



The Seedling

The Newsletter of the Altar Guild of the Diocese of Long Island ✧ Summer, 2026

From the President...

I was in the Sacristy recently doing some straightening and cleaning when I glanced at the Altar Guild calendar on the bulletin board. You know, the one we all have that tells us what our Sunday “color” should be. It was Pentecost, and every Sunday on the page had a green number. The next Sunday would be the Fifth Sunday of Pentecost and I thought, how could that be? Wasn’t Ascension Day just a few weeks ago?

When I was a youngster, my grandmother would often say, “The days seem to pass so quickly now.” I was too little to understand what she meant, but grandma was right ... the older I get, the faster the days fly by!

Summer is the perfect time to get together with a few Altar Guild members and spend a day or two taking stock of what’s on hand in the sacristy and deciding what needs your attention. Is it polishing, mending, replacing, checking chasubles and stoles for stains, seeing what needs to go to the cleaners, or time to order more bread, wine, candles or liquid wax? Make it a fun day — invite some of your parishioners and order lobster rolls for lunch. Maybe you’ll even find a new team member, or two!

The long green season after Pentecost is a good time to reflect on the joys we receive whenever we prepare the altar for Sunday

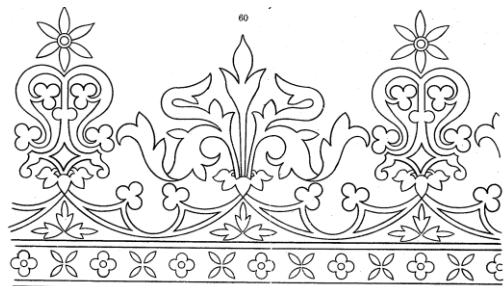
worship. That may not happen every Sunday, but if you look beyond daily cares, I’m sure it is there for each of us.

Our Diocesan Altar Guild Board has planned the year ahead with events for all. A DAG Meeting at Camp DeWolfe in October; the annual Quiet Day at Mercer School on December 12, 2026, and a Spring Tea Party, (at which we will sneak in a brief annual meeting) on May 15, Please keep our entire

Diocese in your prayers, especially as we transition from saying goodbye to our wonderful Bishop Lawrence Provenzano and look forward to a warm, prayer-filled welcome to our Bishop-Elect Adam Shoemaker. His consecration will be Saturday, Sept. 19 at the Tilles Center in Brookville. You are all in my prayers as you serve your parishes through your Altar Guild ministry. May God Bless you and fill you with His love.

In Christ’s love,

Jane Ames
President, Diocesan Altar Guild



A HOLY, REASONABLE AND LIVING SACRIFICE

From the Chaplain

Maybe it's an occupational hazard, but I often find myself thinking about words and/or phrases from the BCP. One word that has been very present lately is the word "sacrifice." It is in all of the Eucharistic prayers, of course. As a verb, the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines it as "the act of giving up something important or valuable to you in order to get or do something that seems more important" Because it is a transitive verb, it requires a direct object. A sacrifice is made *to* someone or something. As a noun, it has to do with that which is given up.

In Eucharistic Prayer I in Rite I, there is the wonderful sentence, "And here we offer unto thee ourselves, our souls and bodies to be a reasonable, holy and living sacrifice unto thee." That is the place where serving in the Church, but perhaps especially in the Altar Guild becomes as close as we might ever get to being really holy.

Some of you who are taking the time to read this may be part of a large guild and serve as part of a team once a month. Some of you are part of a guild that asks a little more of you. Some of you may be a guild of one or two that sets the altar and takes care of the myriad other details every single week. However much work you do, you are making and being a holy reasonable and living sacrifice.

There is no question that there are a lot of things that demand our time. Whether it is work or the kids or elderly parents or

shopping or cooking yet *another* dinner or even suffering through a Mets game, there are so many demands on each of us and on our time, that taking care of the holy things, even if you love to do it, is a sacrifice of time and talent and of treasure.

Going back to the *OED* definition, when you give up time that is valuable. Be strengthened by the knowledge that you are doing so for someone even more important. Putting on the cotton gloves and setting the altar is a gift you give God by taking care of His precious things and His precious people. Because you trade your time to help make worship happen seamlessly and with beauty and dignity, people are drawn to the holiness of the Sacrament.

