



## Foreword



**THE ORDER OF SAINT VERONICA** is a Society promoted by the St. Benet's Guild to instill into all hearts a deeper devotion to the sufferings of Christ.

MEMBERSHIP is extended to every soul for whom He walked to Calvary.

THE OBLIGATION is to perform "one act of love to commemorate the compassion which St. Veronica had for the pitiable condition of our dear Redeemer."

THE OBJECT is to aid the poor Churches and Chapels where Jesus dwells in the Tabernacle for love of us, His children.

A DONATION of linens or money --linens made according to the directions herein are preferred-- should be sent to:

ORDER OF SAINT VERONICA

c/o ST. BENET'S GUILD  
312 W. SIEBENTHALER AVENUE  
DAYTON, OHIO 45405

## Preface



The St Benet's Guild gets many requests from poor priests for altar linens and vestments. Often retired priests and priests in poor parishes are especially in need because vestments, linens and altar furnishings are relatively expensive. The altar linens and vestments are therefore used until they are torn and tattered.

Also, many of our local parish churches have sacristies that have been stripped of the beautiful linens they once owned. They have been replaced them with cheap imitations of inferior quality. These churches are desperately in need of refurbishing their linen supply.

"*The Art of Making Linens*" was first printed the 1920's by Our Sunday Visitor. It is a very basic book on making altar linens for churches. The Guild presents this book to you with the idea of reestablishing the Order of St. Veronica. We have updated the book where needed, added some designs and an appendix with sources and altar linen sizes.

Although the hems of the very finest altar linens are always handstitched with small tight stitches, it is acceptable to machine stitch the hems with a medium length stitch on linens for daily use.

If you would like a more detailed book on the techniques for making the very fine handstitched altar linens I suggest "*Making Church Linens*" by Elizabeth Joseph Morgan printed by Morehouse Publishers and available on the Internet.

The linen sizes given for the altar linens for missions are somewhat smaller than those used in local churches in order to get as many pieces from the linen as possible. We have included a chart in the appendix with preferred sizes for local churches.

Making altar linens takes only some simple basic sewing skills and a caring heart. With so many women involved in sewing, quilting, and crafts, it is truly an act of charity performed toward Our Lord to use these talents to make altar linens for poor priests and churches.

Any altar linens you may make for poor priests can be given in the name of a friend or relative as a memorial donation and sent to the Order of St. Veronica, c/o St. Benet's Guild. We will forward them to priests who need them.

St. Benet's Guild ..  
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June, 2003

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## Introduction



### ORDER OF SAINT VERONICA

ON that memorable Friday when our divine Savior was faltering under the Cross, thorn-crowned, blood-stained, mud-stained, there stepped from among the crowd a woman who braved the wrath of hundreds of soldiers to offer Him a linen cloth with which to wipe His haggard Face. On this last day of His life He was the object of the bitterest hate which the malice of man could inflict, just as on the first day of His life He was the most beautiful Babe the love of God could create. Christ rewarded the compassion of Veronica by leaving the imprint of His Holy Face on the cloth.

Veronica, we honor thy intrepidity! On that road of agony, insults and ignominies did not move Him--but He could not withstand love; love called forth the one manifestation of his divine power during His human weakness as He struggled on to Calvary.

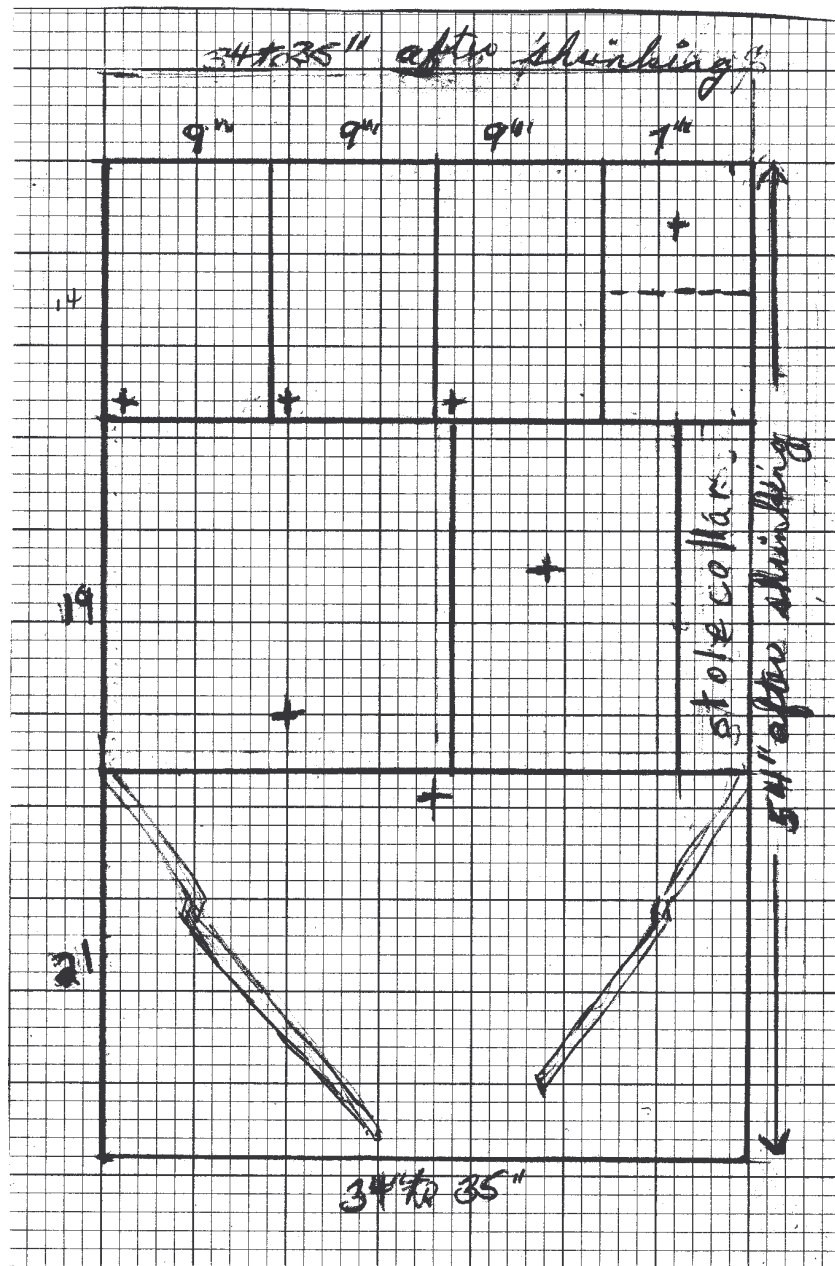
When we ponder the love of our Redeemer we wish we could have gone to Bethlehem's lowly manger to have offered a soft, warm coverlet to the Christ-Child; we, too, long to be as sympathetic as Veronica, as generous as Joseph with his sepulcher.

