

SACRISTAN HANDBOOK

Blessed Sacrament Parish – Midland, Michigan

SACRISTAN SCHEDULE:

- Scheduling periods are June to August, September to November, December to February and March to May. You will receive a Scheduling Form on which you indicate any times or dates when you are not available. This form must be returned by the deadline date given.
- When you receive your schedule, go through and mark every time you are scheduled to serve. Then, transfer those dates and times to your family calendar.
- If you cannot serve, you must find a substitute from among the other sacristans on the list provided.
- You must also call the Liturgy Office (Loretta Schepperly) at 835-6777 Ext 239 and inform her of your substitution, so we put their name on the sign-in list.
- Get in the habit of coming to the sacristy before every mass, even when you are not scheduled, to see if the scheduled sacristan needs any help.

PREPARING TO SERVE:

- Arrive in church at least 30 minutes before mass. On weekends when we are celebrating infant baptisms, you should plan to arrive 40 minutes before mass.
- Check off your name on the sign-in list. Put on your name tag.
- Review the “Today’s Liturgy” notes found on the large bulletin board in the Work Sacristy (opposite wall from the altar servers’ alb closet), to determine:
 - Whether or not there is a procession INTO church.
 - Whether or not there are any special requirements for this mass (such as baptisms, sprinkling rite, etc).¹
- As you do the tasks in your ministry, make sure that the lectors, servers and coordinator for hospitality ministers have arrived.²

PREPARING THE CHURCH ENVIRONMENT:

- The lights should already be turned on ... the presider usually does this task.
- The church doors should also already be unlocked. Automatic door openers were installed in the ramp entrance at the northeast vestibule. Openers were installed on one of the glass, exterior doors and on the smaller wooden, interior door. Both are activated with a button labeled for Handicap Access. Check to see that the switch for the glass,

¹ See the section of this handbook entitled “Special Rites” for procedures to follow for baptisms, sprinkling rites or confirmation.

² If at least two altar servers, one lector and the coordinator of hospitality ministers does not arrive, you will need to work with the presider to recruit missing ministers from the assembly.

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exterior door has been toggled to the “automatic” position. The switch is on the left door frame, approximately six feet from the floor. You will need to toggle the same switch to the “off” position, when locking up the church. Hospitality Ministers can set the switch for the glass, exterior door to the “hold open” position, at the end of mass and prop open the other exterior doors. **DO NOT PROP OPEN** the automatic doors (instead, use the “hold open” switch). The switch for the wooden, interior door should be left in the “automatic” position. However, should it need to be set, the switch for that door is located on the metal header above the door.

- Ensure that the sound system is turned on. The switch on the wall under the clock in the Middle Sacristy should already be on. There is a second switch in the sound system closet on the bottom of the electronic panel. It is marked MAIN. Ensure that this switch is on. Also make sure the appropriate WIRELESS switches are turned on, depending on which wireless unit the presider is wearing.
- Turn on the ambry (oils cabinet) light (two taps on the switch on the top of the cabinet).
- If we are NOT processing into church, place the processional candles in their stands at the ambo. Otherwise, leave the processional candles in their holders in the Work Sacristy.

SETTING UP FOR EUCHARIST:

- For the 5 pm Mass, place the white corporal³ on the altar. For other masses, replace the corporal if it is soiled. Soiled corporals should be placed in the “soiled purificator” basket under the sink in the work sacristy.
- Place the water cruet, bowl and towel for hand-washing and chalice with purificator on the credence table.
- Place the purificator basket on the floor by the credence table.
- Place five bread plates and the trays with eight cups and nine purificators on the credence table.
- Put the key (stored in the cabinet where the purificators are stored) in the tabernacle.⁴ If the ciborium from the previous mass is in the tabernacle, check to see how much Christ’s Body is remaining from the previous mass. Break any reserved Christ’s Body into individual pieces in the ciborium.

³ Corporals can be found in the drawer marked “Assorted Small Linens” under the cabinet in the Middle Sacristy. They measure about 36 x 42 inches. They should be placed in the center of the altar, on top of the altar cloth.

⁴ As you enter the Eucharistic Chapel, you should show a sign of reverence with a bow or a genuflection to the tabernacle.

