

N.E.T. Catholic

All Saints



Holy Cross



Saint Anthony



Altar Servers

Handbook

Dear Parents,

Thank you so much for supporting your child in her/his desire to serve Jesus more closely as an Altar Server. We know that this will require some effort on your part but we are confident that it will truly nourish your child's faith and enrich her/his experience of the Mass.

We will all work together to make this a very positive experience for her/him. Initially your child will be scheduled along with more experienced altar servers so they can mentor her/him, so there is nothing to be worried about. The experienced altar servers, deacon and priest are all very gentle and patient and will help them along. You can help us by reassuring your child, praying with them daily, encouraging them as they strive to learn this ministry and communicating with us if there is anything that is not working. It will be very helpful if you can arrive about 15 minutes early when your child is scheduled to serve. That will allow her/him enough time to get ready and pray before Mass so that they do not feel nervous and rushed.

If your child can serve at N.E.T. Catholic special services, such as Holy Days of Obligation, Holy Week, etc. and/or once in a while serve at our N.E.T. Catholic Sunday afternoon Masses that will be tremendously helpful and much appreciated.

Please let us know if you will be away, or if there are times of the year during which your child should not be scheduled to serve. If your child is scheduled and something comes up, please try to find a sub and/or please let us know.

Thank you,
Fr. Daniel



A Server's Prayer

**Gracious God, Creator of the universe,
You call your people to worship,
To be with you and one another at Mass.**

**I thank you for having called me
To assist others in their prayer to you.**

**May I be worthy of the trust placed in me
And through my example and service
Bring others closer to you.**

**I ask this through Jesus Christ, Our Lord, who lives and reigns
with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and
ever. Amen.**

The Ministry of Altar Servers

Before Mass

- Arrive a little early so you have time to prepare for Mass. Come directly to the Sacristy. Look at the priest's vestments to identify the proper liturgical color. Find an alb and cincture. The alb is always white. The cincture will match the proper liturgical color. Make sure the alb you wear is the right size. It should go down to your ankles.
- Once you have vested, take a moment to ask Jesus to be with you as you serve Him at the altar. Say the Altar Server's Prayer.
- Make sure that all the items and sacred vessels needed for Mass are in place on the credence table (a small table placed to the side of the altar) and that candles are lighted.
- The tallest server will be the cross bearer (altar server 1) and the shortest will hold the book or binder (altar server 2). The cross bearer will lead the entrance, offertory and recession processions. The altar server that holds the binder, will also assist in the initial preparation of the altar. If there is only one altar server then she/he will both carry the cross for the processions and hold the book/binder for the priest. If an altar server in training is joining the two other altar servers, this is, there are 3 altar servers in total, the altar server in training will assist in the preparation of the altar and after communion.
- Please notify someone in authority if you cannot serve when scheduled and/or arrange for a substitute.

During Mass

- In general: during the Mass, the altar servers do what the congregation does. They stand, sit, kneel, as the congregation does and say the prayers and responses with them. They model a prayerful and active participation for everyone else.
- The Entrance Procession: A couple minutes before Mass begins, the priest will join you in the sacristy. At his indication all ministers will line up in front of the crucifix and after bowing in veneration will

proceed to line up at the door of the sacristy where the cantor can see the Cross bearer. The Cross bearer will be first, followed by the other altar servers, who (if there are 3 in total) will process in side by side.

When the cantor sees the Cross Bearer, she/he will invite the congregation to stand and join in the opening hymn. Once the cantor begins to **sing**, the Cross bearer will begin to walk slowly but naturally, followed by all the other ministers. As we reach the steps at the foot of the Altar we will all line up leaving the space right in front of the altar for the priest and deacon. The altar server who will hold the binder will line up in front of the side of the sanctuary where the presider's chair is. The Cross bearer will line up in front of the side of the sanctuary where the Cross stand is. Other altar servers will line up in front of the side of the sanctuary where their seat is. Once the priest reaches the foot of the sanctuary all bow with him. (Please note that the Cross bearer and whoever is carrying the book of the Gospels, do not bow.) Once the priest starts to move to ascend to the altar, all others also ascend to the altar. During the Mass, we always follow the lead of the priest who presides in the person of Christ. This models for the people that in life we should always follow Jesus. The Cross bearer, puts the Cross in its stand. All go to their proper places.