We can. On many a poverty-stricken Altar dwells the Prisoner of Love. Give Him some assurance of your devotion. Are you willing to make an offering to poor churches and chapels as a token of your self-denial? Can not you and your neighbors a few little linens for His earthly dwelling place? Suppose you cannot sew beautifully, and have little leisure time and less money--St. Veronica did not wait for some one with linen of a finer texture, nor for one who wore a better mantle--she saw His extreme need and followed the prompting of her loving heart. Can we do less? Love, fervent love, is our greatest need; God will supply skill for our handiwork, means for our purse, if we do our part.

If every woman would make an offering of linens in gratitude of Veronica's courageous love, we would accomplish undreamed good for the poor churches and chapels. If you could but read some of the pathetic appeals from those lonely toilers, who are spending their strength in desolate places to win souls for the Kingdom of God! They are making superhuman efforts to balance our indifference; they implore us--not somebody else, but you and me- to aid them.

In gratitude for that first great Friday, everyone should become a member of the ORDER OF ST. VERONICA, by a gift of linens, or a donation of money, (but the linens all ready for the Holy Sacrifice are preferred). There are no yearly dues, no by-laws, just one generous act of love like Veronica's to Him Who, for love of us, carried His Cross to the heights of Calvary.

CUTTING MISSION SIZE ALTAR LINENS FROM 1 ½ YDS OF PRESHRUNK LINEN



One and one-half yards of preshrunk linen 34 " to 35 "wide. It is best to cut off the selvage and if necessary, make a slight adjustment in the size of the labavo towels. It will cut:

3 labavo towels	14" x 9"
1 pall	14" x 7"
1 corporal	19" x 19"
1 purificator	19" x 12"
1 or 2 stole collar	19" long
1 amice	34" to 35"wide x 21"deep

## The Finger Towel



*Let Him be crucified. And Pilate seeing that he prevailed nothing, that rather a tumult was made, taking water he washed his hands before the people saying: "I am innocent of the blood of this just man; look you to it."-- Matt. XVII, 24.*

Partly in commemoration of the incident described by the above text, the priest when saying Mass washes his hands and dries them on a finger-towel. Have you ever thought how many finger-towels are needed for the countless Masses said daily? Are willing to give a few linens to the Prisoner of the Tabernacle?

One and one-half yards of linen, thirty-six wide, will make eight pieces of small linens without one inch of waste by following these directions: Purchase a medium grade of linen (it must be **ALL LINEN** for the service of the Altar) neither a heavy nor a flimsy texture is desired, and to eliminate waste, ask to have it cut according to the drawn thread. (See appendix for sources. )

Shrink the goods by soaking in very hot water (linen shrinks about 1 to 2 inches in length and width per yard)--uniform measurements can be secured only after shrinkage--and iron while still damp. Measure 14 inches along the selvage and cut across to the other selvage by pulling a thread. This small piece is now divided into 4 parts, three measuring 14 inches x 9 inches and one slightly smaller.

Lay a 1/8 to 1/4 inch hem all around the towel, be sure to have the raw edges well lapped in, Sew by machine or by hand, fastening with care--if it frays the poor priest can not take the proverbial stitch in time. These towels may have a neat edge of tatting or preshrunk cotton lace about 1/2" wide on the narrow ends( not all around). Some priests prefer them plain. Directions for laundering them are given later. A cross should be embroidered in very light blue or white embroidery floss in one corner.

With every stitch sew in a prayer, make every step and act of love, fold into the linen that petition for which your heart has yearned so long--and you will learn that Jesus can withstand no request which come to Him tucked away in a little offering to relieve His Sacramental poverty.





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## The Purificator



*But Peter rising up, ran to the supplchre, and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths laid by themselves; and went away wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.---*

*Luke XXIV, 12.*

The purificator represents the other cloths that were used at the internment of Christ. The purificator is a linen napkin which the priest uses to wipe the chalice also his lips and fingers, after the Communion of the Precious Blood, and at the ablutions,

To make, measure 19 inches along the selvage, cut according to a drawn thread, divide into 3 pieces one measuring 19" x 19" for a corporal, a second measuring 19" x 12" for a purificator and the remainder is made into a stole collar.. Turn hems, using 1/8 to 1/4 " hems on the long sides and 1/2" hems on the shorter edges. No trimmings need be used on purificators.

Crosses are used in marking Altar linens. The Saint Andrew cross is a square cross composed of sixteen little cross-stitches and is used on palls, pall covers, purificators., amice, and the corporal. The Purificator is folded carefully to find the central thread of the width, creased sharply, folded to find the central thread of the length, creased or marked lightly with pencil. Cross stitch in light ice blue or white thread (*red thread may also be used but make sure it's colorfast*) counting three or five threads of linen for each tiny cross-stitch according to the accompanying design. Three threads within your stitch will make a very small cross, five threads a larger one, but much depends on the weave of the fabric. The second way to work the crosses is to trace one of the designs in this book on your linen and embroider it with white or ice blue embroidery floss.



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## THE CORPORAL



*Joseph of Arimathea, a noble counselor, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, came and went in bodily to Pilate, and buffed the body of Jesus.-- Mark XV, 46*

The corporal represents the shroud which was wrapped about the sacred remains of our Redeemer when, in the gathering gloom, His faithful few laid the body in the sepulchre. The corporal, which is a little napkin, is placed over the Altar cloths, upon which the Body ( in Latin , *corpus* ) of Our Lord is laid during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, whence comes its name corporal. It is also upon the corporal the sacred vessels must always be placed when they contain the Holy Eucharist .

To make, use the 19" x 19" square you've already cut. Turn one-half inch hems all around the corporal and sew by machine or by hand. It is permissible to put a neat lace--tating or a lace of similar daintiness--all around the edge, which trimming should not be more than one-half inch wide and sufficiently full when turning the corners to allow for a tiny fullness and also for shrinkage. (If it is cotton lace, preshrink the lace. )

A cross should be stitched into the center front of the corporal. When a cross has been made on the corporal, it is finished.



