

HANDBOOK FOR SERVERS



Immaculate Heart of Mary

5876 Veteran's Way
Burlington, Kentucky

Revised: November, 2020

Prayer Before Serving

God in Heaven,

Your Son Jesus Christ showed his love for you
by his sacrifice on the cross.

He showed us how to love by serving others.

As I prepare to serve You and Your people at the altar,
I ask for your help.

Help me to pay attention.

Help me to pray and sing well.

Help me to listen to your Word.

Help me to remember what I need to do, and to do it well.

Help me to not be distracted by others or by my own thoughts.

Help me always to give you praise and glory.

Thank you for giving me this great opportunity to serve you today.

Lord, increase my faith, and be with me always.

Amen.

WELCOME TO THE PARENTS:

Your son or daughter has expressed interest in actively participating in Mass by serving at the altar. We welcome the children to this sacred ministry. **Serving at Mass is a special privilege.** It allows your child to be close to the altar, to carry the cross, to carry the light of Christ, to wear the robe of Baptism, to hold the book of prayers and most importantly learn to understand the rites of our holy faith. Altar servers are an important part of our parish and they add so much to the celebration.

This is a very important ministry, and should never be taken lightly! By allowing your child to be a server, **you are accepting a special responsibility** to help him/her in meeting the associated duties and responsibilities, including attendance at all training sessions, keeping abreast of the minister's schedule, and ensuring they fulfill this responsibility by arriving to serve at least 15 minutes prior to the liturgy start time. If they miss two times when they were scheduled, and do not follow the substitution process described here, they will be removed from the serving ministry. Serving at the altar is too important a ministry to accept anything less!

The training program your child just started will take 3 meetings to complete. Each meeting will approximately two hours and is conducted in the church, after school. The meetings will be under the supervision of Deacon Malsi, Deacon Meier and Mr. Ritchie. You are welcome to attend the class and observe. **Sign up for each of these 3 training sessions** will be done using a web-based application called Sign-Up.com. The link is on our parish website, under the Parish Life, Liturgical Ministries Menu, [Server's Page](#). There will be a written and practical test at the end of the training sessions that must be satisfactorily passed to be considered for serving.

Server scheduling is done via a web-based program called Ministry Scheduler Pro. Instructions for using this web site will be e-mailed to you upon successful completion of the training.

Thank you for helping your child in this important ministry. If you have any questions please feel free to contact Deacon Meier (859) 689-5010, ext 223 or email [Deacon Meier](#).

To the candidates:

Welcome and thank you. You have decided to become an altar server, a very special privilege. By serving God in the church you are also learning how to serve God outside the church by helping people who are in need. We hope you will enjoy serving at Mass and will be enriched by your ministry. It is a wonderful way to serve God and God's people, to praise God and to grow in your faith.

This handbook will help you know what it means to be a server, and how to serve. There is also a dictionary here. This is your book to keep. **Bring it to the classes.** Study it to help prepare for your final tests. Review it often!

Training Class Overview

Welcome and Orientation to the Server Training Process

Class room presentations
Introductions
Class Times and Scheduling
Importance of Paying Attention

Practice, Practice, Practice
Server's Prayers
Permission slips
Commitment forms

Session One: People and Places and Things

Prayer
General

Privilege to serve at the altar
What does it mean "to serve?"

Who's who?

People involved in the Mass:

Sacristan
Music/choir
Ministers of Hospitality
Master of Ceremony
Lector/reader
Instituted Acolyte/server

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy
Communion
Deacon
Priest
Assembly
Gift Bearers

Some basics all servers must know:

Sign of the cross
How to genuflect
Folding your hands

How to receive Holy Communion
Posture

All servers must:

Be alert, awake, and anticipate
Be Responsible; Two and out policy;
Getting subs
Get a good night's sleep
Know what is going to happen next
Know the prayers by heart

Be transparent not a disruption
Dress standards
Restroom before Mass
Arrive no later than 15 minutes
before Mass is to start!
Get ready, keep quiet, prayer

Session Two: Serving at Mass

Session Three: Review; Written and Practical Testing

Get Ready for Training Session One:

Why do you want to be a server? **Write your answer here:**

Think about these questions and be ready with an answer at the first training session. This is your book; you may make notes or even write the answers here.

What does it mean to make a commitment to be a server?

