



# Sacristy Sense

January 2025

PROVINCE IV ALTAR GUILD NEWSLETTER



## *To Altar Guilds*

That Thursday night so long ago, when in a borrowed room they met,  
The Master and his chosen friends ate and drank what other hands had set.

Who cooked their lamb with bitter herbs?  
Who poured their wine and baked their loaves of bread?  
Their names unknown, their voices mute, they were there, although it were not said.

The women, the faithful serving women. They spread the cloth along the table plain  
And set the plate with humble cup for him to bless for those who love his name.

No silver there, no gleaming gold, no linen fine to dress the rustic board.  
But clean and proper, neat and filled, they set the table of their trusted Lord.

Then, early on the week's first day when love's full price had been so fully paid,  
With precious oils and grieving hearts they came to where his body had been laid.

The women, the faithful serving women: They were the first to see and know and say,  
"He is risen! Christ our Lord is risen from the dead on this now glorious day."

Still, you come, you faithful women, to serve with hands and hearts and time;  
To wash and polish, clean and set, for all who meet in sacrament sublime.

You fill the font for newborn babes, smooth bridal veil and pall with equal grace;  
You fold the palms, trim candle wicks; give decent, ordered care to holy space.

Little seen and too little thanked, your work is prayer so humbly raised,  
And Christ who meets at table spread is through your hands forever praised.

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*I have thought for a long time that church altar guilds came into being on that first Maundy Thursday evening – the night when Jesus and the Twelve met for the supper in the upper room before his death. Although the Gospels are silent on the matter, someone cooked, prepared the room and the meal, and cleaned up. The examples of my mother and my wife tell me this. With these thoughts, I wrote these lines in the early 1990s in thanksgiving for all altar guild members (who are mostly women) and especially for the altar guild of Trinity Church, Mobile, who were my companions in service for so many years.*



## Community

As Episcopalians, we often hear about the importance of community. The bible, both old and new testaments, has many references to that.

Hebrews 10:24-25 says, "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."

Romans 12:4-5 says, "For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another."

You can google "community in the bible" to read more. We are all aware of the closeness we develop with our altar guild teams. Maybe

some of you are also on flower guilds or cooking ministries. If you have attended an active diocesan altar guild you may already have discovered how much that community enlarges your world and your thinking.

Province IV Altar Guild proposes that you enlarge your community, and ours, again! Meet your sister and brother altar guild members from other areas within the province. Let us learn from each other and teach each other as we make new friends.

Come join us at Solomon Retreat Center in June 2025!

God Bless all y'all!  
Phyllis Bruce



## Burning of Linens

Once a religious object is blessed and dedicated for divine worship or veneration, it must be treated with reverence and not be used in either an improper or profane way. However, blessed religious objects break or wear from use. The basic rule for the disposition of these items is to burn or to bury them. Here are a few examples:

- A chalice which becomes "unserviceable" is not to be sold, but must be used for some other sacred purpose or melted.
- Vestments, altar cloths, and linens must be destroyed.
- Polluted or excess holy water must be poured into the ground.
- Palms are to be burned, and the ashes then used for distribution on Ash Wednesday or returned to the ground.
- A broken rosary or religious statue normally would be buried.

In all, the underlying idea is that what has been dedicated to God should be returned to God. One should never just "throw out" what has been dedicated to God. Linens that can no longer be repaired should be deconsecrated and burned. Bring them to Solomon and they will be lovingly deconsecrated, burned, and the ashes scattered on the grounds.

Since 2001, at each of our meetings, Province IV has had a service to deconsecrate and burn tired linens. If you have any such, bring them to Solomon in June; we will have a burning ceremony one night while there. Prior to burning them, each item will be carefully looked at to see if any embroideries, tassels or fringes might be reused. They are often of much finer quality than is currently available. If burning is not practical, items should be deconsecrated and buried.

# PROV IV Conference Registration Form

June 8-11, 2025

Solomon Episcopal Conference Center  
54296 Highway 445, Loranger, LA 7044

## General Registration

\$60 registration fee includes speakers, hospitality, workshops (including supplies), and the Tour of Saint Joseph Abbey (Tuesday, June 10, 8:15 - 11:45 am).

## PROV IV Dues

If you have not paid your 2025 membership dues, please add:

Individual \$20          Parish \$20  
Household \$30         Diocese \$30

Parish and Diocese may name an attending representative below.