*The Art of Making Linens*



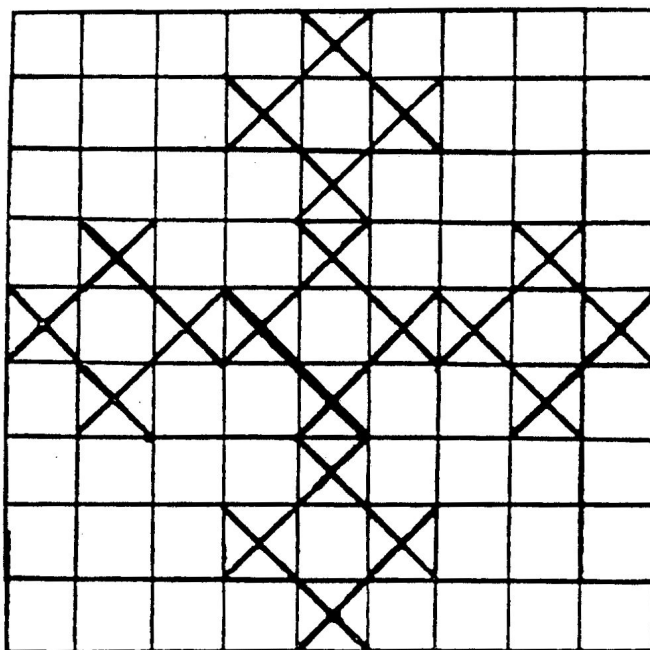


*And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came to the sepulchre, the sun being now risen. And they said to one another: "Who shall roll us back the ston from the door of the sepulchre? And looking they saw the stone rolled back. For it was very great. --Mar XVI, 2-4.*

The pall represents His tomb. It is a small square of linen, usually measuring 6 to 7 inches, into which is slipped a plastic or plexiglass pall board of the same size, to make it stiff and firm. It is used to cover the chalice during Mass. The white pall board (.020 plastic with slightly sanded corners to eliminate sharp points) is cut 6 inches square. To make the pall, fold the linen along the dotted line as shown in the diagram, machine stitch two sides so that the linen forms a pocket and fits very snugly over the pall board. Turn linen to right side and slip the pall board into linen pocket. The linen should fit without a wrinkle. If the pall board doesn't fit like this, remove it, stitch again. A cross is worked in the center of the pall or a fancy design maybe worked in light blue or white embroidery floss. Designs maybe copied, enlarged, or reduced on a photocopy machine.

The unfinished edge is hemmed to come to about 1/16 of an inch beyond the edge of the pall board. Hand tack this edge closed over the pall board in such a manner that it maybe be removed for washing if desired. (With plastic pall boards the pall maybe laundered by hand without removing the board but DO NOT IRON IT WITH THE PALL BOARD INSIDE. ) A dainty edge of tatting maybe sewn around the four sides.





This cross is  
magnified to

show details. The cross is neatest when either three or five threads of the linen are counted for each cross- stitch. The odd number is required because the central threads of the *goods* are creased along the length and along the width to serve as guides for your needle.

## THE AMICE

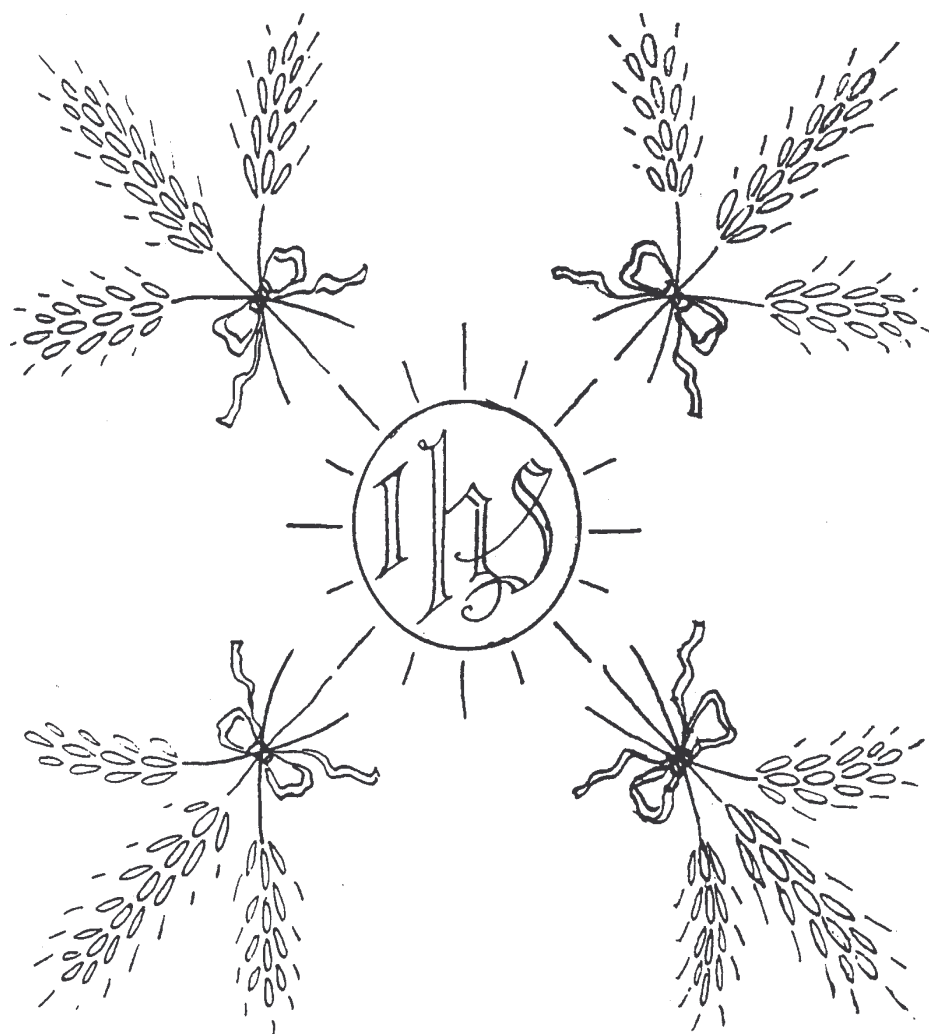


*And some began to spit upon Him, and to cover his face, and to buffet Him, and to say unto Him, "Prophesy" and the servants struck Him with the palms of their hands."--Mark XIV, 65*

