

Tridentine Community News

July 2, 2006

Reminder: LLA Conference

Friday-Sunday, July 14-16, the Latin Liturgy Association convention will be held in St. Louis, Missouri. This is arguably the premier event in North America for devotees of the Latin Mass, in both Tridentine and Novus Ordo forms. Speakers this year include Msgr. Michael Schmitz, ICR, North American Provincial Superior of the Institute of Christ the King; Fr. Frank Phillips, CR, pastor of St. John Cantius Church in Chicago; and Dr. Richard Haefler, Gregorian Chant expert and co-organizer of the indult Tridentine Masses in Phoenix. The weekend begins with a tour of historic St. Louis churches on Friday. The days are filled with exemplary Latin Masses, including a Pontifical High Tridentine Mass to be celebrated by Archbishop Raymond Burke. See www.latinliturgy.com for more information.

Altar Furnishings

Last week, we discussed the various vestments used by the sacred ministers at at Tridentine Mass. Today, we will continue in that vein by reviewing the items that you see on the altar.

The chalice that holds the wine that is changed into Our Lord's Precious Blood is placed centrally on the altar. Before Mass, it is prepared as the diagram at right indicates. The purificator cloth is draped over it. This cloth has a small cross sewn on it, and is used to protect against spillage out of the chalice, as well as to clean the chalice after Holy Communion. (The purificator is not to be confused with the lavabo cloth, or hand-towel, a similar item with *no* cross used by the priest to dry his hands after having had water poured over them by a server at the Offertory.) Over the purificator is placed the paten, the small dish that holds the host, or bread that is changed into the Body of Christ. On top of the paten and host is placed the veil, a firm, decorated square that both protects the host and serves as a stabilizer for the chalice veil that is draped over the assembly. On top of the chalice veil is placed the burse, an accordion-like holder for the corporal, the piece of cloth that is unfolded and placed upon the center of the altar. The actions of the Mass, that is the sacrifice and consecration, take place upon the corporal.



CIBORIUM

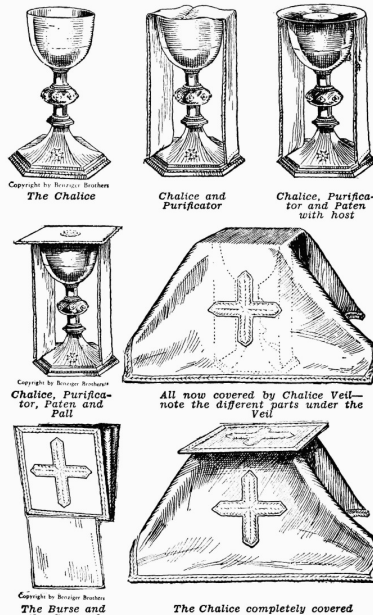
At least one host, usually a larger one, is consecrated at each Mass for the celebrant's consumption. If additional hosts are to be consecrated, they are contained in a ciborium, a decorative cup that is uncovered and placed on the corporal before the consecration. Only those species located on the corporal are considered to be consecrated. The ciborium may be covered with a veil, to draw attention to the Eucharistic Lord contained within. After Holy Communion, the remaining consecrated hosts in the ciborium are placed inside the tabernacle, the (usually gold) locked cabinet that is the repository for the Blessed Sacrament.

When a tabernacle has the Blessed Sacrament reserved in it, there must be a tabernacle lamp nearby, a long-life candle that stands vigil for Our Lord. This candle burns day and night, all week long. At St. Michael's, this candle is on the left wall of the sanctuary. At St. Josaphat, it is in the gold decorative fixture that hangs from a cable on the left of the sanctuary.

At the center of the altar there must be a crucifix. Most traditionally designed churches also have the tabernacle located at the center of the altar, certainly a logical affirmation of the pride of place that Our Lord must have in our lives and sights. The rubrics do not require a central tabernacle, however.

On the gradine, or upper back shelf of the altar, are candles that must be lit for Mass. For a Low Mass, two candles are lit, one on either side of the central crucifix. For a sung Mass, four or six candles, two or three on either side of the crucifix, are lit. One

usually sees six; the 3-3 symbolism is yet another reminder of the Holy Trinity. Occasionally, you may see sung Masses celebrated at some very small altars on which one cannot fit six candles. This is an example of where common sense must take over; if only two candles fit, then two candles will have to do. You may have noticed that our six candles are always at the same height. This is because the actual candles are in spring-loaded tubes inside external white sleeves that appear to be candles themselves.



The Missale Romanum

, or altar missal, is placed either on a stand or on a pillow. From the beginning of Mass until just



before the Gospel, it is placed on the right, or "Epistle side" of the altar. From the Gospel

through Holy Communion, it is placed on the left, or "Gospel side". After Communion it is returned to the Epistle side. Since the priest is considered to face "Liturgical East" when he faces the altar in the same direction as the people (hence the "orientem" in the term "*ad orientem*"), the Gospel side is actually "Liturgical North", which itself represents the historic need to preach the Gospel to the pagan North of the European continent.

Three altar cards are placed on the mensa, or table of the altar: The central one contains many of the prayers of the Ordinary of the Mass, so that the priest does not have to refer to the altar missal. The right card contains prayers said during the presentation of the water and wine, and the *Lavabo*, or washing of hands, at the Offertory. The left card contains the standard Last Gospel that is used at most Masses.

Both the altar missal and the altar cards are richly decorated and represent some of the best in sacred art. You are welcome to take a closer look at them; please come to the sacristy after Mass if you are interested.

Questions? Comments? Ideas for a future column? Please e-mail tridnews@stjosaphatchurch.org with your thoughts.