

Did You Know? An Anglican Glossary



Altar Array

Westminster Abbey's high altar displays gold-plated salvers and chalices on great occasions. Many of these pieces date from the reign of Charles II, who, upon his Restoration found the Abbey stripped of most of its treasures to fund the Civil War.

Other English churches that possess "treasures" frequently display them for great events. It is a way of "dressing" the church for the occasion, also to remember the giver, demonstrate safekeeping of the gift and to honor the occasion. Such treasures were favored as presentation pieces and very popular in the 18th century.

The large dish in the center of the altar was made by the London goldsmith Henry Greenaway, in 1664 and depicts the Last Supper.