What is a privilege? **Why is serving a privilege?

How do I pray? What is my favorite prayer?

Review the Prayers for Servers in this book. You don't have to memorize them but be ready to say them together with the group at the first session.

Review the information on the next pages. We will be discussing these during training sessions.

THE PEOPLE IN CHURCH

Sacristan: The sacristan is the person who sets things up before liturgy and cares for the things that we use in worship. The sacristan works in the **sacristy**. Other people help too: people who clean and who decorate church, nuns who bake the bread for the Eucharist, people who wash and iron the linens and vestments, people who train the ministers and make the schedules.

Ministers of Hospitality: They help the assembly to gather. They welcome everyone, members of our church, new members, and visitors and help everyone find a place and be at home in the house of God. They also collect the offerings of the people into the collection baskets, organize people in the procession to present the gifts, and give people bulletins to take home.

Welcoming Minister: This person welcomes all to the Liturgy and may also read the announcements for the day. This is done just before Mass begins on Sunday.

Assembly: All the people in church! Remember Jesus said, "where two or more are gathered in my name, I am there."

Presider: The Presider leads our prayer. At Mass, the Presider is always a priest. At other liturgies, a priest, deacon, or lay person may be the Presider. The chief Presider is our Bishop.

Since the bishop cannot be with all the parish churches at the same time, **priests and deacons** are chosen and ordained to lead the assembly in the liturgy. They lead the assembly in worship, and they also serve the Church in other ways throughout the week.

Priest: A priest has received the Sacrament of Holy Orders, and is always the presider at Mass. The head of our parish is the pastor, who is a priest with special authority and responsibility to lead the parish and make decisions for the parish. During liturgies, the priest is said to “act in the person of Christ”; that means that through the special and holy graces he received at his ordination, he prays and acts as Jesus did. The priest is clergy, and usually wears special clothing that includes a black shirt with a white “Roman collar.” The Priest who serves at Mass also wears special clothing: alb, cincture, stole, and chasuble.

Deacon: A deacon has received the Sacrament of Holy Orders, but to a lesser degree than a priest or bishop. Like a bishop and a priest, the deacon is ordained, chosen by God to serve the Church. The deacon helps the Presider by sometimes leading the penitential rite, always reading the gospel, preparing the gifts of bread and wine, holding the chalice, inviting the people to exchange a sign of peace, and dismissing the assembly at the end of Mass. The deacon is also clergy and may wear the same shirt and Roman collar that the priest wears. At Mass, the deacon also wears special clothing: an alb, a cincture, a stole (that is different than the priest’s) and a dalmatic.

Music Ministers: The **cantor** helps us all to sing. Sometimes the cantor sings alone so that we may all listen and then join in the singing. The **choir** is a group of singers who also lead the assembly in song. Other **music ministers** play instruments like the organ, the piano or the guitar.

Lector: The **lector** proclaims the readings from the Lectionary. Sometimes, the lector will read the intercessions at Mass, especially when a deacon is not present. Lectors receive special training and participate in regular formation workshops to help them in this important ministry.

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion: The ordinary ministers of Holy Communion are the priest and deacon. Sometimes, help is needed to distribute the Body and Blood of Christ to the assembly, so extraordinary ministers are appointed by the Bishop for this job. Like the lectors, they receive special training and participate in regular formation programs.

Master of Ceremonies: Sometimes, at very important liturgies such as at Easter, a Master of Ceremonies helps all the priests, deacons, servers, and assembly to make sure the service runs smoothly. This Master of Ceremonies is a server’s best friend as he will help you remember what comes next!

Gift Bearers: These people, often a family, bring the gifts to the Presider. The gifts at Mass always include the bread and wine, and usually the collection basket of money offerings. The bread and wine represent things of the earth, made by human hands; they represent all that we are. During the Eucharistic Prayer, the Priest asks God to send the Holy Spirit upon these simple gifts to make them holy and change them into the Body and Blood of Jesus. Our simple offering of bread and wine become the most perfect offering to God of his only Son, Jesus, just like Jesus did when he died on the cross.

Instituted Acolyte: This is a man who is usually preparing for the Sacrament of Holy Orders. He is a server just like you but has some additional duties and responsibilities.