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Portion of Ciborium	Approximate Number of Pieces
Single Layer on Bottom	30
Double Layer on Bottom	60
One-Quarter Full	100
One-Third Full	150
One-Half Full	200
Two-Thirds Full	400
Full	600

- Fill the wine pitcher with the appropriate amount of wine and place the appropriate amount of bread⁵ on the large bread plate. The larger loaves of bread should be broken into QUARTERS, before placing them on the large bread plate. The wafer hosts go in the bowl shaped ciborium. Place these “gifts of bread and wine” on the gifts table.

September - April	Bread	Wine	Wafer Hosts
Saturday, 5 pm	7 loaves	Level B	None
Sunday, 8:30 am	5 loaves	Level C	40 hosts
Sunday, 11 am	7 loaves	Level A	None
May to August	Bread	Wine	Wafer Hosts
Saturday, 5 pm	7 loaves	Level B to Level A	None
Sunday, 8:30 am	6 loaves	Level B	40 hosts
Sunday, 11 am	6 loaves	Level B	None

- You will notice that we have THREE wine pitcher levels, marked “A”, “B” and “C”. One which corresponds to eight cups half full, one for eight cups two-thirds full and one for eight cups filled to about one inch from the top of the communion cups. Be prepared to discuss the level with the presider, once he estimates the size of the assembly.
- **If a deacon is assisting**, before mass, SHOW him the level which he should pour into each cup, since he will do the pouring at the Preparation of the Gifts.

⁵ If there is a lot of consecrated Christ’s Body in the ciborium in the tabernacle, then talk with the priest about possibly reducing the amount of bread that you put out. Each “loaf” of bread contains 100 pieces.

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PREPARING FOR THE GATHERING:

- The steeple bell is programmed to ring FIVE minutes before the start of each mass.
- Check with the Coordinator of Hospitality Ministers to make sure that they have recruited the gift bearers and that they have instructed the gift bearers in the procedure we use at Blessed Sacrament to “bring up the gifts.”
- Check with the Altar Servers that they have agreed to who is doing “Gifts”, “Candles” and “Books”.
- Have the Lector place the lectionary on the stand in front of the ambo.
- Have the Candle Server light the altar candles.
- Simple Gathering (No Procession):
 - Have the Candle Server light the processional candles at the ambo.
 - Have the Altar Servers go to their chairs and be seated 2-3 minutes before the time that mass begins.
 - Once everyone is in place, you may join the assembly for the start of the mass. There are two chairs next to the altar servers’ reserved places that you may use, if you wish.
- Entrance Procession:
 - Have the Altar Servers light the processional candles.
 - Begin in the gathering space near the font.
 - The “Gifts” server leads the procession.
 - The remaining two servers carry the processional candles.
 - The presider (and deacon or other preachers) follow.
 - Ensure that the “Gifts” server knows the procession route.⁶
 - Once the procession has started, you may join the assembly for mass.

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST:

- Preparation of the Cups and Wine⁷
 - As the Altar Servers are doing their preparation tasks, please move and stand by the credence table.

⁶ The procession route is shown on the Altar Servers’ Diagram of the Church, posted on their bulletin board.

⁷ If the deacon is present, you should prepare the cups but the deacon will pour the wine. Please wait at the credence table to take the pitcher and purificator back to the sink counter in the Work Sacristy, when the deacon is finished the pouring. The deacon might want you to help with pouring, by turning the trays.