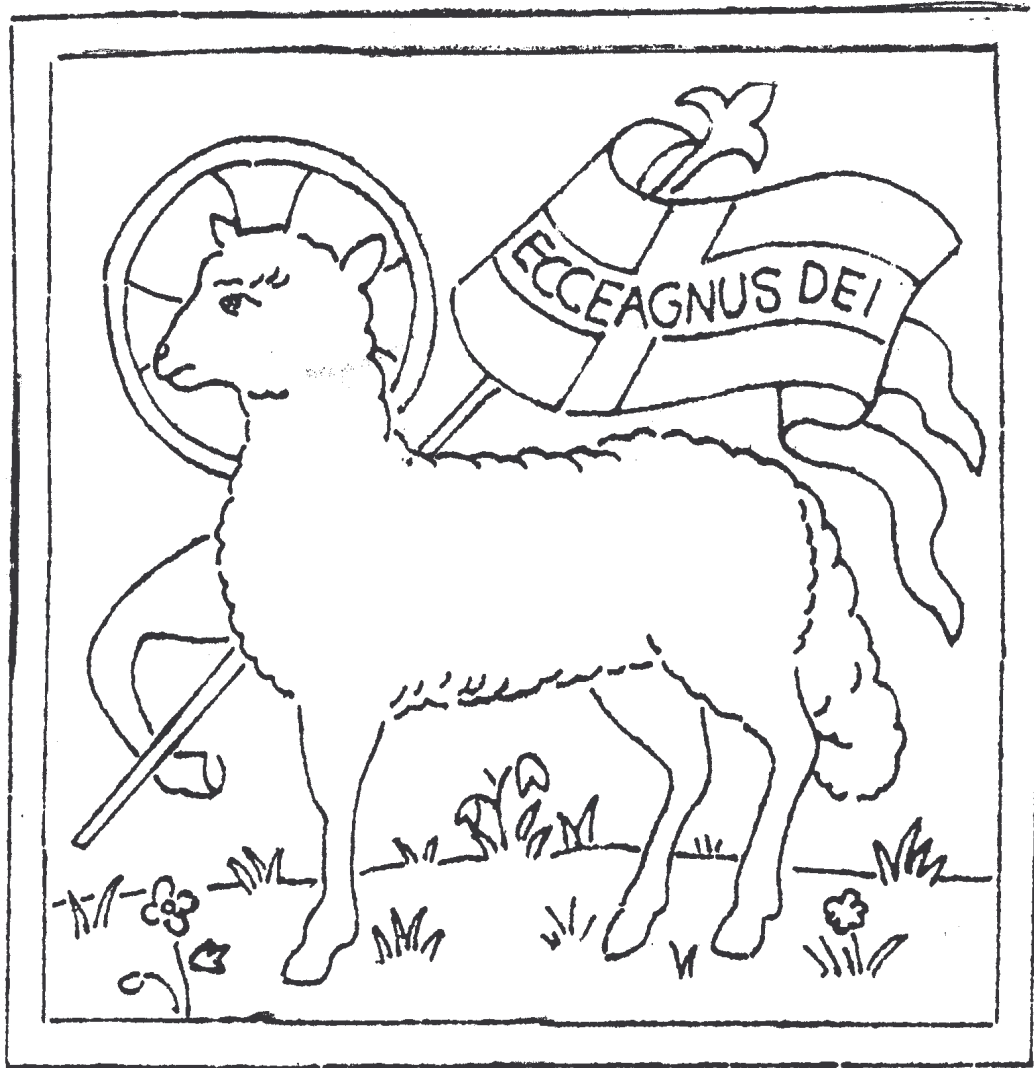
The amice which the priest places around his neck and over his shoulders, represents the linen cloth wherewith in the house of Caiphas the Jews covered Christ's countenance, bidding Him in mockery: "Prophesy to us, who is it that struck thee." Formerly it was worn upon the head. The Church using it as an image of the helmet of salvation which St. Paul wishes every Christian to be armed with. It is for this reason that the priest, before laying the amice over his shoulders, puts it upon his head, saying: "Place upon my head, O Lord, the 'helmet of salvation'"

The remainder of your 1 ½ yards of linen will give one amice 36" X 26" or less according to shrinkage. Put a one inch hem around four sides. A twill tape or grossgrain ribbon, *about ½ inch wide and 54 inches long (longer if the priest is large)* should be stitched on each of the upper corners, so that the length of the amice goes across the shoulders. Place a cross or a fancy design at the center back an inch or so below the hem.