Servers: YOU! Servers are specially trained to help set things up and to put things away, carrying the cross, candles and vessels of smoking incense, hold the book of the prayers, lead processions and assist at the altar. Sometimes servers will have special duties that have their own name:

Cross bearer. Carries the Processional Cross in the entrance procession and when leaving Church after Mass. This cross is very expensive, and care must be used when carrying it so as not to drop it, let it fall, or to hit it against the top of the sacristy door frame or the exit sign.

Thurifer: This server carries the bowl of burning incense, which is called the **thurible**. (Sometimes also called the “censor”, and the server who carries it the censor bearer). If selected to be the thurifer, you will receive special training.



Boat Bearer: This server has nothing to do with sailing, but he/she carries the boat, which is the small bowl with a lid that carries the incense crystals.

Book bearer: This server brings the book (called the Roman Missal or the Sacramentary) to the Presider, and holds it high and steady for the Presider to read.

Before the liturgy begins, the servers coordinate with themselves so that each person knows their job!

Can you think of anyone that is not on this list? Write them down and ask at the training!

PLACES AND OBJECTS

There are many elements that are part of our Catholic Liturgies. Servers must know these elements, including places and objects. You should know what these things are, how they are used, and where they are kept.

Liturgy: This word comes from a Greek word that means “the work of the people.” The word came to mean the public worship of the Church. The principle liturgy is the Mass, and it is divided into two distinctive, yet inseparable, liturgies: **The Liturgy of the Word and The Liturgy of the Eucharist**. Another principle liturgy which servers may help is the celebration of the “Liturgy of the Hours”, which is sometimes called the official prayer of the church.

Sanctuary: The Sanctuary is the space at the front of the church where most of the action of Mass takes place. The word means “holy place”. In most churches this space is elevated. There are many things in the sanctuary with which you should be familiar:

Altar: The large, high table located in the center of the sanctuary and sometimes called “the table of sacrifice” or “the table of the Eucharist.” At the altar during Mass, the priest offers to God the perfect sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Jesus. The altar is a very special part of our church, and we always bow to the altar when crossing in front of it or when approaching it during Mass.

****Ambo:** Sometimes called the Lectern – The place from which the reader proclaims the scripture readings. The Deacon or Priest also proclaims the Gospel here and gives the homily from the ambo. It is sometimes called “the table of the word.”



Credence Table: These are the two small tables on which are kept the vessels (see below) used during Mass. In the drawer of the credence table may be found matches or extra hosts and purificators.

Candles: Candles are kept burning throughout the Mass as a sign of Christ, the Light of the World. Servers light these candles 10 minutes before Mass, and extinguish them after Mass.

Cassock: A garment sometimes worn by priests (black). Our servers wear a “wine red” cassock every time they serve. The cassock should come down to your ankles.

Cincture: This is a rope that is worn around the waist outside of the alb.

Alb: A white, floor length garment worn by the Priest and Deacon. It is a symbol of the white garment used at Baptism.



****Surplice:** A white garment worn over the top of the cassock.

Paschal Candle: The large candle blessed at the Easter Vigil, and then placed in the sanctuary during Easter season as a reminder that Christ is among us. It is lit for Mass during the Easter Season, and for Baptisms and Funerals.

Processional Cross: The cross mounted on top of a tall pole. A server carries it, leading processions. During Mass, it is placed into a stand in the sanctuary. When not used, it is stored in a stand inside the sacristy.

Tabernacle: A Latin word that means tent. The priest or deacon will place remaining consecrated hosts (the Body of Christ) in the tabernacle for use when taking the Eucharist to the sick. It is a most sacred object, and outside of Mass, we always genuflect when crossing or approaching it.

Chairs: There are the Presidential Chair, the Deacon’s Chair, and chairs for the servers.

Presidential Chair: The large chair in which the Presider sits during Mass.

Deacon’s Chair: A smaller chair, next to the Presidential Chair.

Server(s) Chair(s): Smaller chairs usually placed in the sanctuary for servers and other ministers.

Ritual Books: There are several books used for Mass. You should know where they are kept, you do not need to know how to find the prayers, the priest or deacon will do that. All of these books are stored in a cabinet (left of window) in the sacristy.

Roman Missal or Sacramentary: This is the large book which contains all the words which the priest uses during Mass. The server brings the Missal to the Presider at the proper times.