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- When the Altar Servers have completed their tasks and are returning to their seats, place the two trays with cups and purificators on the altar. Place them to the ambo side of the middle of the altar, touching the corporal, if possible.
- Move back and wait at the credence table until the gift bearers bring up the bread and wine.
- Approach the altar and start to pour as soon as the presider finishes pouring wine in the chalice and sets the pitcher to the side. As you pour, he will have several prayers over the gifts which he will be saying silently and then he will wash his hands. If the liturgy calls for the gifts to be incensed, do not approach the altar until after the incensing is complete. Remember, **when a deacon is assisting**, the deacon will pour and the sacristan will wait at the credence table to take the pitcher back to the Work Sacristy.
 - Use the extra purificator to catch drips from the pitcher.
 - Fill four cups (two on each tray), set the pitcher down to rotate the trays, then continue filling the remaining cups.
 - All cups do not have to be filled to the exact same level.
 - Don't pour from cup to cup.
 - Leave the cups on the trays.
 - If you fill the cups and still have some wine left in the pitcher, DON'T go back and "top off" the cups. Instead, take the remaining wine in the pitcher back to the Work Sacristy. After Mass, the wine you did not pour into the cups can be returned to the wine bottle.
- When finished pouring, take the empty pitcher and purificator back to the sink counter in the Work Sacristy.
- Return to your seat.
- Assisting in the Distribution of Communion to the Eucharistic Ministers⁸
 - As the Eucharistic Ministers approach the altar (at the Lamb of God), come to the altar and stand between the presider and the line of Eucharistic Ministers. See the Diagram of the Church for Sacristans for the proper location.
 - As the presider receives communion, he will give you communion. After you receive the Precious Blood, keep the chalice and the purificator. You will become

⁸ This is performed by the sacristan only if a deacon is NOT present. If the deacon is present, he will assist in the distribution of communion to the Eucharistic Ministers. In this case, DO NOT approach the altar platform at the Lamb of God. Instead, stay in your place. Come to communion with the assembly and after you receive, take the chalice and purificator from the altar, back to credence table. Consume any remaining Christ's Body from the chalice, at the credence table. Clear the table of the handwash bowl and towel (take them to the Work Sacristy). Return to the sanctuary and proceed with your other communion duties (see Monitoring Communion).

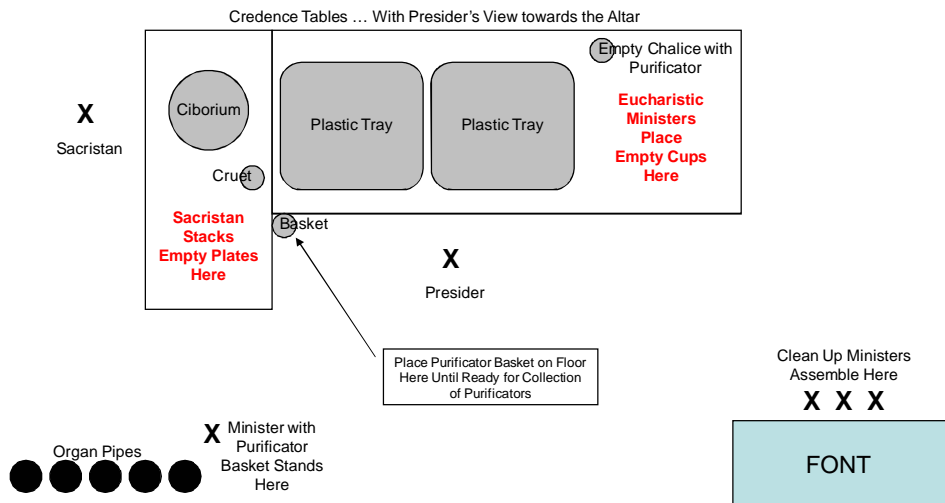
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the Minister of Christ's Blood to the cantor, keyboardist and the Ministers of Christ's Body.

- Follow the presider and present the chalice to the cantor, keyboardist and the Ministers of Christ's Body with the words, "The Blood of Christ."
 - After each receive, wipe the outside and inside rim of the chalice with the purificator. Turn the chalice ¼ turn before moving to the next minister.
 - The presider will be giving the Blood of Christ to the Ministers of Christ's Blood using the cups they will be using to minister to the assembly. When you finish ministering to the Ministers of Christ's Body, take the chalice to the credence table. Then reverently consume any remaining Christ's Blood from the chalice and leave the empty chalice on the credence table.⁹
 - Take the hand-washing bowl and towel back to the counter in the Work Sacristy. Leave the cruet of water. Then return to the credence table to continue your communion duties.
- Monitoring Communion
 - Go to the tabernacle and get the ciborium containing Christ's Body reserved from previous mass(es). Place this on the credence table and set-up the credence table for purification (as shown below):

Credence Table Set-up for Purification



⁹ At special liturgies (such as Christmas and Easter) where we have a larger number receiving communion, DO NOT consume any remaining Christ's Blood from the chalice. Instead, leave the chalice on the credence table as a possible opportunity to "switch out" the chalice with the cup from another minister who might run out of Christ's Blood.