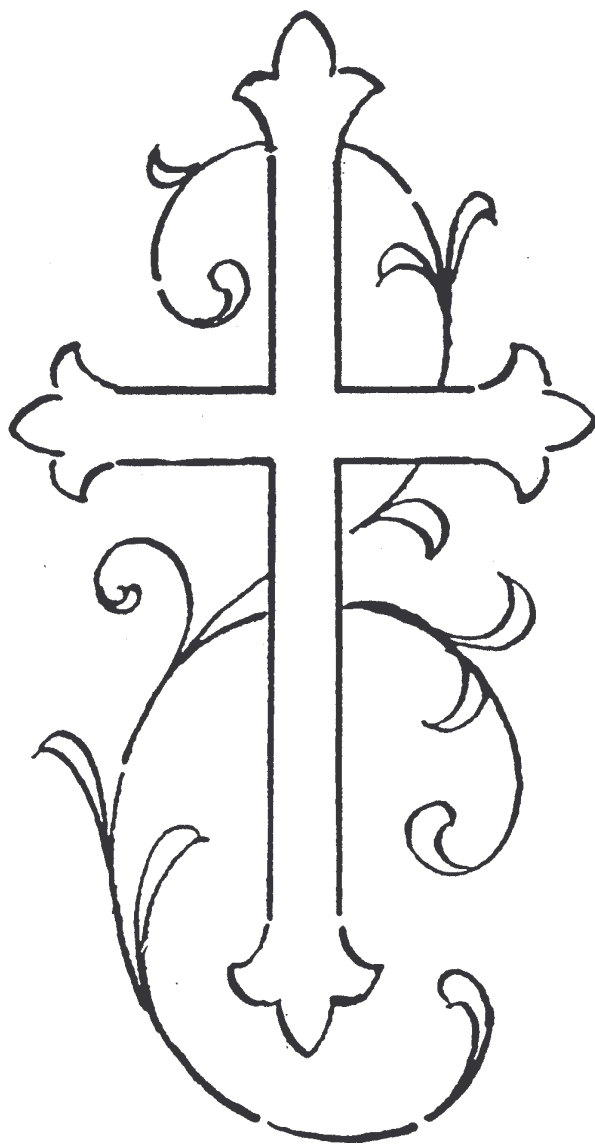
FANCY DESIGN FOR A PALL



AGNUS

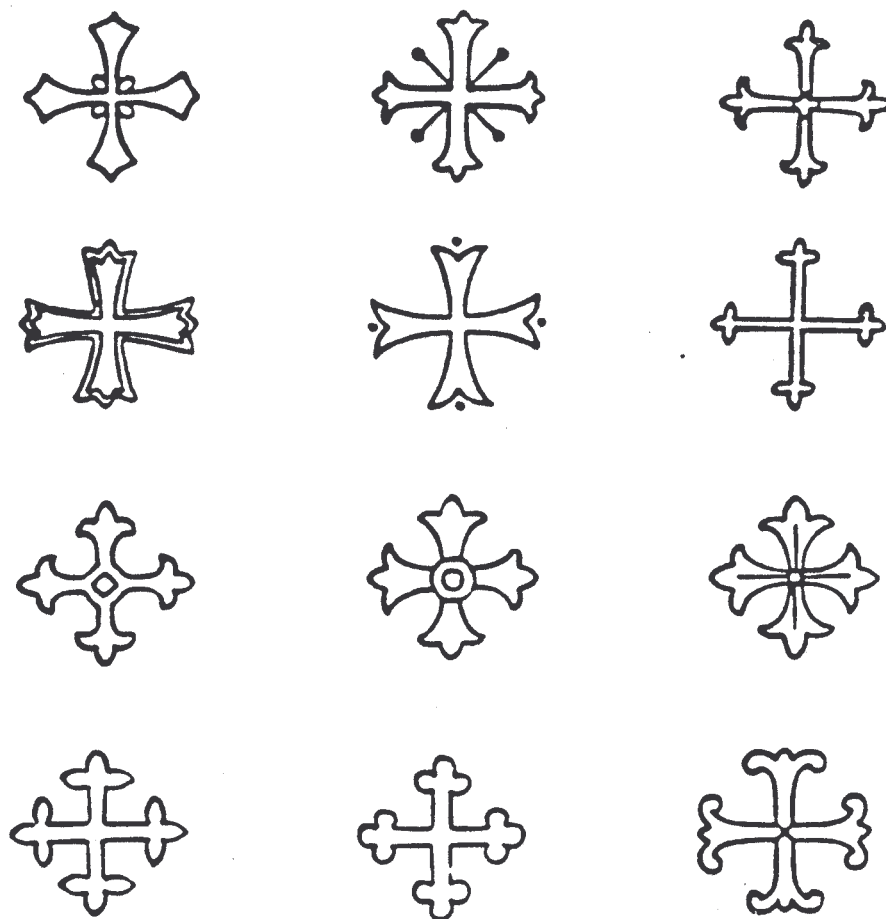
DESIGN FOR PALL

DEI



ROMAN CROSS

SUITABLE FOR A STOLE

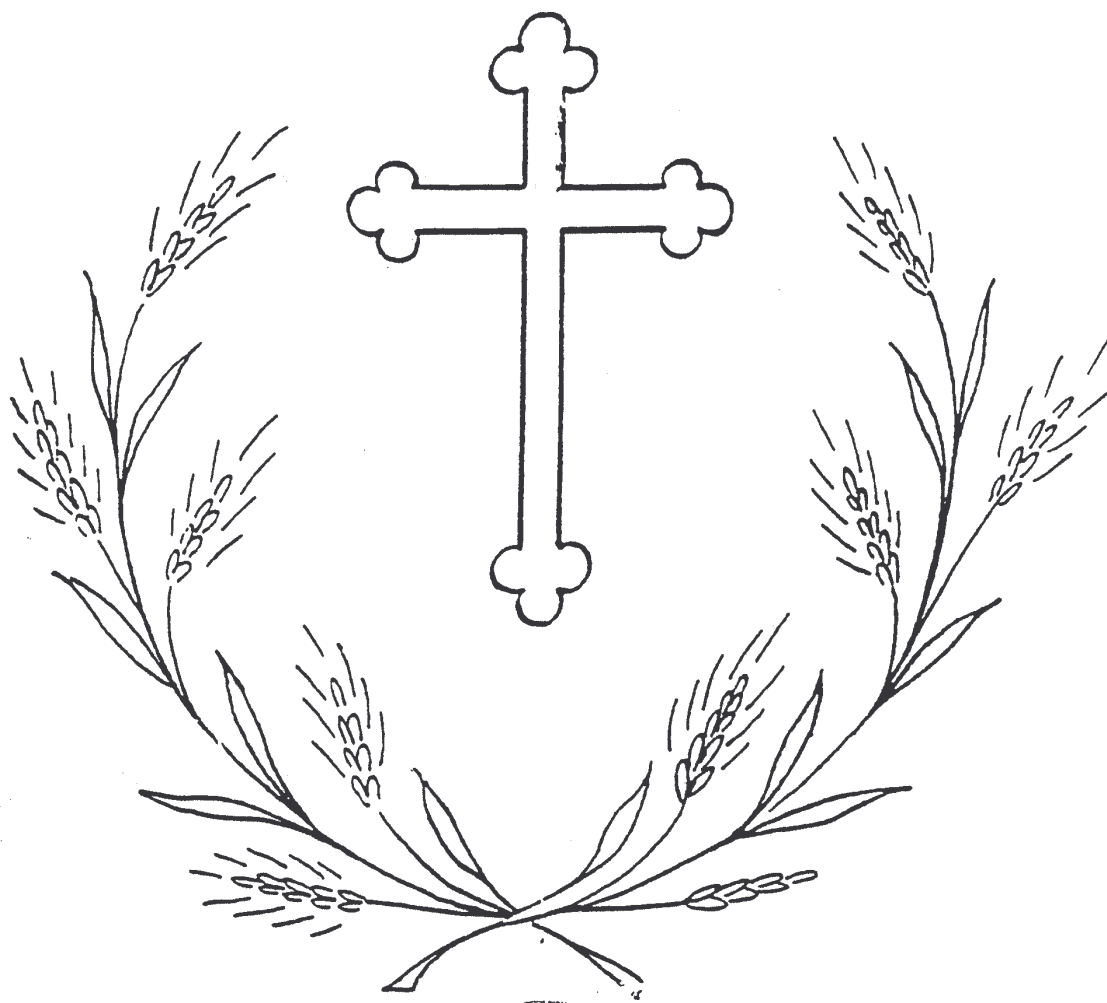


CROSSES FOR ALTAR LINENS

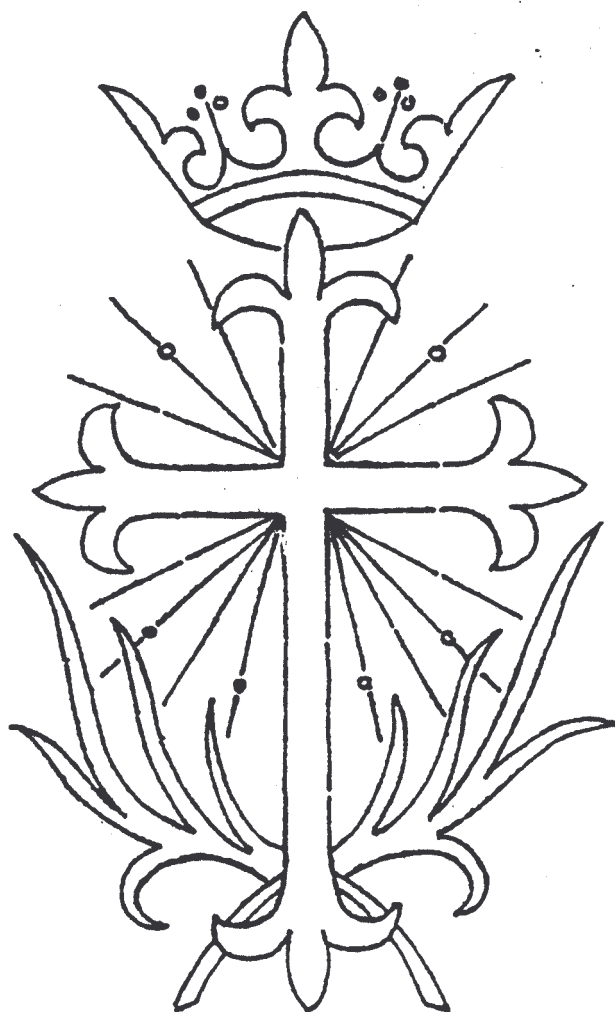




IHS DESIGN FOR PALL



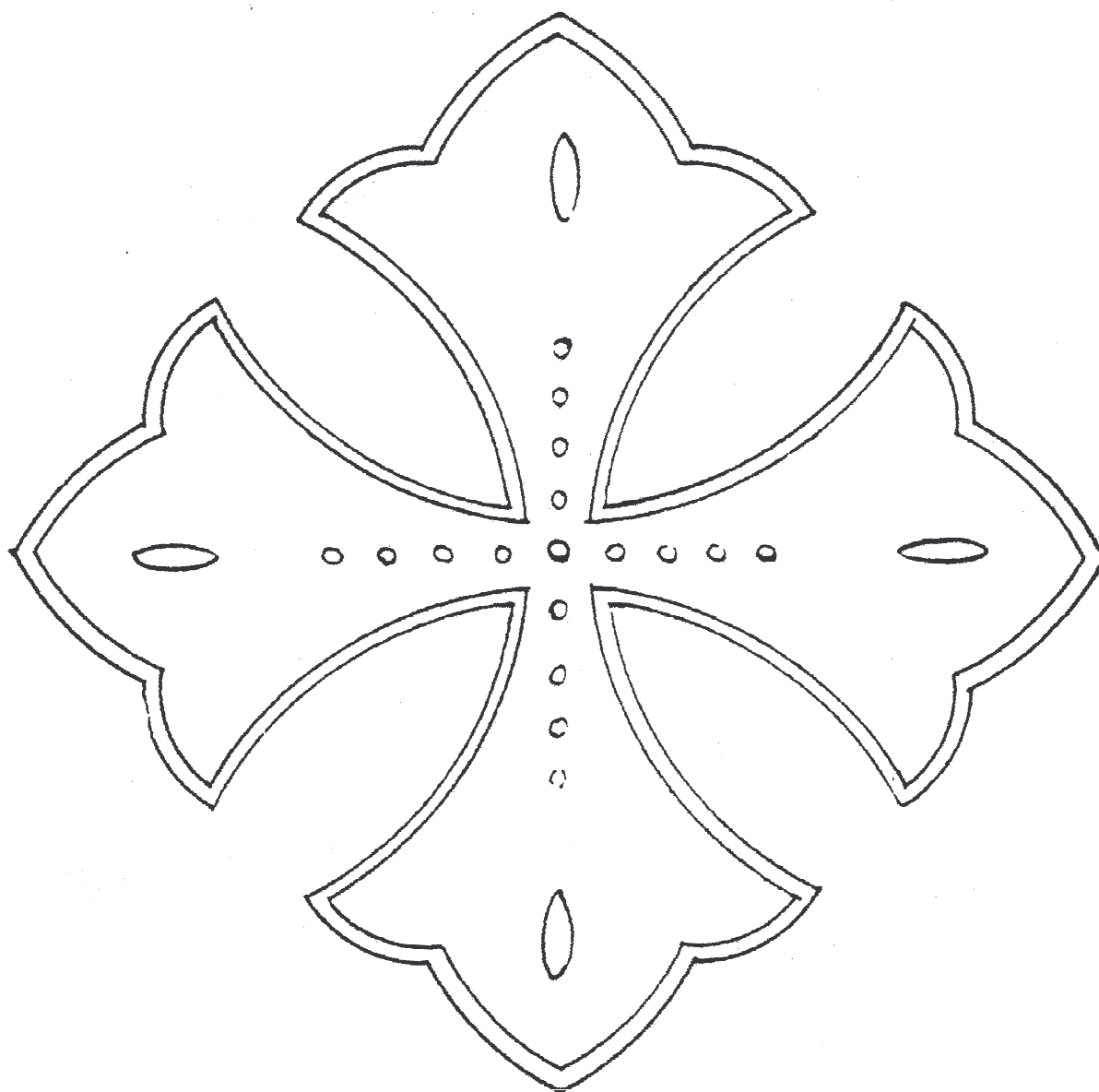
WHEAT DESIGN  
FOR EMBROIDERING A FANCY PALL



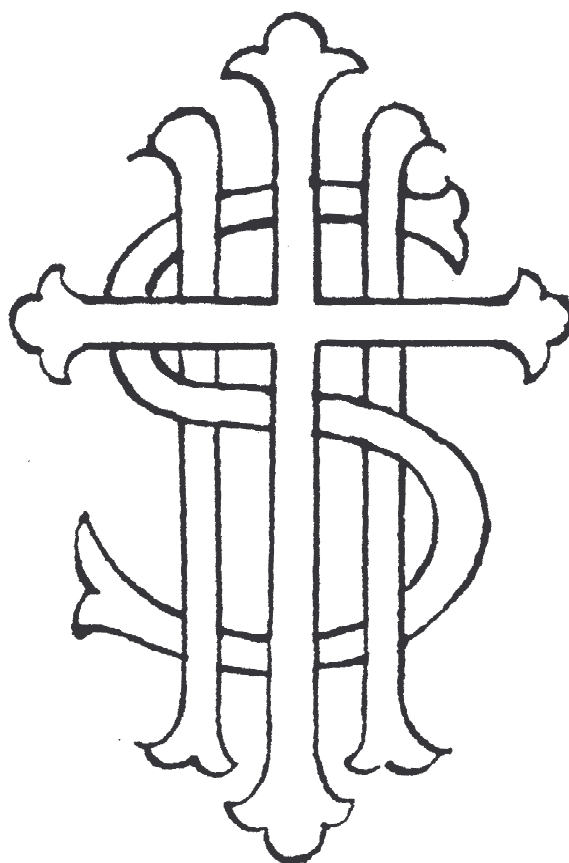
CROSS AND CROWN

FOR PALL OR STOLE

DESIGN



CROSS DESIGN  
FOR A PALL



MONOGRAM  
FOR ALTAR CLOTH CENTER



WHEAT

AND

GRAPE DESIGN  
FOR THREE PANEL CIBORIUM OR  
FOR TABERNACLE HANGINGS

## THE ALTAR CLOTHS



The Altar cloths which the Church prescribes for the celebration of the Mass should be three in number. The top cloth should extend over each of the Altar to the platform below. Make only the large top Altar cloth. It can be folded to serve as two under cloths. Also, it is preferable to make the Altar cloths from a heavier linen than is used for the small linens.

The Altar top is usually 40 inches from the floor. The length of chapel altar is usually at least of 60 inches and from the tabernacle to the front of the Altar is 18 inches minimum. Perhaps the greatest need of the small churches and chapels is Altar cloths. These articles are not received as often as the smaller linens, due, of course, to the greater cost of the larger linens.

To make 2 top Altar cloths for a six foot altar from 4 1/2 yds of 45 inch linen, (first preshrink the linen). Cut in half lengthwise and put a 2 inch hem on the front, back and on the ends of the cloth. By having the hems identical, the front and back are changeable, thus distributing the wear caused by rubbing of the chasuble.



## LAUNDERING THE ALTAR LINENS



In laundering the linens for the service of the Altar, care should be taken to use suitable utensils and an immaculate ironing board covers. Do not starch the linens, but iron them while they are very, very damp, first on the right side to bring out the gloss, then on the wrong side to make them perfect, then fold.

