# A teacher's guide to

# preparing the place for Mass

### What is Expected?

The place of celebration should be fit for purpose.

- When it is clean, tidy, and appropriately decorated, the place of celebration shows to us the importance and holiness of the Mass.
- Proper space must be provided for the dignified ministry of clergy, readers, musicians and others - and for the easy circulation of the congregation at the time of distribution of Holy Communion
- The place of worship must help the gathered community realise the unity it shares in Christ.

### What things are needed?

#### Ambo

- The Lectionary
- (Text for Prayer of the Faithful)

#### Altar

- White altar cloth
- White altar candles 2, 4, or 6 (7 if it is the Archbishop presiding!)
- Crucifix (cross and corpus)- standing or flat on altar
- Altar Missal & concelebrants' books, if there are to be concelebrants.

#### Credence Table

- Corporal
- Chalices, as needed
- Purificators one for each chalice
- Jug of water
- Bowl for priest to wash his hands
- Lavabo towel
- · Communion bowls, as needed

#### Offertory Table

- Large altar bread for the priest to use
- Additional small altar breads
- Jug of wine

#### Also

- Chasuble/stole for priest
- Processional candles for servers

#### Westminster LITURGY Commission

This resource has been prepared for use in Schools in Westminster Diocese. Thank you to teachers at St Edwards School, Lisson Grove, and St Joseph's School, Maida Vale for assistance.

#### **Ambo**

The Ambo is the table of the Word. Where possible the design of the ambo should reflect the design of the altar - the table of the Lord's Supper.

It should be of a suitable size for the readers, but if very short children (or adults!) are reading, probably it is better for them to read from in front of the ambo, rather than standing on a box behind it.

It should face (at least the majority of) the congregation. It should be easily seen by all of the congregation.

If a microphone is to be used, readers should be made familiar with the best way to use it in good time before Mass begins.

The dignity of the Ambo means that it should be reserved for the proclamation of the Word - in readings, psalm, homily - and the Prayer of the Faithful. Another place should be found for other announcements.

#### Altar

The altar should be at a proper height for the priest to stand at it, and large enough to hold with dignity all the things that need to be placed there, and the actions that take place there.

The altar should be stable, and dressed with dignity, fitting its sacred function.

The altar fittings - eg candle stands, crucifix - should be of a size appropriate to the size of the altar, and also so that they are clearly visible to the congregation.

### Use the right books

The Church requires that the Liturgical books used be fitting for the sacred Liturgy. Therefore the official editions of Lectionary and Missal should be used, and not Sunday or Weekday Missals.

However when Mass is in school, the study edition of the Lectionary and the Chapel edition of the Missal may be used.

## A teacher's worksheet for

# preparing the place for Mass

### Credence & Offertory Tables

These should be dressed with a white cloth, and have enough room for the various items that need to be on them. There should not be lighted candles on these tables.

The Credence table should be easily accessible from the altar, but not right next to it. The sensible place to put the Offertory table is usually near the entrance to the place of worship.

### Getting the numbers right Number of altar breads

It is important to try and ensure that the number of altar breads brought to the altar for Consecration match the number of communicants. This is especially important when there is no Tabernacle at the place of celebration.

#### **Number of Communion bowls**

The time of distribution of Holy Communion should not be rushed. Neither should it be unduly extended. If there are more than 50 communicants, it is best to have a second minister to assist with the distribution of hosts.

#### **Number of chalices**

When Holy Communion is being ministered under both kinds it is usual to have two ministers of the Chalice for each minister of the hosts.

# Number of ministers of Holy Communion

Ministers of Holy Communion should be commissioned for ministry in the school as needed. The responsibility for approving, training and instituting of ministers lies with the local parish priest. However he is likely to be ready to approve the use of ministers who are already commissioned for the distribution of Holy Communion elsewhere in the diocese of Westminster.

if new ministers are to be commissioned, there is no minimum age set by the Church, but ministers must have been confirmed and be in good standing with the Church.

# Chairs for priest(s) and altar servers

- The presider's (or priest's) chair is designed to be a place from which he presides at the Liturgy. Therefore it is good to place the chair where he is free to move, and can easily have eye contact with the congregation. It should generally not be behind the alter, but to the side of it, or even in front of it.
- The seats for altar servers should be placed close to the credence table.
- Seats for concelebrating clergy may be seated near the servers

Preparing the place for Mass
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at
in
Coordinator for Mass is
Priest is

I. Anything needed for this Mass?

2. Anything that needs to be ordered to restock in readiness for the next Mass?

Details of what is needed should be passed to......for actioning before.....