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- In an unobtrusive manner, make your way around to the Ministers of Christ's Body and present the ciborium for them to take extra Body, as they need it.
- Assisting in the Purification Rite
 - Stand at the credence table as the communion ministers return with their plates. Take the plates and gather the remaining Christ's Body into the ciborium. Brush any crumbs into the ciborium. Stack empty bread plates on the credence table so they can be purified by the presider or deacon.
 - The THREE Eucharistic Ministers assigned for clean-up should stand by the font (see the illustration above) after they finish giving communion to the assembly. These three ministers will help remove the dishes to the Work Sacristy, once the purification is complete and the presider/deacon returns to his seat.
 - Ask the first minister that is finished serving (and is NOT one of the ministers assigned for clean-up) to assist with collecting the used purificators from the other ministers. This person should stand by the organ pipes (see the illustration above) and collect the purificators in the basket. This minister will take the basket of purificators AND THE CRUET OF WATER to the Work Sacristy, once the purification is complete and the presider/deacon returns to his seat.
 - Once the purification is complete and the presider/deacon returns to his seat, allow the ministers assigned to clean-up to remove the vessels. Then, reverently return the ciborium to the tabernacle.
 - If you are not the sacristan at the 8:30 am mass, you can return to your place in the assembly.
- Assisting with the Homebound Ministers (at 8:30 am Mass ONLY)
 - Ensure that the plate containing the consecrated hosts remains on the altar and that the Eucharistic Ministers do not remove it. Also, ensure that ONE bread plate is left on the credence table and that the Eucharistic Ministers do not remove it.
 - After placing the ciborium in the tabernacle, return to the credence table. The presider will not continue until you are positioned at the credence table.
 - As the presider calls the Homebound Ministers forward, go to the presider with the empty bread plate. He will place some hosts (Christ's Body) in your plate.
 - Start opposite the presider and go to each Homebound Minister. They will inform you how many hosts you will need to place in their pyx.¹⁰
 - After all Homebound Ministers receive the proper number of hosts, take the bowl ciborium from the presider and carry that ciborium and your bread plate to the tabernacle.

¹⁰ It helps if you place the hosts in the pyx one at a time so there is no misunderstanding of how many they need. If you run out of hosts in both your plate and that of the presider's, you will need to give the ministers the correct amount of hosts, AFTER MASS.

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- Transfer the hosts to the host ciborium in the tabernacle. Take the two empty vessels back to the sink counter in the Work Sacristy.
- Return to your place in the assembly.

AFTER MASS:

- Remind the Altar Servers to extinguish the altar and processional candles.
- Use the “table crumber” to remove any bread crumbs from the altar. These crumbs should be placed in the crumb ciborium in the Middle Sacristy. If the corporal is soiled, replace it with a clean one. Place the soiled corporal in the basket under the sink, in the Work Sacristy.
- Place all soiled purificators in the basket under the sink, in the Work Sacristy. There is a special marked basket for these.
- After 11 am Mass:
 - Remove the corporal from the altar. If it is soiled, place it in the “Soiled Purificator” basket under the sink, in the Work Sacristy. Otherwise, put it back in the drawer in the Middle Sacristy.
 - Bring the ciborium of consecrated Christ’s Body from the tabernacle to the counter in the MIDDLE sacristy. Wrap the remaining Christ’s Body in newspaper¹¹. Also remove the crumbs from the “crumb” ciborium into the same paper. Have the dish washers wash the ciborium. The empty and washed ciborium should be stored on the counter by the sink, in the Work Sacristy. The “crumb ciborium” does not need to be washed. It should be placed on the sink counter in the Middle Sacristy.
- After 5 pm and 11 am Masses:
 - Put all liturgical items (ie cups, plates, trays, etc) in their designated cabinets.
 - Lock the tabernacle, remove the tabernacle key and store the key on the hook in the cabinet where the purificators are stored.
 - Turn off the ambry light.
 - Turn off the lights and help lock the church. Remember to toggle the switch for the automatic EXTERIOR door in the northeast vestibule to the “off” position, when locking the church. The switch for the automatic INTERIOR door should be left toggled in the “automatic” position.

