

SACRED VESSELS

Sacred vessels are the utensils and receptacles used in liturgical celebrations. In the Latin Rite these are the chalice, paten, ciborium, pyx, capsula, lunette, and monstrance—which come into direct contact with the Blessed Sacrament. Other vessels used in the liturgy are cruets, lavabo dish, thurible, boat and aspergillum. They are to be handled with reverence.

Chalice



Purificator

The **chalice** is the most sacred of all the vessels. It is the cup which holds the wine for consecration; and after it holds the precious blood of Christ. It should be made of precious metals. It represents the chalice in which Our Lord at the Last Supper first offered His blood; and symbolizes the chalice of the Passion; and lastly, it stands for the Heart of Jesus, from which flowed His blood for our redemption. (Latin: calix, meaning "cup") The **purificator** is an oblong piece of linen folded thrice and placed over the chalice.

Ciborium



Pyx

The **ciborium** resembles the chalice, except that it has a cover. It holds the small hosts distributed for the communion of the faithful. It is made of precious metals, and the interior is commonly gold or gold-plated. (Greek kiburion, means "food") The **pyx** is a small, round container with a hinged lid resembling a watch case and usually made of gold. It is used to bring consecrated hosts to the sick. (Latin: pyx, meaning "a box")



Reliquary

A **reliquary** is a vessel in which relics are sealed and kept. Most small relics are kept in a round case having a stem and stand, resembling a small monstrance. Relics may not be exposed for public veneration unless enclosed in reliquaries.

The **paten** is the small plate on which the host is laid. It is made to fit the chalice. It is of the same materials as the chalice, at least gilt. Both chalice and paten are blessed by a priest or bishop. (Latin: patena, meaning "pan")



Paten

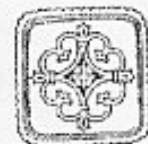
Monstrance

The **monstrance** is a symbol of the Blessed Sacrament since the monstrance is the sacred vessel which contains the consecrated Host when exposed or carried in procession. (Latin: monstrans, means "to show")



Pall

The **pall** is a small square piece of linen starched stiff, used to cover the chalice. It represents the stone which the Roman soldiers rolled against the entrance to Christ's sepulchre.



Sacred Vessels...continued



Stand

Sacramentary

The **sacramentary** is the book which contains the prayers and ceremonies of the Mass, including the four Eucharistic prayers. The **lectionary** is the book which contains the readings for the Mass from Sacred Scripture. It is about the same size as the Sacramentary, yet has no tabs and only a few ribbons.



Cruets

The **cruets** are glass or metal containers, shaped like covered pitchers. They are the vessels from which the priest or deacon pours water and wine into the chalice. There are two cruets on the credence table during each Mass.

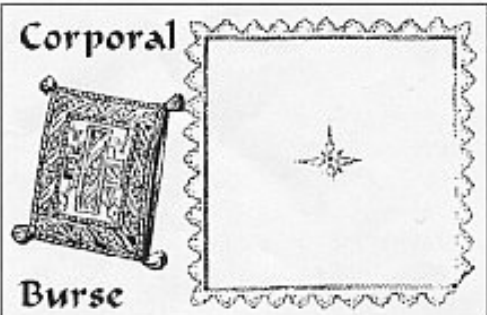


Thurible

The **thurible** is a vessel in which incense is burned for liturgical incensations. It consists of a metal body with separate lid enclosing a pan for the charcoal and incense; it is carried by three chains attached to the body, a fourth chain actuating the lid. Incense is a perfume which is burned on certain occasions, as at solemn Mass and Benediction. (Latin: thuris, meaning "incense")

The **incense boat** is a vessel in which incense is kept. Incense is sweet smelling gums and spices taken from trees, usually burned with foreign substances to make the smoke thicker and smell sweeter. Because the smoke of burning incense ascending to heaven reminded men of the ascent of prayer to God, we find records of its use very early in the Old Testament. Symbolically it represents the consuming zeal of the Christian, the good odor of virtue and the going-up of prayer and good works to God.

Incense Boat



Corporal

Burse

The **corporal** is a square of fine linen, with a small cross in the center. It often has a border of lace. It is folded in three from both sides and kept in a **burse**. It is the most important of holy cloths. The priest spreads it on the altar and places the chalice and paten on it after consecration.

The **aspersory** is the container used to carry holy water, into which the **aspersillum** is dipped. The **aspersillum** is a short rod with a perforated metal bulb at the end, used for sprinkling holy water on persons or things at the Asperges and blessings. (Latin: aspergere, meaning "to sprinkle") (The asperges is a ceremony of sprinkling the people with holy water before the principal Mass on Sundays.)

Aspersory



Aspersillum

Liturgical Colors

The church uses various colors to symbolize different aspects of the mysteries of our faith.

Green: color of hope, for ordinary time.
Red: color of fire and blood; fire for the Holy Spirit; blood for Martyrs, who shed their blood for Christ.
Purple: color of penance, for Advent and Lent, and may be worn at funerals.
White: color of purity, used for Feasts of Jesus and Mary and other saints who were not martyrs, such as pastors

and virgins. Used all during Easter season, also used for white, for solemn Feast days.
Black: color for sorrow, may be used in funerals and in Masses for the dead.
Rose: used only on two Sundays, one in Advent and one in Lent, to symbolize the closeness of Christmas (in Advent) and Easter (in Lent).