonies (e.g., the catechumenate, the first part of the wedding service) are celebrated.

**Nave**- the body of the church where the faithful assemble for services.

**Neum**- A wordless, ornate musical prolongation of the last syllable of an antiphon or of the alleluya. In the very fullest tradition of chanting, no less than a series of melodies sung upon the "ah" of the final repeat of the Alleluya chant. This wordless jubilation is a mark of the fullest Western tradition and has been awarded many beautiful allegorical interpretations, but is rarely found in parishes.

**Nicene Creed**- or Credo in Unum. The only universal Christian creed, sung every Sunday at Mass in the Western Rite. Its proper name is the Symbol of Faith. It was formulated by the first two Ecumenical Councils, those of Nicaea and Constantinople.

**Ninth Hour**- The little Hour of the Divine Office which follows the Sixth Hour and is sung about 2:00 or 3:00 p.m. This is the Hour which introduces the Mass on fast days, vigils, ember Wednesdays and Fridays, etc. Commemorates the Passion of Christ.

**None**- see Ninth Hour.

**Offerenda**- Less commonly called the Offertorium. An ornate melodic chant, including verses and repeats, which is sung at the offertory segment of the Mass (offering of oblations, washing of Priest’s hands, and the little epiclesis).

**Offertory Veil**- veil of rich cloth that covers the chalice as it is brought to the altar. Also used to veil the paten when there is a Patener (see Patener).

**Officium**- The series of melodic chants which actually begin the Liturgy. It includes the entrance antiphon or introit, with its psalm verse, Glory be, and repetitions; the Kyrieleyson, with its nine verses; and, it might be said, the Angelic Hymn or Gloria, with its tropes, if any. Answers, in some degree, to the Byzantine Liturgy’s "O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ." (\* in the Western Rite, there is a similar Officium for Ember Saturdays, "O come let us worship and fall down before God...")

**Orphrey**- from L. "aurifrigium," or band of gold. A wide, decorative band of precious materials characteristic of the chasuble, dalmatic, cope, and mitre.

**P.T.** - Abbreviation for Paschaltide (the day of Pascha through the day of Pentecost, inclusive). During this season, many chants and responses end with "alleluya," which do not normally end that way. Example: The words of an Officium may conclude, "and together praise the Son of God (P.T.: alleluya)."

**Pallium**- Refers most commonly to the purple cover-cloth blessed by the Bishop and placed on the Altar between Masses to keep the white linens clean. Also refers to the Archbishop’s pallium, answering to the omophorion of the Byzantine Rite, but in the West usually white with black or purple crosses. It rests over the Archbishop’s shoulders, crosses over, and hangs down equally in front and behind. It is traditionally fastened on with pins, although a button system is easier on the chasuble.

**Pascha**- the Latin and Old-English word for Easter Day (another Old-English term).

**Paschaltide**- season from Pascha to Pentecost Day inclusive.

**Paten**- The golden vessel (fashioned like a dinner plate) on which the singing-bread is placed at Mass. Not used during the Canon, when the Bread rests directly on the sindon.

**Patener**- the Acolyte who throughout the Canon of the Mass holds the paten, veiled in the offertory veil. The Patener wears a tunicle or chlamys (a sort of short, sideways chasuble rarely in use nowadays).

**Pax**- Refers to either the kiss of peace or the icon passed around for kissing, as a substitute for the kiss.

**Pax Icon**- As the clergy are giving one another the personal embrace which is the kiss of peace, the pax icon is taken up from the altar and out to the people for them to kiss. Anciently, the people gave one another the kiss of peace, but this is not within consideration if the men and women do not stand on separate sides of the nave, as is traditional in any case (some Anglo-Catholic parishes, such as All Saints in London, maintained this separation of the sexes throughout most of the 20th century; certainly the Reformers preserved this custom for centuries).

**Pilleolus**- A black skullcap worn by clergy. A heightened cap similar to the Byzantine kamilavka was worn by pre-Reformation priests in England, topped by a black veil. (Anciently, no rank of clergy wore any particular headgear.)

**Piscina**- Latin for "pond." The sink within the chancel which empties to a designated spot beneath the church, on consecrated ground; used for blessed things which must be poured out.

**Planeta**- see Chasuble.

**Pope**- ancient title for the Patriarchs of Rome and Alexandria.

**Precentor**- In Latin, "cantor," meaning simply "singer." The minister responsible for intoning the chants, leading the choir, and appointing the readers and singers for the various portions of the Divine Office. Often imbued with teaching or librarian functions.

**Preces**- A series of versicles and responses (q.v.) leading into a collect. Always sung to the tone Fa-Fa-Fa-Fa-Fa-Fa-Re throughout (unless a straight tone is specified).

**Prelest**- Illusion or deceit (some Collects contain this term). Orthodox jargon borrowed from Slavonic (the Greek is *plani*), denoting a soul-destroying deception, especially when one is unwittingly self-deceived.