- The Opening Rites: When the priest says: Let us pray. The server assigned to holding the binder will approach him and hold the binder for him. Do not wait for anyone to signal to you, just come after the priest says Let us pray. Do not worry, there is no hurry, there is supposed to be some time of silence. When the priest takes back the binder, return to your place.

- Preparing the Altar and the Gifts:

When there is 2 altar servers: The Cross bearer will be altar server 1 and the book bearer will be altar server 2.

Altar servers 1 and 2: After the Universal Prayer, the cantor will announce the offertory hymn and invite the congregation to join. When the cantor starts to **sing**, the servers stand.

Altar server 1: The cross bearer gets the Cross and slowly processes with the Cross to the back of the church. When the gifts are ready to process the Cross bearer leads them. Once they reach the priest or deacon the Cross bearer **continues up to the sanctuary, places the cross on the stand** and goes to the credence table. Gets the cruet with water and waits standing close to the altar.

Altar server 2: The other altar server goes to the credence table as soon as the offertory hymn begins and brings the book, chalice with paten (purificator and corporal), and secondary chalices (purificators) to the Altar, in that order, they are arranged on the credence table in that same order to make it easier for you to remember. Do not place any of these items in the center of the Altar. Place them to the side of the Altar. The priest or deacon will open the corporal in the center of the Altar and then place the gifts on the corporal once he says the proper prayers. Once she/he is done assisting with the preparation of the altar, she/he stands in his places. When the priest starts moving to receive the gifts, she/he joins him and stands next to him, facing the congregation. She/he receives the gifts as the priest or deacon hands them over to her/him and brings them up to the altar when the priest returns to the altar. Place the bread on the Altar to the side of the corporal, not on the corporal. Then stand to the side of the Altar, facing the priest or deacon.

Altar server 2: Standing to the side of the Altar, facing the priest or deacon, hold the cruet with wine with the handle facing the priest or deacon (remove the stopper and hold it in your other hand).

Altar server 1: Standing to the side of the Altar, facing the priest or deacon, hold the cruet with water with the handle facing the priest or deacon (remove the stopper and hold it in your other hand). The priest or deacon will take the cruet with water from you, and then give it back, when you receive it, stay where you are and continue to hold the cruet with the handle facing the priest and the stopper in your other hand.

Altar server 2: The priest or deacon will take the cruet with wine from you, and then give it back, when you receive it, put the stopper back on, return the cruet to the credence table and get the lavabo and finger towel. Drape the finger towel over your right arm and hold the lavabo with your right hand. Return to stand to the side of the altar next to the altar server holding the cruet with water.

- Washing of the Hands: After bowing to the altar the priest will turn towards you and extend his hands. Altar server 2, will place the lavabo under the priest's hands. Altar server 1: will pour a little bit of water over the priest's hands.

The priest will take the finger towel from altar server 2, dry his hands and drape it again over the altar server's arm. Then the priest will bow and both altar servers will bow to him at the same time. After that they will return the cruet, lavabo and finger towel to the credence table and then go stand at the steps of the sanctuary near the bells.

- During the elevation of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ: The servers are kneeling at the steps of the sanctuary. When the priest raises the host, one of the servers will ring the bells **three times**. When the priest raises the chalice, one of the servers will ring the bells **three times**. When the congregation stands for the Our Father return to the sanctuary and stand to the side of the altar.
- Communion: Once you have received communion return to your places to pray in thanksgiving.
- After communion: When communion concludes one of the servers gets the water from the credence table and all line up to the side of the altar. They return items to the credence table as the priest or deacon hands them to them. Once all items, including the Missal have been returned to the credence table they go back to their places.
- After the blessing and dismissal: the cantor will announce the recessional hymn. **Stay in your places** and sing with the congregation. **When the priest starts moving**, the cross bearer gets the Cross, once the priest and deacon have venerated the altar and start descending the altar servers do the same and **line up at the foot of**

the sanctuary in the same way as they did at the beginning of Mass. They bow as the priest bows and then turn around as the priest does and line up to process out in the same order. As you turn, make sure you turn facing the Tabernacle. The Cross bearer leads the procession out. Once they reach the doors of the church the altar servers continue in procession to the sacristy. One of them will take the candle snuffer and extinguish the burning candles. Once all enter the sacristy they venerate the crucifix and then proceed to put their albs and cinctures back in place in an orderly fashion.