¹¹ Newspaper is found on the top shelf in the vestment cabinet (the cabinet on which the Lector’s bulletin board is found). Tape the folded newspaper closed or use a rubber band to contain it. Place this package in the bread basket and leave the basket on the counter in the Middle Sacristy.

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Your ministry is VITAL to the life of the community! Your attention to details and commitment to our worship will improve the quality of our liturgies. Thank you for your generous service to the people of Blessed Sacrament Parish!

CONTACTS:

- For scheduling and reporting substitutions ... Loretta Schepperly (835-6777 Ext 239) or lorettas@blessed-midland.org.
- For questions about procedures or for on-going formation ... Joe Plevyak (835-2846) or joe.plevyak@gmail.com.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- Left-over consecrated hosts (Christ's Body) remain in the host ciborium in the tabernacle to be used during the week.
- Left-over consecrated bread (Christ's Body) remains in the ciborium in the tabernacle from one mass to the next on a weekend to be used at the next mass. Since this bread molds quickly, it is not reserved from one week to another. Instead, it is gathered after the last mass, wrapped in paper and burned in a special fireplace in the rectory basement. The presider at the last mass will take it to the rectory.
- How do you handle a spill of consecrated Christ's Blood? Answer: During the liturgy, you should cover the spot with old, small purificator(s). These old, small purificators are stored on the top shelf of the cabinet where the other purificators are stored. After mass, use the purificators to soak up the spill. Rinse the area with clean water and soak up as much of the rinse water with purificators. All the purificators should then be rinsed with clean water and the rinse water disposed of directly in the sacrarium (the COVERED sink in the MIDDLE sacristy). Place the soiled purificators in the basket under the sink in the Work Sacristy.

SPECIAL RITES AND PROCEDURES:

"Baptism Sundays" ... If the "Today's Liturgy" notes identify this as a Baptism Sunday, there are a few more tasks in addition to your duties for a "Regular Sunday" ...

- Before Mass:
 - Review the "Today's Liturgy" notes to determine the number of people being baptized.

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- Have the Ministers of Hospitality reserve a pew section¹² for the family of each person being baptized.
- Take a baptismal candle (one for each person being baptized) from the box and place the candle(s) on the font ledge by the Easter candle.
- Place the empty baptismal candle box, a towel and laminated baptism instruction card for each person being baptized, in their reserved section.
- Pour a small amount of chrism (the oil in the gold handled vessel in the ambry) into a glass bowl and place it on a terry cloth¹³ in the ambry. Open the ambry doors.
- Light the Easter candle.
- Place a towel on the font ledge by the upper font (for the presider to kneel on during the baptism).
- Instruct the Altar Servers:
 - The “Book Server” should assist the presider by holding his book during the baptism at the font. After the baptism, they are to return to their seat, with the presider’s book.
 - The “Gifts Server” should help with the chrism. During the baptism, the server comes to the ambry (oil cabinet) and takes the small bowl of chrism and the terry cloth and goes back to their seat. After the baptism, when the presider goes to the newly baptized infants (in front of the altar), the server goes to the presider and hands the bowl to him. Afterwards, the server returns the chrism bowl and towel to the ambry and then returns to their seat.
- After the Mass:
 - Remind the servers to extinguish the Easter candle.
 - After 11 am mass, pour the chrism back into the gold handled vessel and remind the dish washers to wash the chrism bowl.
 - Close the ambry doors.
 - Collect wet baptismal towels and place them in the basket in the bathroom between the MIDDLE and MUSIC sacristies.
- Location of Items:
 - Baptismal candles and laminated instruction cards are stored on the top shelf of the “Fire and Smoke Cabinet” in the WORK sacristy.

¹² First family in Section #8, second family in Section #7, third family in Section #6, fourth family behind the first family in Section #8, fifth family behind the second family in Section #7 and so on.

¹³ These wash cloths are found in a basket in the Work Sacristy cabinet where the baptismal towels are stored.

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- The terry towel for the chrim bowl is stored in a white basket in the cabinet where the baptismal towels are stored.