**Presanctified**- a Mass without consecration of the Gifts but with communion from the Reserved Gifts. Popularised by St. Gregory the Great, mandated by the Sixth Ecumenical Council for all weekdays in Lent, when, it was ruled, no Eucharist may be celebrated.

**Presbytery**- The westernmost portion of the chancel. Doors in the screens which encompass the chancel on its north and south sides open into the presbytery and it is therefore an important ceremonial landmark in the Sarum Rite; various processions enter or leave through these north-south presbytery doors.

**Priest**- from Latin "presybter," elder. The second step in the threefold priestly order (Deacon, Priest, Bishop). The Priest celebrates or leads services.

**Prime**- see First Hour.

**Prostration**- The action of standing on both knees, then tracing a cross on the ground with the thumb, bending to kiss the ground at the cross, and rising to the feet. On certain occasions, such as priestly ordinations, the action of lying stretched out full-length upon the ground for a time.

**P.T.** - Abbreviation for Paschaltide (the day of Pascha through the day of Pentecost, inclusive). During this season, many chants and responses end with "alleluya," which do not normally end that way. Example: The words of an Officium may conclude, "and together praise the Son of God (P.T.: alleluya)."

**Purificator**- a little cloth customarily used to wipe the sacred vessels after communion.

**Reader**- a minister having authority over the reading of Scripture; a special rank to which a Doorkeeper may be elevated by the Bishop in a church rite. The reader’s part in services is not so prominent in the Western as in the Eastern rite.

**Responsory**- An ornate chant with a verse, sung most commonly after scripture readings but also as an accompaniment to a procession. The Gradual at Mass is a specialised type of responsory. Used throughout the Divine Office but chiefly at Vespers and Matins.

**Rood** - from the Anglo-Saxon for cross; the large cross rising up over the door in the centre of the rood-screen or iconostasis. Usually flanked by figures of Cherubim or the Mother of God and St. John.

**Rood-loft**- The balcony atop the rood-screen of many churches, where scriptures are read and the inter-scripture chants are sung. Often the sermon was preached from this vantage as well.

**Rood-screen** - or iconostasis. The wall dividing the nave from the chancel. In the early English Church, often a solid stone wall; as time progressed, it tended to become less solid, and at the end of the middle ages, at least in the east of England, the screen became an object of delicate wooden filigree carving, allowing the worshippers to look upon the elevated host as the main focus of the service. The ultimate development along these lines was the utter removal of any partition between nave and chancel.

**Rulers of the Choir** - Chanters who stand in the centre of the choir enclosure as visible leaders of the singing on Sundays and many feasts.

**Sacristan** - see Apocrisarius.

**Sanctus** - The Epinicion or Triumphal Hymn (Holy, Holy, Holy). Found in all early Christian liturgies before the anaphora or canon. In Western Rite, it has one more word than in the Byzantine: "Lord **God** of Sabaoth."

**Septuagesima** - the first Sunday in Fore-Lent, ninth Sunday before Pascha, and the season beginning with this day and ending on Holy Saturday in Great Week.

**Sequence**- A variable, non-ornate chant consisting of a number of poetic verses, which is sung after the Alleluya and just before the Gospel on many Sundays and feasts. To St. Notker of the Celtic foundation of St. Gall Monastery in Switzerland (mid-9th c.) is attributed the popularisation of the sequence, which appears already in simple prototypes in Gaul in the eighth and early ninth centuries. The Sequence is a distinguishing feature of the W. Rite liturgy at its zenith in the Orthodox period. Only five sequences out of hundreds survived in the Tridentine liturgy.

**Server**- one who assists a Priest in services. Originally, this function was usually held by an Acolyte, a cleric blessed so to function in a church rite, at least in larger parishes. Nowadays, laymen often volunteer in the same capacity; the term Server can refer to either.

**Sext**- see Sixth Hour.

**Shrift** - archaic word for confession, more especially absolution.

**Shrovetide** - the Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday before Ash Wednesday, so called from the practice of the whole populace going then to confession.

**Side Altars** - Many classical Eastern and Western Rite churches have multiple altars. In the Western Rite, these altars, dedicated to various Saints, are used frequently as stations for prayers on those Saints’ feasts. In churches without multiple altars, a stand with an icon may serve as the station for a Saint’s feast.

**Sign of the Cross** - Made in the Western Rite by joining the thumb, index, and middle fingers of the right hand and touching the forehead, stomach, right shoulder, then left shoulder. Altered by the Roman Catholic church in the 16th century so that all fingers are used indiscriminately and the left shoulder is touched before the right. When the Priest signs the Gifts at Mass, he holds out the index and middle fingers of his right hand, index finger on top, and joins his thumb to them at the first joint, motioning up to down, left to right.

**Sindon**- The second of the corporas cloths, spread over the altar during the Mass. It represents the winding-shroud of Christ’s burial.

**Singing**-**Bread**- The prosphora, leavened bread baked especially for the Liturgy using iconographic stamp-designs depicting our Saviour and the Cross.

**Sixth Hour**- The little Hour of the Divine Office which follows the Third Hour and is sung about noon. Introduces the Mass on ferial days. Commemorates the Passion of Christ.