I hope that your ministry gives you joy and is not burdensome, even when it can be challenging. As I write this I realize that, as of yesterday, I was ordained to the diaconate almost exactly one half of my life ago. I have faced many challenges. Most have them have been cancelled out by good times with God's people, including the several years that I have been privileged to be the DAG Chaplain. I hope that in your ministry in the Church you have been able to stockpile joy so that you can continue to offer a sacrifice not just of time, but of praise and thanksgiving.

Faithfully,



The Very Rev. Laurence G. Byrne

HOW LOVELY IS THY DWELLING PLACE

On May 23, I joined 25 members of the Diocesan Altar Guild, along with Jane Ames and Fr. Larry Byrne, for a private tour of The Cathedral of the Incarnation in Garden City. Our friendly docent was Rebecca Maines, Warden of the Cathedral Chapter. Fortunately, the group was able to experience an amazing art installation suspended over the pews. Gaia, a 20-ft. exacting replica of planet Earth, was created by U.K. artist Luke Jerram.

Our tour of the cathedral exposed nooks and crannies not usually seen by Sunday worshippers. On either side of the sanctuary we saw two incredibly steep, winding metal staircases that led to the original sacristy in the basement. Imagine having to go up and down those

stairs to fetch and return the Communion elements! A third steep and tightly winding staircase leading to the bell tower can still be seen at the cathedral's main entrance. Thankfully, a modern elevator was recently installed during a renovation. We also got to see The Chapel of the Resurrection and crypt in the basement, as well as the old sacristy and exhibits of historical artifacts. Rebecca explained the details of many of the stained glass windows throughout the space, including one or two small artistic mistakes that only an eagle-eyed observer would notice.

I am thankful for this wonderful tour and getting to meet so many faithful members who serve on the parish altar guilds throughout Long Island.



Barbara Hagan, *Member of St. Margaret's Altar Guild (Plainview)*



For more information about the Gaia exhibit, please visit
<https://www.incarnationgc.org/visit/gaia>

Did you know.....

(In a perfect world) the Sanctuary Lamp is lit from the Paschal Candle which has been lit from the New Fire at the Easter Vigil. The lamp indicates the presence of the reserved Sacrament and burns continuously until Good Friday after the reserved Sacrament is consumed. Ideally, each new candle is lit from the previous one so that the light never goes out.

mighty MARTHA SACRISTY SUPERHERO



Overheard on a hot microphone.....
Supply Priest: “Doesn’t anyone teach the altar guild the difference between a lavabo towel and a corporal? Good grief.” Oops.

Martha can help with Linens 101. Assuming you already know that the altar frontal goes on first, then the cere cloth, then the Fair Linen, we can look at the three most used and confused linens.

First, the **Corporal**. The corporal is a square linen (These days linens are rarely made of linen, but the more user-friendly cotton or a cotton-polyester blend.) cloth on which the Sacrament is placed. The corporal is folded in nine, i.e., in three and three again, making a square in such a way as to ensure the best face, opens to the top when spread on the Altar. There is typically a cross embroidered in the center just above the bottom hem, This is folded right side in, in nine folds so that it cannot become soiled before or after actual use at the Altar. It insures the gathering up of particles of the Blessed Sacrament which may have fallen on it. Corporals will vary in size depending the size of the altar.

The **Lavabo Towel** is just that: a towel for the Celebrant to use after the ritual hand washing done before the consecration. A lavabo towel tends to have a cross embroidered at the bottom center, just above the hem. This one is easy... it is folded right side out in thirds

lengthwise, and then folded in half. Just like a guest towel in your perfect powder room!

Third, (in order of appearance at the altar on any given Eucharist) is the **Purificator**. The purificator is smaller than the corporal, often about 12 inches square. Like the corporal it usually has a cross in the center and is folded in nine, but right side up. When draped over the chalice the embroidered cross should be in the center. It is a good idea to keep an extra purificator in the burse in case of messy ministers.

Speaking of messy ministers and masses..... do try to treat stains on linens as quickly as possible. For red wine stains, a product called *Wine Away* works very well, especially if the stain is fresh. Spray it on, let sit for a while, blot, then rinse with cold (never hot!) water and launder with a gentle detergent. *Wine Away* is available at Almy or on Amazon. If you have wax drips on your linens Almy makes a candle wax remover that is effective.

