

Five Ways to Become the Church Janitor's Worst Nightmare

I have worked part-time as a church janitor for the better part of 17 years. It might surprise you to hear this, but I actually enjoy it. It allows me to move around, do something very practical and tangible, and see immediate results from my work. That said, there have always been aspects of the job that get under my skin. Instead of ranting and raving about them internally, I figured I would put together a handy little list of the Five things you should avoid if you would rather not have an angry church janitor stalking your sanctuary each week. Trust me – you don't want to get on our bad side. We control the toilet paper supply. (Special shout out to my boys for helping me put the videos together for this article.)

Paper Towel Disposal: The Right and Wrong Technique

It's pretty simple: if you handle paper towel correctly after you wash your hands in the bathroom, you will save the janitor much heartache. Below, you will find two videos that demonstrate the two approaches for disposing your used paper towel. The first video is the common, albeit completely improper way to do it. As you will see, the trash can fills up quickly and soon becomes an eyesore and a nuisance.

In the second video, you will witness the proper way to handle the paper towel. If you take the time to wad up that paper as much as possible before throwing it away, you will save space, save the janitor time, and maybe even save the world.

The Tools of the Trade: Using the church's stuff in ways you would never dream of using them at home

The typical church janitor uses a few tools every time they clean. A broom. A dust mop. A mop. A vacuum cleaner. Things like that. Sometimes, these tools are borrowed or used by other church members. Sometimes this does not end well. The following are true stories. The quotes are fabricated...mostly...but the scenarios are 100% accurate to reality.

"Oh, you aren't supposed to vacuum mulch? My bad!"

"Oh, I'm not supposed to use the dust mop to clean up the soda I spilled? They really shouldn't use the word 'mop' in the name then."

"Oh, the mop shouldn't be used on the gravel outside of the church? I'm going to have to plead ignorance on this one!"

"Oh, the broom isn't a communal broom to be taken home whenever we feel like it? I wish someone would tell me these things!"

Crimes of a Wet Nature: The Improper Disposal of Liquid

Are you familiar with what I like to call "trash juice?" No? Allow me to elaborate. (You might not want to read this while eating.) Trash juice is the wonderful and aromatic liquid that forms at the bottom of a large trash can when the disposed liquid and refuse become one flesh and together discover an escape through a small crack or seam in the bottom of the trash liner. Trash juice is odious and fetid. It is a misery to clean. The primary culprit in the creation of trash juice is the seemingly innocent act of throwing away a cup or container full/half full/quarter full of liquid. Here is a delightful stop motion video to explain what I mean. (The video works best with the volume on.)

In the demonstration above you witness the improper technique. There is a simple solution to this problem but it is rarely, if ever, utilized – POUR OUT YOUR LIQUID IN A SINK PRIOR TO DISPOSING OF YOUR CUP/CONTAINER IN THE TRASH CAN.

No Trash Liner = No Trash Accepted: Access Denied

Most churches have multiple trash cans. Almost every room will have one. So do us all a favor when you have trash to dispose of and you see the one trash can that does not have a trash liner (because the church janitor is currently in the process of taking said trash out and has not yet replaced the liner) – please don't use that trash can. You might not think it is a big deal, but it is. It's a huge deal. Your time-saving action will force the janitor to have to retrieve that bit of garbage out by hand. And that is super gross.

And so help me, if I see you throwing away a cup full of soda into a can with no liner, I will be tempted to imitate Weird Al Yankovic in the not-surprisingly overlooked 80s action comedy, *UHF*. Avert your eyes if you are squeamish and easily upset.

The only differences are, I am a janitor and not a librarian and will be using my broom instead of a sword. And since my broom is not sharp, it will take me much longer to achieve the desired result.

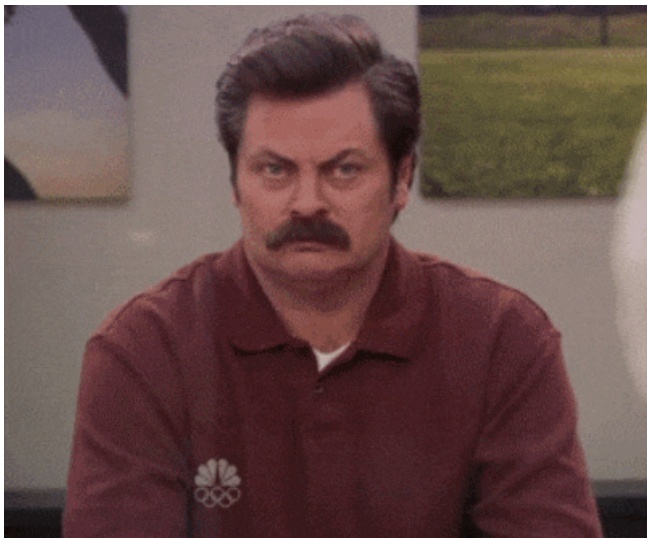
Glitter: The Devil's Dust

Glitter is evil. 100%, absolutely, unequivocally evil. I am convinced it was invented by someone whose only purpose in life was to bring pain and suffering to all janitors,

housekeepers, and cleaners across the globe. Do not be fooled by its sparkle! Once you use glitter it never goes away. EVER. It will cling to every surface, every article of clothing, every inch of exposed skin. It will not sweep away. It will not mop away. It will not scrub away. There is no greater metaphor of the destructive and pernicious effects of sin in our lives than glitter. It was birthed in the bowels of hell itself and seeks nothing less than the total annihilation of all that is good, noble, and pure. And we use it in church more than anywhere else in the world! FOR SHAME!!!

When the precious church children make a craft that uses glitter, the following gifs will walk you through my mental, psychological, and emotional response:

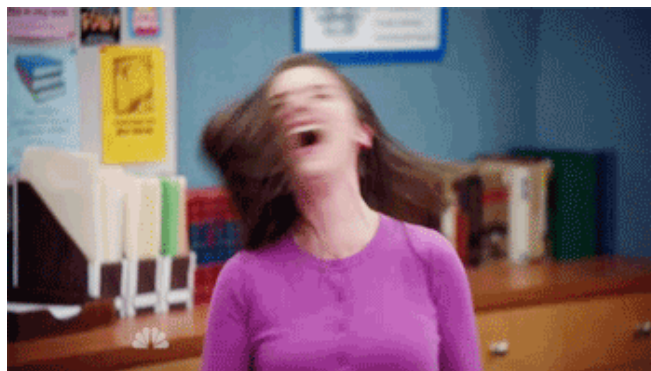
My first response is absolute resignation. I am helpless to the horrors that await me.



It is then that I summon an unbridled bellow of frustration and desperation in it's purest form.



Then, I throw a little hissy fit. Or a big one. Judge not lest ye be judged people.



Then, I Hulk out in the least intimidating or impressive manner possible.



Finally, I channel all of that rage, all of that anger, all of that hate and I do this. I would say literally, [but you all know how I feel about that word being misused](#). But seriously though, it's really close to literal. Super close.



Moral of the story: Don't ever use glitter. Ever.

Ever, ever, ever.

Never ever.

EVER.

EVER.

That's it. Avoid those things or do those things correctly and all will be well. Well, mostly. I still need to deal with people cutting their nails in church, church members bringing Chinese takeout into the sanctuary, worshipers taking...