

## What Is the *True Purpose* for the Ambo?

The ambo is a place, an activity, an object where we gather to hear the Word proclaimed and explained. It is the place to lay our petitions before God. It is a place reserved for ministers with the duty to sing the *Exsultet*, to proclaim the Word, to break open the Word, and to place our petitions.

The Easter Candle is placed next to the Ambo during the Easter Vigil where this single light illuminates the singing of the *Exsultet*. This is the prayer that makes present the night when the stone was rolled back, the night that Christ was risen from the dead, the night that the death was overcome – the promise of salvation was fulfilled.

Scripture, the Word that comes down from on high, that forms our lives is proclaimed from the Ambo. It is a place where homilies break open the Word and prepare us to receive Christ in the Eucharist which helps us to share the Christ we received with the world in which we live.

The ambo is also where we place our petitions before God for leadership that flows from the Word we hear, for peace in a world where there is little peace, for love where love is often withheld, and for comfort for those who are in need.

The ambo, like the altar, is sacred to our actions and should be treated with the same respect shown that of the altar. The books we use for the proclamation of the Word should reflect the dignity of this holy space. Special liturgical books containing the scriptures are to be used as we approach or gather around the ambo. When the passion is read by multiple ministers, they should be at this blessed location.

This blessed location should never be or used for convenience or the resting place for other objects, notes, or books. We should never use throw-a-way or one-time use pamphlets at the ambo. It should not be the place for a call to prayer before Mass begins, presentations, financial reports, other announcements, etc. A microphone and a simple lectern in another location is needed, possibly the same one used by the cantor.

The altar and ambo are two tables used within our liturgy. Both are holy and reserved for the holy things we do.