When there is only 1 altar server:

After the Universal Prayer, the cantor will announce the offertory hymn and invite the congregation to join. When the cantor starts to **sing**, the server stands and goes to the credence table and brings the book, chalice with paten (purificator and corporal), and secondary chalices (purificators) to the Altar, in that order, they are arranged on the credence table in that same order to make it easier for you to remember. Do not place any of these items in the center of the Altar. Place them to the side of the Altar. Once she/he is done assisting with the preparation of the altar, she/he gets the Cross and slowly processes with the Cross to the back of the church. When the gifts are ready to process she/he leads them. Once they reach the priest or deacon the Cross bearer **continues up to the sanctuary, places the cross on the stand** and returns swiftly to the side of the priest or deacon to assist with the gifts. She/he receives the gifts as the priest or deacon hands them over to her/him and brings them up to the altar when the priest returns to the altar. Place the bread on the Altar to the side of the corporal, not on the corporal. Go to the credence table, remove the stoppers from both cruets (wine and water) and place the stoppers on the credence table, take both cruets and go stand to the side of the altar facing the priest holding the cruets with the handle facing the priest.

The priest or deacon will take the cruet with wine from you, and then give it back, when you receive it, stay where you are and continue to hold the cruet with the handle facing the priest. The priest or deacon will take the cruet with water from you, and then give it back, when you receive it, go back to the credence table, put down the cruets, take up the finger towel and drape it over your left arm, take up the lavabo and hold it in your left hand, take up the cruet with water and hold it with your right hand (or dominant hand). Return to stand to the side of the Altar facing the priest.

Washing of the Hands: After bowing to the altar the priest will turn towards you and extend his hands. place the lavabo under the priest's hands and pour a little bit of water over the priest's hands.

The priest will take the finger towel, dry his hands and drape it again over the altar your arm. Then the priest will bow and you will bow to him at the same time. After that you will return the cruet, lavabo and finger towel to the credence table and then go stand at the steps of the sanctuary near the bells.

- During the elevation of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ: The server is kneeling at the steps of the sanctuary. When the priest raises the host, the server will ring the bells **three times**. When the priest raises the chalice, one of the servers will ring the bells **three times**. When the congregation stands for the Our Father return to the sanctuary and stand to the side of the altar.
- Communion: Once you have received communion return to your place to pray in thanksgiving.
- After communion: When communion concludes get the water from the credence table and line up to the side of the altar. Return items to the credence table as the priest or deacon hands them to you. Once all items, including the Missal have been returned to the credence table go back to your place.
- After the blessing and dismissal: the cantor will announce the recessional hymn. **Stay in your place** and sing with the congregation. **When the priest starts moving**, get the Cross, once the priest and

deacon have venerated the altar and start descending the altar server does the same and **line up at the foot of the sanctuary in the same way as they did at the beginning of Mass.** Bow as the priest bows and then turn around as the priest does and line up to process out in the same order. As you turn, make sure you turn facing the Tabernacle. Lead the procession out. Once you reach the doors of the church continue in procession to the sacristy. Take the candle snuffer and extinguish the burning candles. Once all enter the sacristy venerate the crucifix and then proceed to put your alb and cincture back in place in an orderly fashion.

Important Terms to Know

Alb the white garment that the altar servers and other ministers wear. It reminds us that when we were baptized, we were called to serve Jesus.

Altar the sacred table in the middle of the sanctuary where the priest offers the bread and wine which become the body and blood of Jesus. When the church was dedicated, the bishop consecrated the altar with special oil. We bow to the Altar, because the Altar is a symbol of Jesus Christ, who is the Priest, the Altar and the Victim.

Altar Candle the candles at the altar that are lighted for Mass.

Ambo the place where the scripture readings are proclaimed and the homily is given.

Baptismal Font the large bowl on a stand that we use to celebrate the sacrament of baptism.

Presider's Binder the prayers for intercessions and often other additional blessings and prayers are copied into a special liturgical binder that we use during Mass. One of the servers is responsible for holding the binder.

Book of the Gospels the special book that is carried by the deacon or reader during the Entrance Procession. The Gospel is proclaimed from it during Mass.

Cantor the person who leads the singing of the responsorial psalm and other sung parts of the Mass.

Cincture a long cord used for fastening some albs at the waist. The cinctures may be white, red, green, purple or gold. The color is determined by the liturgical season. To make sure what color cincture you are supposed to wear remember to look at the color of the priest vestments in the sacristy.

Paten the small metal plate that is used for the priest's host.

Vestment The special clothing we wear for Mass. Includes: albs, stoles, chasubles, etc.