*Notes: Do not use chlorine bleach on the linens. Linens should not be dried in the drier except to preshrink the fabric before cutting new linens. A large table about 5' long x 24" to 30" wide and 33" to 36" high padded with blankets or towels and covered with a clear white sheet is the ideal surface for ironing large linens and albs.*

Purificators are folded right side out in thirds along the length; place the end hems together so cross will fold inside; crease; now turn the right sides out again and fold down within one inch of the center. This will make the purificator like the letter "M" along the outer lines. The little two inch indentation fits into the chalice. Pall covers are ironed without folding.

The corporal should be starched to make it crisp. It is the only linen to be starched. The corporal is the ONLY piece of linen which is folded inside out, this being done to protect any Sacred Particles that might cling to the linen. Lay the corporal right side up with the cross nearest to you; fold the front third of the linen away from you; fold the back third toward you; over this; fold the third nearest the right hand across toward the left, and the left hand third over this.

Lay the amice with the cross face down and to the cross on the right of the ironing board. Bring the side hems to meet at the cross; crease edges; bring these edges to meet at the cross; crease edges; and lap each side





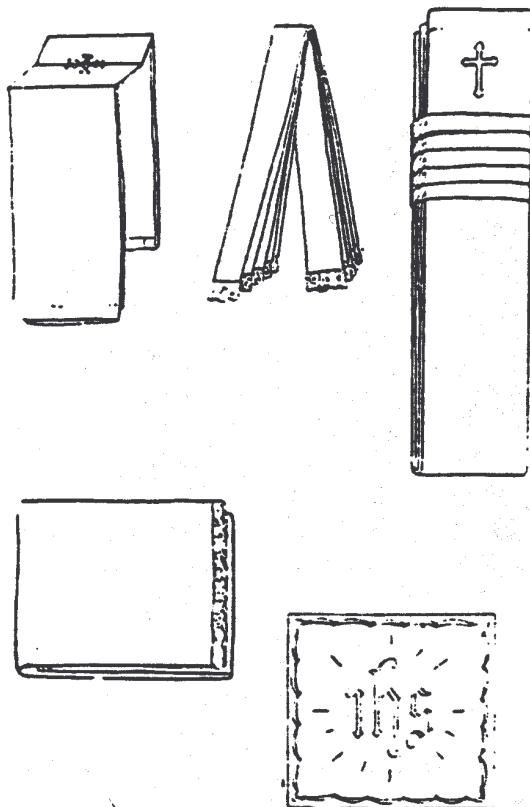
beyond the center of the amice about one-third; fold the bottom hem up to the top hem; wind the tapes neatly around the amice the narrow way and fasten them by tucking them under their own windings .

The finger towels maybe folded in thirds along the length and once across the width but the “fan-fold” opens easier to the priest's hand, if there is but one server and he places the finger towel over his arm while holding the cruet and the bowl. Fold lengthwise wrong side out and iron a crease in the center; open out face up, and make wrong side of hems meet this crease; double along length; bring ends together and the finger towel is fan-shaped with the right side of the hems out. The process is easy to remember if you notice that you always iron the wrong side of the linen, except at the final turning of the lengthwise hems. )

In laundering Altar cloths they should be ironed and *folded if they are to be shipped away*. When ironed for a local church they should be rolled. The boards on which yard goods from the fabric store are rolled make very good rolls on which to store linens. They can be stored flat, stacked several on top of each other and the ends of the boards marked for easy recognition of each linens.



## Folded Linens



### VIEW OF PURIFICATOR, FINGER TOWEL, AMICE, CORPORAL AND PALL CORRECTLY FOLDED

It is very important to fold linens properly, because the corporal must fit into the burse and the purificator must hang over the chalice.

Let us make our little offerings to Him as exquisitely beautiful as lies in our power; we expect, and receive, perfection in His great gifts.

## THE MISSION BOX



Let us peek into a "Veronica" Box as it goes forth to a little Chapel on its errand of love. A stout box, tissue lined is carefully packed with several sets of small Altar linens. Sometimes an altar cloth, a credence table cover, sacristy towels or an altar cloth cover may be added. We rejoice if we have an donated alb, surplice or vestment, even if they are used, to pack.

These boxes will be sent to poor churches and chapels in the United States where they are so desperately needed.

Each box contains a card reading::

### Order of Saint Veronica

*Promoted by The St. Benet's Guild*

These linens are donated  
by the members of the

ORDER OF SAINT VERONICA

in commemoration of her compassion for our Divine Savior. Kindly give the generous donor a Memento when these articles are first used in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.



## THE JOY THAT MISSION BOXES BRING



"Praise God for this idea of the ORDER OF SAINT VERONICA. the demand on your Society from the foreign field is so great that we can no wise supply sufficient linens.

"May heaven's choicest blessing be daily showered upon the members, noble and thoughtful souls as they are. I shall try to show myself grateful and every morning will I remember them at the Holy Sacrifice."

"It is most encouraging to a lonely missionary to find some appreciative souls. I am here trying to start a mission among 2,600 Indians, who in all these centuries have never had a residing priest among them. Therefore, the beautiful present of Altar linens was a most welcome gift. "

"The kind offer of help through the ORDER OF SAINT VERONICA is the first letter of the kind that I have ever received. I am isolated here; the nearest priest is eighty miles away and my next priestly neighbor is only one hundred forty miles away."

"The desire of my heart is to get a central boarding school where the children could at least be prepared for First Communion, but unless God is good to me, I shall not live to see this realized, as my once robust constitution is fast breaking under the drag and the draw of my Missions, six in number."

"I had just returned from one of my missionary trips when I found the excellent parcel of Altar linens, sent me by the noble ORDER OF SAINT VERONICA. Although I felt so tired and hungry and the stove was awaiting the match to start the supper cooking, I was so anxious to see what St. Joseph had sent me I could not wait, but had to find out what was in the box. You will never know what you sent me after my long, weary trip. How did you find my name? How did you know I wanted just the very things you sent me? May God reward our good benefactors and my dear Indians will often pray for these generous souls."



## JUST BETWEEN STITCHES



Aside from the foregoing linens which are needed for the Altar (if fabric other linen is used for palls, purificators, and corporals, they cannot be used in the Mass) one may donate hand towels for the sacristy. These may be plain huck towels, and should have a loop of tape sewn on, for if the sacristy has a hook on which to hang these, the tape will prevent rust spots from eating the damp towel.

Table covers for the credence table are most acceptable gifts. A cincture, the cord which binds the alb, represents the cord wherewith Christ was bound in the Garden of Olives. This beautiful white rope is easily purchased from a church supply store.

A lace frontal 6,8,10, inches wide by 2 ½ yards long makes a nice gift for the decoration of the Altar.

Never waste a bit of linen; it is too precious. Stole collars and sick-call towels maybe made from small pieces.