Lectionary: This book contains all the Scripture readings for Mass. It is placed on the ambo before Mass.

Book of Gospels: This book contains the Gospel readings for Mass. It is only carried by the Deacon in the entrance procession, or a lector if there is no deacon at Mass. It is placed on the center of the altar.

The Book of Blessings: A book used by the minister for special blessings as needed.

Vessels: There are several vessels used for Mass. Servers need to know where they are stored, how and when they are needed by the Presider, and what to do with them after Mass.

****Chalice:** A most sacred vessel, the chalice is used by the Priest to hold the wine that God changes to the Blood of Christ during the Liturgy of the Eucharist at Mass. Only the priest or deacon purifies (ritually clean) the chalice(s) after Mass. Other, smaller chalices (sometimes called “cups”) are used when there are several Ministers of the Blood of Christ.



Ciborium: A sacred vessel, with a cover, in which consecrated hosts are reserved inside the tabernacle. Only the priest or deacon purifies (ritually clean) the ciborium after Mass.

****Communion bowls:** Sacred vessels used by the Ministers of Holy Communion to distribute the Body of Christ to the assembly. Only the priest or deacon purifies (ritually clean) the bowls after Mass. **When bringing these bowls to the sacristy after Mass, NEVER stack them inside each other.**



Decanter: A large, glass pitcher used to bring wine to the altar.

Sprinkler: A gold-colored bucket with a hollow, metal wand used to sprinkle holy water for blessings. Sometimes referred to as the *aspergillum*.

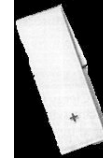
****Monstrance:** An ornate vessel used during Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Many times, a sun-burst type pattern surrounds the glass-enclosed host.



****Cruets** – Two small pitchers, which contain water and wine.

Lavabo: A small bowl, used by the server during the “washing of the hands” of the priest at Mass.

****Purificator:** Blessed, small white cloths used during Communion Ministers of Communion to wipe the chalice.



by the

Corporal: A large, white cloth placed under the Chalice during Mass. It is carried folded on top of the Chalice Pall when it is not on the altar. At times, the corporal may be placed in a special pocket in the burse.

Chalice Veil: A large, rectangular cloth that covers the chalice when not in use.

Burse: A square cardboard piece that holds the corporal when it isn't being used.

Pall: This is the small, white cardboard-like square cover placed on the chalice. It also refers to the white cloth that is draped over a casket during a Funeral Mass.

Finger Towel: A small, white towel given to the priest to dry his hands after washing.

Candle Lighter and Snuffer: A long pole used to light and extinguish the candles at the altar. Inside the pole, there is a waxed coated taper that burns readily. **Be careful with fire.** After you have lit the candles, extinguish the taper by pulling the lever down, the taper will go into the hollow tube and go out, then immediately push the lever out. If you do not, the hot wax on the taper will act like glue, and the next server will not be able to use it to light the candles. The snuffer is a bell-shaped cone that you place over the candle to extinguish the flame.

Batteries: Sometimes, servers are asked during Mass to get fresh batteries for the microphones. These are stored on the counter top in the sacristy.

PREPARING TO SERVE MASS

Know your schedule! We are counting on you to serve when you are scheduled. If you cannot make that Mass, YOU MUST FIND A SUBSTITUTE! **If you fail to serve two times when you were scheduled, without obtaining a sub, you will be taken off the server list. Calling or having your Mom tell us at Mass that you could not find a sub is not finding a substitute and will count as a no-show.

Before You Come to Church

- Get a good night's sleep, so you will not be drowsy when you serve in the morning.

- **Wear dress shoes that are cleaned and shined.** Your choice in clothing tells others how much you care about yourself, and how much reverence you have for serving at Mass. **Flip-flops, and similar shoes should not be worn for safety concerns.** Gym type or running type shoes may be worn, but they are not preferred. They must be clean, and never have colors or shoe strings that violate the principle of “transparency” discussed in training.
- Girls should wear dresses, skirts, or slacks and a top.
- Boys should wear long pants and a shirt.
- Do not wear tee-shirts with printing or logos. IHM shirts are permitted.
- Bring a handkerchief or tissues. They may be needed.
- Your hands including fingernails and face should be clean. Hair neatly combed. You try to look your best when you go to a party. Do the same when you are serving God.