Crisp, clean linens are a joy to use. Here’s a shortcut you can use on purificators if you either hate ironing or are simply out of time. Lay your freshly hand washed purificator out flat on a pristine smooth hard surface (Martha’s counters are vintage Formica.) and flatten them out, squeegeeing out as much water as possible. When they dry, carefully fold them with sharp creases and it will be hard to tell the difference between them and ironed ones!



ESCAPE TO CAMP DEWOLFE OCTOBER 1, 2026



St. Luke's Chapel at Camp DeWolfe

We are fortunate as a diocese to have a place of natural beauty where so many people experience the love of God in nature and in each other. Camp DeWolfe has been a place of refreshment for children and adults since 1947, and its ministry has touched thousands of lives. The D.A.G. has been a small part of that ministry by providing liturgical vessels and linens over the years.

It has been several years since the Diocesan Altar Guild has held an event at the camp, so your DAG Board is excited to invite you to take part in an

AUTUMN DAY AWAY AT CAMP DEWOLFE

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2026

10:30 AM-2:30 PM* .

The camp is beautiful in every season, but it is glorious in the Fall! The day will include time for: prayer, relaxation, a little business, a picnic lunch (weather permitting); two presentations to jump-start your plans for the whole Holiday season, and a tour of the camp. Those who wish may of course take the stairs to the waterfront.

"Everybody needs beauty...

places to play in and pray in where
nature may heal and cheer
and give strength

to the body and soul alike."

— John Muir

The tentative schedule for the day is as follows:

10:30 Gather, and coffee

10:45 Holy Eucharist

11:30 Fall Meeting (News you can use!)

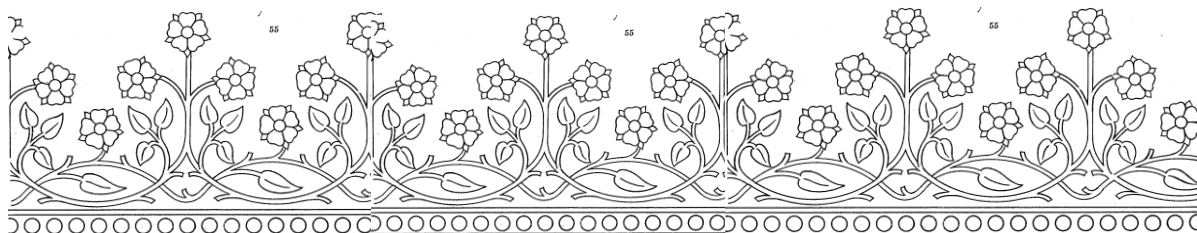
12:00 Lunch and Camp Tour

1:15 Preparing the altar for Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas. This will be a time of sharing ideas and offering suggestions (Please bring photos of your altars and sanctuaries.)

2:30 closing devotions. Stay and enjoy the grounds as you wish.

There is no charge for this event, but we will ask for registration at a future date so that we can prepare.

**We know that weekdays are difficult for many people, but Camp is fully booked on every Saturday through the end of the year! We promise to make it worth the trip and even taking a day off from work!*



LASTING BEAUTY- PRESERVING FLOWERS

While it is traditional to use fresh flowers on the altar, the reality is that we can't always do that. However, that does not mean that we have to resort to using plastic (I see you shuddering.) or even silk flowers, although they are a natural material and so are ok in a pinch, according to Fr. Fussington who like everything just so. With Summer at its height, there are flowers from gardens and in the wild that can be preserved and used on the altar. Don't be afraid to get creative and use natural materials. It's not as hard as you might think.

When I was in my teens, my dad, who was an avid gardener, began growing straw flowers to use in dried arrangements. There were bundles of upside down flowers hanging all over the place drying! After they were dried, Dad made simple arrangements that lasted for years. If

you want to give your budget a break and use dried flowers, through the magic of the internet, it's not hard to learn.

Here are some suggested sites to visit:

Country Living Magazine

<https://www.countryliving.com>

The National Altar Guild Association

<https://nationalaltarguildassociation.org/>

Appleyard London

<https://www.appleyardflowers.com/flowerdiaries/how-to-dry-press-flowers/>

YouTube also has lots of how-to videos.

We would love to see photos of your creations at our October meeting at Camp DeWolfe!