A ciborium cover of satin lined in red, white or gold is a beautiful gift, as it veils the vessel holding the Sacred Hosts. the cover maybe made from small pieces, embroidered or painted, and offers to the artistically inclined who have learned to paint and do lovely handicraft work a fertile field for charity.



## THE SEAMSTRESS of NAZARETH



Teach us your art, for Mother dear,  
Your gentle hands once made  
Those swaddling clothes the Christ Child wore  
When in the manger laid.

You hemmed cloths for the frugal meal  
With which you were content--  
Because of His Presence Divine  
'Twas like a Sacrament.

You sewed the fleecy coverlets  
Upon His lowly bed  
Where moonbeams made a halo bright  
Around His curly head.

You made those garments, which when touched,  
Cured many as he passed;  
And those Roman soldiers took  
When jeering lots they cast.

Teach us to fashion Altar cloths  
And all small linens bring,  
Required for the sacrifice  
Of our Sacramental King

*Troella V. Mills .*



**PREFERRED SIZES FOR ALTAR LINENS FOR  
CATHOLIC CHURCHES**



**SMALL ALTAR LINENS**

*Corporal*

Unfinished	22" x 22"
Finished	20" x 20 with 3/4" hems, mitred corners

*Purificator*

Unfinished	12" x 22"
Finished	11" x 21" with 1/4" side seams, 3/4" end hems

*Finger Towel*

Unfinished	13" x 18"
Finished	12" x 16" with 1/4" side hems, 3/4" end hems

*Amice*

Unfinished	22" x 36"
Finished	20" x 34" with 3/4" hem all around

*Pall*

Unfinished	8" x 8"
Finished	7" X 7"

**ALTAR CLOTHS**

*2 Under Cloths*

These should cover the top of the altar

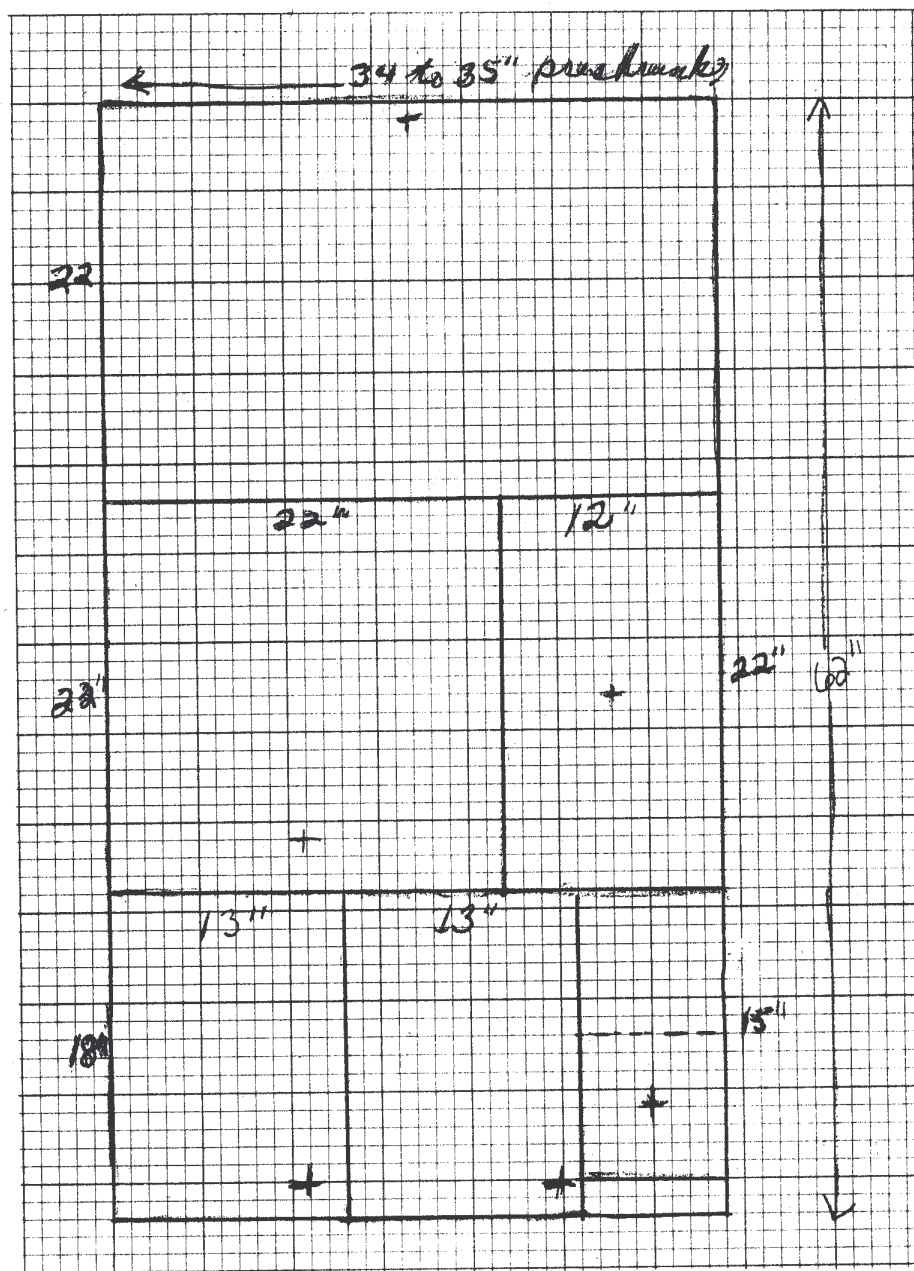
Unfinished	The length and depth of the altar plus 4 1/2'
Finished size	The length of the altar, 2" hems all around

*Top Cloth*

Unfinished	The length of the altar, plus 2 side drops to the floor, plus 4 1/2" and the depth of the altar plus 4 1/2".
Finished	The length of the altar plus 2 drops to the floor and the depth of the altar with 2" hems all around



**CUTTING CHURCH SIZE ALTAR LINENS  
FROM 1 3/4 YDS OF 34" to 35" PRESHRUNK LINEN**



One  
half yards of linen 36 inches wide will shrink to 34- to 35 inches. It will cut:  
1 amice 34"to 35" x 22"  
1 corporal 22" x 22"  
1 purificator 22" x 12"  
2 finger towels 18" x 13" 1  
1 Pall 15"x 8"

and one-

## Cutting Instructions



1. It is best if the selvage is cut off. Check the width of the linen after it has been preshrunk. If necessary make slightly narrower hems or cut the linens slightly smaller.
2. Measure down 22 inches and cut a piece from the linen for the amice.
3. Measure down 22 inches again and cut another piece from the linen. From this piece cut off a piece 12 inches wide for the purificator. The remainder is for the corporal.
4. From the remainder cut 2 finger towels 18" x 13" and 1 pall 15" x 8".



EXHIBIT OF ST. BONIFACE SEWING SOCIETY FOR 1922.