When You Come To Church

- ****Arrive at church at least 15 minutes before Mass is scheduled to begin.**
- Go directly to the vesting sacristy and write your name on the sign-in sheet.
- Put on a clean, well fitting cassock and surplice.
- Pray the Server’s Prayer Before Serving Mass.
- About ten minutes before Mass begins, one of the servers will light the candles. The server will go to the work sacristy, get the candle lighter and take it to the altar. Keep the flame away from your vestment. Be careful for your own safety and the safety of the church. After you have finished lighting the candles, pull the taper back into the lighter to extinguish the flame and then immediately push it back out. Place the lighter back on the wall in the work sacristy and return to the vesting sacristy.
- Remain quiet while in the sacristy.
- Using the provided “post-it” note paper, write down the hymnal numbers for the songs, and place this inside the cover of your hymnal so you can find the songs during Mass.
- Decide with your fellow server(s) what task each will do at Mass.
- ****Servers should participate in the Mass, including singing and reciting the assembly’s prayers.**

Posture

****While serving, it is very important for you to be *transparent*.** This means that you never want to do something that causes the assembly to focus on you!

Posture is how you are using the parts of your body at a particular time. A server has to carry out a number of different actions at Mass, and so there are a number of different postures.

Walking: Always walk with your back straight and your head held high. Walk slowly during processions and when you walk in the sanctuary.

Bowing: When you bow to someone or something at Mass, it should be a smooth forward inclining of your head and shoulders. When you bow to the altar, bow deeply at the waist and

bring yourself slowly to your full height. When you bow to the priest or deacon, bow your head slowly and gracefully. Never walk and bow at the same time: stop before bowing.

Genuflecting: When you genuflect, keep your hands in front of your chest while you go down on your right knee. Keep your body straight. Do not wobble back and forth, or you may look like a newborn lamb trying to walk. Be sure that your cassock is not going to trip you on the way down or up.

Holding the Missal: When holding the Missal or other book for the Presider, hold it very steady, and at least chest high. Hold it in front of you and stand directly in front of the person reading from the book. If you are short, you may need to hold the book with it resting against your forehead to ensure it is high enough.

Kneeling: When you kneel, your body should be upright and your folded hands should be in front of your chest, well above your waist. If you lean your body forwards or backwards you will hurt the muscles in your back or the ligaments in your knee.

Standing: Always stand up straight with both feet firmly on the floor six to eight inches apart. This will give you balance and comfort at the same time. Do not lean against the furniture or against the walls. Do not “lock” your knees, as this can cause you to faint.

****Sitting:** Sit down on chair carefully and gracefully. Once you are seated, sit tall and do not slouch. Do not rest against the arms of the chair. Place your hands on your lap or flat on your thighs in a relaxed manner. Do not cross your legs. Never play with your hair or anything else-- people are watching you!

Hands: Unless you are sitting down or carrying something (like a candle), your hands should be kept joined in front of your chest; either locked together, or palm to palm, fingers pointing upward. Keep your hands high up on your chest. If you are carrying something in one hand hold the other hand flat on your chest. When you are not holding or carrying something, fold your hands.

Eyes: During Mass, always look towards the place where the action is happening: the Presider, the ambo or the altar. When a reader is reading the scriptures, you should be looking at the reader. Never look at the people in the congregation, rather look just above their heads. If there is an MC keep an eye on him or her. The MC might want you to do something at any time.

General Appearance: Know what you are to do while serving, and when you are to do it. Never fidget. Always do things smoothly. If you make a mistake, try not to get flustered.

ASK THE PRIEST OR DEACON BEFORE MASS IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS!

Training Session II and III

SERVING AT MASS

(Note: the following assumes a Deacon is serving at Mass. If there is no Deacon present, the Priest will perform all the duties of the Deacon.)

Introductory Rites

We come together in prayer; unite the assembly in a community to worship God together.

Entrance Procession with song or antiphon

An entrance procession may include candles and the cross. If you are asked to carry an object, hold it high enough to be seen by the people in church, but without swaying the object back and forth. If you are not assigned to carry something you should carry the missalette and sing the entrance song.

Server process in order: Thurible (if used), Crucifix, Candle Bearers (side by side, Book of gospels, other servers, Deacon, Priest. Walk slowly, join in the singing, carry music book if not carrying something else.