**Rooms at Solomon** include 3 nights with 8 meals. Price listed is per person:

\$470 Adult Double Occupancy  
Request a Roommate \_\_\_\_\_ or  
Name of Roommate \_\_\_\_\_  
\$575 Single Occupancy

**Day Guests** at Solomon are required to pay for all meals of the day.

Prices are below; please check next to the date(s) you wish to attend:

Day Guest (6/8/2025) - \$43 \_\_\_\_  
Day Guest (6/9/2025) - \$87 \_\_\_\_  
Day Guest (6/10/2025) - \$87 \_\_\_\_  
Day Guest (6/11/2025) - \$34 \_\_\_\_

## Total Due

General Registration    \$ 60.00 \_\_\_\_  
PROV IV Dues            \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Room                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Day Guest Amount       \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**TOTAL DUE**            \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (cell preferred) (H)(C) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Parish \_\_\_\_\_

Diocese \_\_\_\_\_

*Please send your completed registration form along with a check made out to  
"Province IV Altar Guild" to:*

Jay Walters, Treasurer, 407 Lake Oliver Drive, Enterprise, AL 36330

## Workshops

Care of Linens  
- Alice Scarbrough

Anglican Rosary  
(make and take)  
- Joyce Edwards



Solomon Chapel

## Care of Linens

The workshop will include laundry, stain removal, ironing and non-ironing, and storage. The participants can make a purificator. Please bring your problems, and we will work to solve them!



St. Joseph Abbey

## *Workshop Presenters*

### *My experience with the Anglican Rosary*

Years ago, I had a personal crisis and went to my priest to have someone to talk to, and he did listen patiently as I shared my story. At the end of our time together, he prayed for me and offered me this advice. "Since you are so agitated right now, pray the Jesus prayer," and then he proceeded to tell me what it was. "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner." He told me to repeat the prayer many times.

I followed his advice and prayed the Jesus Prayer. With time, my crisis was resolved.

Then on 9/11, I found myself with a group of people at what was to be a training but instead was a place of shock and grief as we watched the silent TV screen show the Twin Towers coming down. Someone handed me an Anglican Rosary and suggested we pray it using "The Jesus Prayer," so we did!

It was such a raw and emotional time for me that I felt I would never be able to pray again, much less focus on my spiritual life. As we read the paper coaxing us to just say the words written there, somehow, we really did begin to pray. For a brief twenty minutes, I shifted to a place that WAS prayer, and I understood that I was indeed



a sinner, as were the people who had attacked our beloved country.

With this experience, I became genuinely interested in learning more about praying the Anglican Rosary. I have found it to be an excellent tool to help me focus as I pray. I read books that helped me learn to use the Rosary while praying the Psalms, prayers from the Book of Common Prayer, and to make up my own prayers when I am worried about my children or my friends.

The Anglican Rosary has been a wonderful tool that helps me open a reliable channel to God.

### *Alice Rotsch Scarbrough*

Alice was born and raised in Austin, Texas, where she graduated from Stephen F. Austin High School. She graduated from the University of North Texas with a BS in Elementary Education and a Masters in Reading Education and Adult Education. Alice taught in the Austin Public Schools, Saint Andrew's Elementary, Wackenhut Prison at Kyle, and had a tutoring business. She has two children, a son in Granite Shoals, and a daughter in Austin and two grandchildren.

She attends The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd in Austin where she is active in the Altar Guild. Alice is a past Chair of the Altar Guild for the Diocese of Texas. She also was a Coordinator for the Eucharist Services at the 2018 Triennial National Convention in Austin. Presently she is the Service Ministries Chair for the National Altar Guild Board of Directors.



## *Prayers for our Province*

We are saddened by the horrific incident that occurred in New Orleans early New Year's Day and we pray for the families who lost loved ones, the ones who are recovering from injuries, and those who witnessed and survived this tragedy.

We hope that this will not deter those of you who might be considering a visit to New Orleans either prior to or after the Province IV Conference. With that in mind, we offer the following informational websites:

New Orleans Official Tourism Website - [neworleans.com](http://neworleans.com)

Christ Church Episcopal Cathedral - [ccnola.org](http://ccnola.org)

33rd Annual Wine and Food Experience, June 11-15, 2025 - [nowfe.com](http://nowfe.com)



## *Province IV Altar Guild Endowment Fund*

Contributions to the Endowment Fund, named for founding member and first Treasurer Betty Knowlton, can be made at any time and in any amount. Please consider a tax-deductible gift to the Endowment Fund to commemorate a special occasion, to honor someone important in your life, or as a memorial in memory of someone special. Contributions will be acknowledged in writing, and published in the following newsletter.

Make checks payable to "Province IV Altar Guild" and put "Endowment Fund" in the memo line. Mail to Jay Walters, Treasurer; 407 Lake Oliver Drive; Enterprise, AL 36330.



## *Necrology List*

If you are aware of the death since June 2023, of any current or former member of Province IV Altar Guild, please advise:

Joyce Edwards, Vice President  
3071 Dunbarton Road  
Memphis, TN 38128-5107  
[joyceedwards@bellsouth.net](mailto:joyceedwards@bellsouth.net)

The member's name, date of death, home parish, and Diocese will be printed and read during our annual meeting at Solomon Conference Center.



Solomon Episcopal Conference Center



St. Joseph Abbey

## Board Members

*June 2023 – June 2026*

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Searching

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