“Sprinkling Rite” ... If the “Today’s Liturgy” notes identify that a Sprinkling Rite will occur, there are a few more tasks in addition to your duties for a “Regular Sunday” ...

- Before Mass:
 - Place a towel on the ledge of the font. On the towel, place the large bowl for sprinkling. [Note: The bowl should be empty and will be filled by the presider.]
 - Place the sprinkler next to the bowl.
- Instruct the Altar Servers:
 - Decide which server will help with the sprinkling. “Book” server and bowl bearer go to the font with the presider.
 - “Book” server holds the book during the blessing prayer. Afterwards, this server takes the book and goes back to his/her chair.
 - The presider fills the bowl with water and gives it to the bowl bearer.
 - Server carries the bowl while presider sprinkles the people. Server follows the presider around the altar platform but not up and down the aisles. Server stops at each aisle and waits for the presider.
 - When everyone has been sprinkled, server returns bowl and sprinkler to the font ledge.
- After Mass:
 - Empty the bowl back into the font.
 - After 11 am mass, store the bowl and sprinkler back in the cabinet in the WORK sacristy. Place the towel in the laundry.
- Location of Items:
 - The bowl and the sprinkler are located in the far-left, upper cabinet above the sink in the Work sacristy.

“Confirmation” ... If the “Today’s Liturgy” notes identify that confirmation will be part of this mass, there are a few more tasks in addition to your duties for a “Regular Sunday” ...

- Before Mass:
 - Review the “Today’s Liturgy” notes to determine the number of people being confirmed.
 - Have the Ministers of Hospitality reserve pew sections for those being confirmed.
 - Set up for “Sprinkling Rite” as described above.

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- Pour a small amount of chrism (the oil in the gold handled vessel in the ambry) into a glass bowl and place it on a terry cloth in the ambry. Open the ambry doors.
- Light the Easter candle.
- Instruct the Altar Servers:
 - Sprinkling Rite (see above) ... [Note: Difference is that only the bowl bearer (not the “Book” server) goes to the font with the presider.]
 - “Book” server holds the book for the presider, during the Prayer Invoking the Spirit. This is after the presider has laid hands on each person to be confirmed.
 - Anointing with Chrism (see above, under “Baptism”)
- After Mass:
 - Remind the Altar Servers to extinguish the Easter Candle.
 - Clean up for “Sprinkling Rite” as described above.
 - Clean up the chrism bowl as described above.

“Using Incense” ... If the “Today’s Liturgy” notes identify that incensing will occur during the service, there are a few more tasks in addition to your duties for a “Regular Sunday” ...

- Before Mass:
 - Move the thurible stand next to the credence table.
 - Ensure that the incense boat is full of incense and the spoon is in the boat.
 - Place a charcoal in the thurible and light the charcoal 15 minutes before the service starts. [Note: Do not light the charcoal in the Work sacristy or the smoke alarm will go off. Light the charcoal in the Gathering Space.]
- Instruct the Altar Servers:
 - The “Gifts” server also handles the thurible. Whenever they carry the thurible, they should also carry the boat. They should gently swing the thurible when they are holding it.
 - The server brings the thurible and boat to the presider or deacon. The server gives the boat to the presider or deacon.
 - The server presents the thurible by holding it up at about chest level. When the presider or deacon has added incense to the thurible, the server gives the thurible to the presider while he/she takes the boat.
 - The server waits in place while the incensing occurs. Then the server takes the thurible and returns the thurible and the boat to the stand. The server then returns to their seat.

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- After Mass:
 - Empty the hot coal into the “Charcoal Extinguish Pot”. [Note: Bring the pot out into the Gathering Space instead of bringing the thurible into the Work sacristy. This will ensure that the smoke alarm does not go off.]
 - After 11 am mass, bring the stand, thurible and boat back into the Work sacristy.
- Location of Items:
 - Incense and charcoal is stored in the “Fire and Smoke Cabinet” in the Work sacristy.
 - The thurible stand, thurible and boat are stored in the corner of the Work sacristy by the processional candle holder.
 - The “Charcoal Extinguish Pot” is located on the floor in the corner of the Work sacristy by the processional candle holder.