When you reach the steps of the sanctuary, thurifer, cross-bearer and candle bearers bow to the Altar, then immediately go up the steps. The cross-bearer places the crucifix into its stand, and then moves to his/her chair. The candles are placed on the Tabernacle stand on either side of the Tabernacle. As other servers who are not carrying objects reach the steps of the sanctuary, they immediately genuflect, and then go up the steps to their chair. All remain standing.

***Stand and Participate in the opening prayers:*

Greeting

Penitential rite (A rite of blessing and sprinkling with holy water may be used at certain Masses, if this is the case, you will have been told before Mass, and your job will be to bring the sprinkler to the Priest when asked to do so.)

Kyrie (Lord, have mercy)

Gloria (Glory to God)

*When the Priest says “Let Us Pray”, bring the Missal to the Priest, walking with book held in front of you. Many times, the Priest or Deacon will turn to look at you as a sign it is time to bring the book. Remember the phrase: “**when I look, bring the book**”. Hold book while Priest reads prayer. At conclusion, bow to the priest, take book back to your chair and sit for readings.*

Opening prayer

+Liturgy of the Word

This is the major part of the Mass between the opening prayer and the preparation of the gifts. We listen to the Word of God proclaimed in scripture. In the homily, the preacher helps us to more fully understand the scripture in our own lives. Moved in faith, we are prepared to enter into the next major part of the Mass, the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

****First Reading; Responsorial Psalm; Second Reading; *Sit for all.***

****Stand** for Gospel Acclamation (Alleluia)

As soon as the Alleluia begins, two servers will go to the Tabernacle stand and pick up the candles and step back. Do not wait for the Deacon or Priest to move; you move first. Now holding your candle, turn to face the altar and align yourselves with the corners of the altar. When the Deacon or Priest picks up the Book of the Gospels and turns toward the ambo, you will turn in unison with him and process to the ambo. One server with a candle will lead; one will follow the Priest or Deacon to the Ambo. There you will stand on either side of the ambo while the Gospel is proclaimed. If there is only one server, this procession is omitted.

Gospel Reading

After the response, “Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ,” you will return the candles to the tabernacle in a synchronized way, and then return to your seats.

****Sit** for Homily

Stand for the Profession of Faith. Bow your head at the words “and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary”.

General Intercessions (Prayer of the Faithful)

At the end of the intercessions, the entire assembly will *sit* for the preparation of the Gifts.

Preparation of the Gifts

***As the ministers of hospitality collect the gifts, the servers help the deacon prepare the altar. When the deacon stands and goes to the altar, the crucifer and the server taking care of the bell will help set the altar. The crucifer will bring chalice to the deacon or priest at the altar. He will then wait there until the Deacon hands him the chalice veil and burse. At the same time the bells server will begin, and then both the servers will bring up all of the cups from the credence table and hand them to the deacon, who will place them on the altar. Then the servers will bring up all the communion bowls that have bread in them, and hand them to the deacon (this may leave a few of the communion bowls that have no bread in them), and then bring the purificators. Lastly a server will bring the book to the deacon. After you hand something to the deacon a vessel, bow to him. If you set something on the altar then bow to the altar. Go back to your seat and wait for the deacon or priest to go to the foot of the altar to receive the gifts.*

***When the priest and deacon stand again, the two servers who helped set the altar go with them down the steps to the foot of the sanctuary, standing to either side. The deacon or priest will receive the bread, cruet of wine and hand them to you. Bow to the people, and then turn with the deacon, and return to the altar. Wait for the priest, then give him the bowl with the hosts; bow and go to the credence table and pick up the cruet of water. The server with the wine takes it to the deacon; the other server brings the deacon the cruet of water and hands it to him. He will then give the now empty cruet of wine back to you, at which time, the servers bow together and return to the credence table. The deacon will say a prayer while pouring a small amount of water into the wine, then hand the cruet back to you. At the credence table, one server will pick up the lavabo bowl and a cruet of water....if you are right handed, hold the cruet in your right hand and the bowl in the left; if you are left handed, do the opposite. Another server will take, unfold, and hold the towel. Both will approach the priest, standing to his side and back about 3 feet behind. When the priest completes his prayers for the preparation of the gifts, he will turn to you, hold his hands over the bowl, and pray "Wash me, O Lord ...", during this prayer, you will pour a small amount of water over his fingers. He will take the towel, dry his hands, and give it back to you. Both servers will bow and return the objects to the credence table. Then you will go to the middle step in front of the altar and **stand**.*

The Priest will pray "Pray... that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable...", and the assembly will respond: "May the Lord accept the sacrifice..."