Chasuble A sleeveless outer vestment that the priest wears over the alb and stole to celebrate Mass. The color changes with the liturgical seasons.

Stole A long cloth of the liturgical color that the priest wears under the chasuble around the neck and hanging down on both sides in front. The deacon wears it over the alb and under the dalmatic over his right shoulder and fastened at his left side.

Thurible The vessel with a chain that we burn charcoal and sweet smelling incense in for special feast days.

Chalice the sacred vessel which is used for the consecration of wine which becomes the blood of Christ during Mass.

Ciborium the sacred vessel which is used for the consecration of the bread which becomes the body of Christ during the Mass.

Communion Cups smaller cups that are used to consecrate and distribute the Sacred Blood to the people.

Corporal the square linen cloth which is unfolded on the altar for Mass. The sacred vessels are placed on it for consecration. Only the deacon or the priest place the sacred vessels on the corporal after they say the proper prayers.

Credence Table the table in the sanctuary where the sacred vessels, linens and the Missal are kept during Mass.

Cruet the small glass pitcher with water or wine is used during the preparation of the gifts.

Deacon the man who sits next to the presider in the sanctuary. He wears a stole that goes across his chest. At Mass he proclaims the Gospel, reads the intercessions, gives directions to the assembly (ie: “let us offer each other a sign of Christ’s peace”, etc.) and distributes communion. The deacon is an ordained minister.

Finger (Lavabo) Bowl the small glass bowl that is used for the washing of the priest’s hands during the preparation of the gifts.

Finger Towel the towel that is used to dry the priest’s hands during the preparation of the gifts.

Gifts Table the table by the baptismal font where the flagon of wine and large ciboria with hosts are placed before they come up in procession.

Holy Water Bucket and aspergillum during the Easter Season we use this container to bless the assembly with holy water at the beginning of Mass as a reminder of baptism. At other times of the year, we use holy water for special blessings.

Incense Boat the container that the incense is kept in before it goes into the censer.

Lectiary the special book that is used for the scripture readings at Mass.

Reader the person who proclaims the scripture readings at Mass.

Missal the red book which contains the prayers and instructions for the priest used during the celebration of Mass.

Paschal Candle The very large candle kept by the baptismal font. It is used to remind us that Christ is the light of the world. During the Easter season it is lit at every Mass and it is kept in the sanctuary. It is also lit for baptisms and funerals.

Presider’s Chair the special chair in the sanctuary where the priest sits during Mass.

Processional Candles During special feast days, we carry these candles next to the cross and during the procession with the Book of the Gospels.

Processional Cross The cross carried by one of the altar servers to accompany the various processions.

Purificator the white folded linen that is used when the communion ministers wipe the chalice.

Sanctuary the area of the church where most of the liturgical furnishings are. The sanctuary is elevated so that people may see what is going on.

Sanctuary Candle the candle near the tabernacle in a red container which tells us that the Blessed Sacrament is present in the tabernacle.

Sacristan the person who sets up the vessels and books for Mass.

Sacristy the room next to the church where the vessels and vestments are stored. The priests and deacon also prepare for Mass in the sacristy.

Tabernacle the special container where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved for people who are sick and can't come to Mass, for those who wish to pray with Jesus after Mass. Extra consecrated hosts are taken from the tabernacle for communion at Mass.

Candle Extinguisher This tool takes its name from putting out candles. It is also used to light them, and can be called the long lighter. It is a pole with a tube at one side on the top with a retractable wick for lighting candles. The server using it should have enough wick exposed so that the flame will not go out until all candles are lit. Then the tab should be used to slide the wick down and put the flame out. Slide the wick back out immediately, so it cools outside the tube. The other side of the top is a cup for extinguishing the candles. Practice is needed to properly light and extinguish candles.

Pahl A linen-covered square used to cover the paten and chalice.

Celebrating the Liturgical Seasons

The liturgical seasons are there to help us change, grow and become more mature as followers of Jesus Christ. With each change of seasons, the Church changes the color of vestments, this includes the altar server's cinctures.

The liturgical seasons are:

Advent the first season of the liturgical year. Is a season of preparation and expectation for Christmas. It lasts 4 weeks.

Christmas is the second most important season of the liturgical year. We celebrate that God became human. It lasts from Christmas Eve on December 24 until the Baptism of the Lord, a little over 2 weeks. The Epiphany is part of this season.

Ordinary Time is the longest season and it is divided in two, a short time between the Christmas Season and Lent (about 6 weeks, it changes every year) and a longer time between Pentecost and Advent (about 27 weeks). During this season we continue to follow Christ and grow in our faith.