LGB+

FATHER, SON, AND HOLY TOAST

Many, if not the majority of parishes use wafers for Holy Communion, which is very convenient, but sometimes it is wonderful to change (pardon my language) things up a bit. Did you know Communion bread does *not* have to be unleavened? Here is a popular recipe for Communion bread that is slightly sweet and similar to what was used with great success at General Convention in 2018.

St. Gregory's Abbey Altar Bread

Ingredients: 7/8 cup lukewarm water (or a bit more if needed) ✕ 4 tbsp. honey ✕ 2 tbsp. olive oil ✕ 1/4 tsp. salt ✕ 2 1/2 cups whole wheat flour* ✕ 1 pkg. active quick rising yeast

**Note: Do not use stone ground flour or the bread will be crumbly. Pillsbury plain whole wheat flour works well. The recipe can easily be doubled.*

1. Measure the water into a mixing bowl and add yeast, stirring until the yeast is dissolved.
 2. Stir in the honey, oil, and salt.
 3. Stir in the unsifted flour.
 4. Turn the dough onto a lightly floured board and knead for 5 minutes until elastic.
 5. Replace the dough in a greased bowl, cover with a damp towel and let it rise for 1 1/2 hours until double.
 6. Roll out the dough to 1/4 – 1/2 inch thick and cut into rounds with a biscuit cutter, a tin can or a glass. Make a cross in each loaf with a serrated knife.
 7. Transfer to a lightly oiled baking sheet and bake at 350 degrees for 10-12 minutes.
- Total time approximately 1 hour , 45 minutes.

Completely cooled bread may be tightly wrapped and frozen

Recipe borrowed from All Saints Episcopal Church, Chicago, Illinois

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Please add the following dates to your *Kalendar*.....

Saturday, September 19th- Ordination and Consecration of The Rev. Adam Shoemaker as IX Bishop of Long Island. Be sure to register on the Diocesan website.

Saturday, December 12th Advent Quiet Day Our annual pause to enjoy the season. Presenter: The Rev. Canon Eddie Alleyne

Saturday, May 15th, 2027 Spring DAG Day... Annual meeting, Book of Remembrance Eucharist, "A Tribute to Mothers" Tea party *More info to come on the DAG events!*

MEMBERSHIP MEANS A LOT!

One of the things we discovered in our 90th year is that our membership rolls are stuck in the last century! Well, okay, that's a *bit* of an exaggeration, but we do want to get as current as possible with your names, addresses, and e-mail addresses!

Sally Bergmeyer, our Treasurer, has done an amazing job putting a list together with the names and other information from the registration forms received from our recent events. We know that it is far from complete.

Because the DAG exists to serve the needs of parishes from the Brooklyn Bridge to Montauk Point, it is

important that we have an Altar Guild member from *every* Parish in the Diocese on our list. The Diocesan Altar Guild can serve individuals best if we have contact information from every Altar Guild member in our Diocese.

Even if you are *sure* we have your contact info, please complete the census form below. If you have provided us with your information, we are asking you to please, once again, send us your information. Whether or not you choose to make a membership donation please fill out the form. Thank you so very much!

2026 CENSUS/ MEMBERSHIP ALTAR GUILD, DIOCESE OF LONG ISLAND

Annual Membership is \$15 for an individual and \$25 for a parish or mission. Your membership dollars go to support our work in the diocese; provide assistance to all altar guilds; help defray the cost of workshops, programs and field trips. We also have a presence at our Diocesan Convention providing assistance with the Holy Eucharist, sharing information, and offering a clergy vestment exchange. We are also members of the National Altar Guild Association.

YES! I WANT TO SUPPORT THE WORK OF THE DIOCESAN ALTAR GUILD



Please make check payable to: "Altar Guild, Diocese of Long Island" and submit to:

Jane Ames 604 Park Ave. Woodbury, NY, 11797 email info to janeames913@gmail.com

☐ Renewal ☐ New Member ☐ New Contact Info ☐ Individual ☐ Parish

NAME _____ PARISH _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

Diocesan Altar Guild Directory

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MEMBERSHIP: *Open*

SILKS / LINENS: *Open*

BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE: Paulette Lalljee
516-84 3175 ✉ paulettelalljee@yahoo.com



Do you have unloved or no longer needed vestments or liturgical items ? Send them along to the DAG liturgical loot closet! They might be just what someone else needs!



ALTAR GUILD

DIOCESE OF LONG ISLAND
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**DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE OPEN AND
SHARE!**