+ Liturgy of the Eucharist

This is the high point of the Mass. This part corresponds to the words and actions of Christ at the Last Supper: Christ took bread and the cup, gave thanks, broke, and gave them to His disciples saying: "Take and eat; this is My Body. Take and drink; this is the cup of My Blood. Do this in memory of Me." In the Eucharistic Prayer, the Priest directs our prayer to God. During it, the entire assembly joins Christ in acknowledging the works of God and in offering the Sacrifice. It includes the following:

Introductory dialogue: "The Lord be with You"; "Lift up your hearts" "Let us give thanks..."

Preface: tells why we should give thanks on this day

Sanctus litany (Holy, Holy, Holy)

***When the Holy, Holy, Holy pray concludes, **kneel** down.*

Eucharistic prayer

Epiclesis – The priest prays that God will send the Holy Spirit to change the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ. *You will see the Priest hold his hands over the gifts. When he makes this gesture, the server will ring the bells **one time for a count of two** as the priest is holding his hands over the gifts.*

Institution Narrative and consecration repeats the words of Jesus at the Last Supper.

*When the Priest elevates (holds up) the host, servers will ring the bells. You will **ring the bells 3 times** for 1 second each time. Repeat this ringing when the Priest elevates the chalice.*

The Eucharistic Prayer concludes with the Final Doxology (“Through Him, and With Him...”) after which the entire assembly responds with the Great Amen (usually sung).

****Stand** after the Amen and come back into the Sanctuary to stand near the pillars.

Communion Rite

It is that part when God gives the gift of Himself to us. In both cases the gift is the same Jesus Christ, the Son of God and savior of the world. It includes the following:

During the Lord's Prayer, *servers will join* in reciting or singing, with hands folded, palm to palm pointing upward.

Rite of Peace (sign of peace) *When the deacon invites the assembly to “offer each other the sign of peace”, servers will come up the steps, and exchange the sign with the priest, deacon, and each other. Servers immediately go to the credence table to bring any empty communion bowls to the Deacon at the altar. When all bowls have been given to the deacon, return to your position by the pillars and stand for the Agnus Dei (Lamb of God) litany. Join in the singing!*

*After the Lamb of God litany, the assembly and servers will **kneel**. When the Ministers come up into the sanctuary, **stand** to receive Holy Communion.*

You will receive Holy Communion from the Priest and/or other Eucharistic Minister at your chair. If you will not receive from the Cup, simply sit down after you have received the Body of Christ.

After the priests and all the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion have left the sanctuary, the crucifer will take the book from the altar. At the same time the server taking care of the bells will bring the chalice veil and burse up to the altar and lay it off to the side. The book bearer will immediately sit down, and the other two will sit down after they have completed these tasks.

After you receive, sit and pray quietly. For example: thank God for His gift of the Eucharist, thank God for allowing you to serve at His altar. Pray that by receiving the Body and Blood of Christ, you may be strengthened against the power of the Devil.

*After distribution of Communion is finished, the deacon will combine any remaining Hosts for reservation in the tabernacle. When the deacon goes to the Tabernacle, he will place the Hosts inside, and then genuflect. Servers **genuflect** at the same time. The priest will then begin to purify the chalice and paten, and the crucifer will bring forward the water to pour over the fingers of the priest. As he does this the deacon may be clearing the altar of the bowls, so the server who takes care of the bells will begin to take these back at the same time. Place the bowls on one of the wooden trays, but **DO NOT STACK THEM INSIDE EACH OTHER**. After that*

is complete the server of the bells may sit down. The crucifer will remain standing to take the chalice back to the credence table (always bowing to the altar when he takes something off of it or to the priest or deacon when he does something for him.

Prayer after Communion

After a brief period of silent prayer, the Priest and Deacon will stand. The Priest will say “Let Us Pray”, at which time the book bearer brings the Missal to the Priest and holds it for the Prayer after Communion. If there is to be a special blessing, the Priest will place his hand on the book as if to hold it open, in which case you stand and continue to hold the book during the blessing. Otherwise, the priest will normally place his hand under the book as if to close it, your sign to take the book, bow, and return to your chair. There may be announcements, just remain standing.