**Skilla**- The little sweet-sounding bell kept in the north half of the choir enclosure. Used by the Precentor to begin the hours of the Divine Office and in fact to initiate all bell-ringing whenever it is to be done.

**Spoon**- In the Western Rite, the holy spoon is used to lower water into the chalice, to give Communion to the sick (for the Portion of the Host is then soaked in a chalice of unconsecrated wine), and to give Communion at a Presanctified Mass.

**Staff**- see Crozier.

**Station**- The halting of a procession at a defined place for the offering of a prayer by the Priest. Also, the place where the halt is made.

**Step of the Altar** - a low step, not immediately about the altar, but at some distance from it, important as a ceremonial landmark in the Sarum Rite. See the diagram on p. qq.

**Step of the Choir**- a low step at the eastern edge of the choir enclosure, important in the Sarum Rite as a ceremonial landmark.

**Stole -** or orarium. Long band which the Priest wears around his neck and hanging down in front of him; a Deacon wears it over his left shoulder.

**Subdeacon** - the minister who assists the Deacon. A special rank to which an Acolyte may be elevated by the Bishop in a church rite.

**Succentor**- Apprentice to the Precentor.

**Sudarium**- The smallest, topmost corporas, folded fan-style, used to veil and unveil the Gifts throughout the Canon. It symbolically represents the napkin of Christ’s burial, which the Apostles found folded and apart from the other burial cloths (Jn 20:7).

**Suffragan**- a Bishop who is beholden to his Archbishop.

**Superaltar**- a small altar-stone, often set in a frame with very short legs, used to celebrate Mass outside of a blessed church (only with the Bishop’s blessing to do so). In the Sarum Rite, superaltars were often placed on the mensa of a regular altar to celebrate over. In some ways, the superaltar or mensa of a regular altar are parallels to the Byzantine antimens.

**Surplice**- white, full-length robe characterised by enormous sleeves, worn by those in the choir enclosure during services. From Latin "superpelliceum," or over-the-pellisse, since being very loose at the wrist it fit better over the fur cuffs than the alb. Often decorated about the collar and hem. This garment originally unique to the Anglo-Saxon Church eventually was adopted throughout the West. It is of plain white fabric except for decorative work about the throat and hem.

**Terce**- see Third Hour.

**Theophany**- from Latin "theophania," compounded from Greek words for "God" and "manifestation." The feast of Jan. 6 commemorating Christ’s manifestations as God at the visit of the three Wise Men, His Baptism in the Jordan, and His first Divine miracle at Cana of Galilee--all at once. In the Western Rite more emphasis is placed on the visit of the Wise Men than in the Byzantine Rite, which combines their memory with the Nativity itself. The oldest English service books call the feast both "Theophania" and "Epiphania."

**Third Hour**- Literal translation of Latin "tertia." The little Hour of the Divine Office which follows the First Hour and is sung about 9:00 or 10:00 a.m. This is the Hour which usually forms the immediate introduction to the Mass. Commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit.

**Thurible**- or censer. In the Western Rite, the body of the censer usually hangs from a disk by three chains. Censers having from one to five chains were once used.

**Thurifer**- the highest-ranking Server, who handles the thurible at services.

**Tonsure**- the cutting of the hair made (1) after Baptism, classically upon the eighth day, but nowadays often on the same day as the Baptism; (2) when a man dedicates his life to God with an intention to serve amongst the minor clergy; (3) at the taking of the monastic habit.

**Tropes**- poetic phrases of instruction or exhortation which are woven into an older, simpler stratum of text. Tropes are one of the distinguishing factors of the Western Rite at its zenith in the Orthodox period and before the shrinking process which set in rapidly after 1100 A.D. The tropes on the Gloria, Sanctus, and Agnus are often called "laudes," acclamations.

**Tunicle**- the over-vestment of a Subdeacon or higher-ranking Acolyte. Similar to the Deacon’s dalmatic, but usually slightly shorter and with markedly narrower sleeves. The Subdeacon wears the maniple in addition; an Acolyte does not.

**Verger**- the minister responsible for heading processions, clearing the way for the clergy. In this capacity he carries a tipped rod.

**Versicle**- A short sentence, usually Biblical, always followed by another brief sentence or phrase called the response; the versicle is said by one (or sometimes two), the response by the choir or people. Found immediately after hymns, series of nocturn psalms, and many other places.

**Vespers**- or Evensong. The greater Hour of the Divine Office celebrated in the late afternoon or at dusk. From Latin "vesperae," evening. Commemorates the creation of the world and the promises of the Old Testament or covenant.

**Vestry**- or sacristy. The area adjoining the chancel where vestments and appurtenances are stored and where the clergy vest. In smaller churches, these things were often stored in the walls of the chancel and all the vestry actions took place in the chancel itself.

**Zona**- or girdle. The flat liturgical belt of all pre-Schism Western Rites, used to gird up the alb. (The round rope-style cincture was innovated by the Franciscan Order.)