Lent is a season that lasts 40 days in which we prepare ourselves for the Sacred Triduum by the practices of Fasting, Praying and Almsgiving.

Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday when we celebrate the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem and ends with the Sacred Triduum, the three most important days of the Liturgical Year in which we celebrate Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter commemorating the passion, death, and resurrection of our Lord.

Easter is the most important season of the Liturgical Year. It lasts 50 days from Easter Sunday until Pentecost. During this season we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The colors are:

White Is a sign of joy. It is used at Mass during the Easter and Christmas seasons. On feasts and memorials of the Lord Jesus other than the Passion. It is used on feasts and memorials of Mary, the angels and saints who are not martyrs. It is used in festive occasions such as Holy Baptism and Holy Matrimony. It is used for funerals as a reminder of the hope in the Resurrection.

Red Symbolizes both the blood of Christ and martyrs and the Holy Spirit. Used on Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Pentecost and feasts of saints that dies as martyrs.

Green Symbolizes growth and hope. Used during Ordinary Time.

Purple or Violet A symbol of preparation, expectation, and penance. Used in Advent and Lent.

Rose or pink can be used on one Sunday of Lent and one Sunday of Advent (Laetare and Gaudete Sundays). It is an invitation to rejoice, gives us a break, a relaxation during seasons of preparation and penance.

Gold can be used in place of other colors for major feasts such as Easter and Christmas.

Prayers and responses during the Mass

Altar Servers say all the parts of the people.

Greeting

PRIEST: The Lord be with you.

PEOPLE: And with your spirit.

Penitential Act

Form A (Confiteor) I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

Form B

PRIEST: Have mercy on us, O Lord.

PEOPLE: For we have sinned against you.

PRIEST: Show us, O Lord, your mercy.

PEOPLE: And grant us your salvation.

Form C PRIEST: Lord, have mercy.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

PRIEST: Christ, have mercy.

PEOPLE: Christ, have mercy.

PRIEST: Lord, have mercy.

PEOPLE: Lord, have mercy.

Gloria

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Gospel Dialogue

PRIEST (OR DEACON): The Lord be with you.

PEOPLE: And with your spirit.

PRIEST (OR DEACON): A reading from the holy Gospel according to _____.

PEOPLE: Glory to you, O Lord.

Profession of Faith (Nicene Creed)

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated

at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Invitation to Prayer

PRIEST: Pray, brothers and sisters ... acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

PEOPLE: May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Preface Dialogue

PRIEST: The Lord be with you.

PEOPLE: And with your spirit.

PRIEST: Lift up your hearts.

PEOPLE: We lift them up to the Lord.

PRIEST: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

PEOPLE: It is right and just.

Preface Acclamation (Sanctus)

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

The Mystery of Faith

PRIEST: The mystery of faith.

PEOPLE:

A – We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

B – When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.

C – Save us, Savior of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection, you have set us free.

The Lord's Prayer

PEOPLE: Our Father ...

PRIEST: ... and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

PEOPLE: For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and for ever.

Sign of Peace

PRIEST: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

PEOPLE: And with your spirit.

Lamb of God

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

Invitation to Communion

PRIEST: Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

ALL: Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Concluding Rites

PRIEST: The Lord be with you.

PEOPLE: And with your spirit.

PRIEST (OR DEACON): Go forth, the Mass is ended. OR Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord. OR Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life. OR Go in peace.

PEOPLE: Thanks be to God.



Prayer to Mary

Loving Mother,

Keep me always very close to your Son Jesus, whom I serve at the Altar.

Through my friendship with him, and your intercession:

Grant me that I will be able to know the vocation to which God has destined me from all eternity.

Grant me the courage to embrace my vocation generously and to remain faithful to it all my life.

From this moment, like you when the angel Gabriel visited you and showed you your vocation, I abandon myself lovingly to God's will.

Amen.

New Altar Server Information

Name of Guardian: _____

Phone number: _____

Name of Child: _____

We want to receive the ministry schedule via email at: _____

Our child would be happy to serve at special liturgies yes _____ no _____

Our child can be scheduled to serve at the following weekend Masses:

Saturday 4:30 pm @ St.A _____ Sunday 8:30 am @ H.C. _____

Sunday 10:30 am @ A.S. _____ Sunday 2:00 pm @ St. A _____

Please return to Fr. Daniel at your earliest convenience.