Concluding Rite

Final Blessing and Dismissal

The Deacon will dismiss the assembly (there are four possible dismissals, for example: “Go forth, the Mass is ended”), at which time the recessional hymn will begin. The cross bearer will pick up the cross from its stand, and walk down the steps and turn, facing the altar, about even with the first row of pews. The other two servers at the same time will get their candles from the Tabernacle Stand and go down to the first set of pews and turn to face the altar with the cross-bearer. Other servers will move to the foot of the steps, turn and face the altar a few feet in front of the cross bearer and wait for the priest and deacon. They will genuflect, all servers not carrying an object do likewise. Then turn, and follow the cross bearer out of Church, walking slowly. This procession is led by the cross bearer, candle bearers, then remaining servers, then the priest and deacon walking side by side.

When you reach the door of the sacristy, turn and wait for the priest. The priest and deacon will stop in front of the cross, bow to the cross and the priest will say “Praise be Jesus Christ” and all respond “now and forever.”

You will go into the sacristy. The cross bearer will place the cross back into its wall bracket. Hymnals should be placed back on the countertop. Wait for the assembly to depart, then go the sanctuary to retrieve the Sacred Vessels and other objects, to bring them to the sacristy. Always carry the Chalice with two hands, and never carry it on the tray. Be careful not to drop anything. And remember, until the priest or deacon purifies the sacred vessels, the Body and Blood of Christ is still present, no matter how tiny the crumbs may be! Servers will bring all chalices (cups), bowls, wine pitcher, and the Book of the Gospels to the sacristy. Leave the lavabo bowl, towel, and water cruet on the table. Place the trays with the Sacred Vessels to the right of the window, where the Deacon will purify them and put them away. Place the Book of the Gospels on the countertop to the left of the window. One of the servers will put out the candles. When all is done, take off your cassock and surplice, and put them away neatly. The cassock must be hung on the hanger, and the top button fastened so it stays on the hanger. You’re finished!

In The Sacristy

Silence in the sacristy—reverence and prayer.

Sign-in sheets are located on the countertop in front of the window. Print your name where indicated for servers. If you are a sub, print your name, then write “sub” and the name of the server for whom you are substituting. If you are a volunteer, place the word “vol” after your name. These sheets have two purposes: first, it lets the sacristan know he/she has enough servers for the Mass. Second, we use them to take attendance. If you forget to sign in, it is assumed you did not serve. Please make sure your sub knows your name; if the sub does not sign in as “sub for”, we must assume you did not find a substitute. If you accepted a sub request using the Ministry Scheduler Pro web program, you are no longer a sub, but the assigned server.

You should become familiar with the location of the objects and sacred vessels mentioned in this manual. Know where they are stored, so you can get them if asked.

During training, you will be shown how to properly light the candles and extinguish them.

Server’s Music Books are located on the countertop to the left of the window. Don’t forget to write down the hymn numbers for Mass, because when you are in the sanctuary, you cannot see the number boards.

Other Information

Sometimes, you may be serving by yourself. Don’t panic, just slow down and think. The priest and deacon have been servers when they were your age, they know how it is and will help you.

At times you may be asked to serve at celebrations that may or may not include the Mass. Examples might be the Rite of Baptism, a wedding, or a Funeral Liturgy outside of Mass. At other times, special ceremonies might take place within the Mass, such as confirmation. In all of these situations, you will receive special training before the ceremony.

No matter how well you are prepared, occasionally things go wrong. When something does go wrong, stay calm. Quick movements or confusion are distracting. When there is a problem think about it for a moment then if possible do what is necessary to correct the problem.

If you feel sick or that you may faint, leave the altar before something happens. The sacristan or your parents will help you.

RESPONSIBILITY

And finally, remember that you have been given a great privilege to serve at Mass, and also you are making a great commitment to serve.

Remember there are people counting on the servers. First the priest depends on them. He needs to know that they will be there on time. He needs to know that they are prepared. They help him a great deal to insure that things go smoothly. Remember that all the parishioners count on them.

A good server keeps things going smoothly.

****A question on these items is included in the written test. All matters are included in the practical test.**