SAINT MARY PARISH

ALTAR SERVER GUIDELINE

SUNDAY MASS
ARRIVAL TIME/SIGN IN

• Altar servers need to arrive in the Sacristy at least fifteen minutes before Mass is scheduled to begin. Put a checkmark next to your name on the schedule that will be found on the bulletin board outside the Sacristy.

• If you are unable to serve, it is your responsibility to find a replacement to perform your altar server ministry.
MINISTRY ATTIRE

• Server puts on the white alb, takes the cincture and ties it around the waist with the knot on the right side, then put the cross around your neck making sure the chain is under the back hood.
PRESENCE

• Always maintain a prayerful presence. Move slowly and respectfully around the sanctuary and altar.

• If carrying an object, use both hands if necessary. Never slouch.
Prepare the following to be placed on the credence table which is located to the left of the altar:

- **Chalice**: A chalice is a cup made of gold or silver used to hold the wine which becomes the Precious Blood of Christ at the Consecration of the Mass.

- **Purificator**: A linen cloth used for wiping the Chalice after Communion. One is used with the priest’s Chalice and one each for the communion cups.
MASS SET-UP CONTINUED

• Communion Cups & Individual Ciboria: These vessels are used to distribute the Host & Precious Blood to the people after the wine has been consecrated. When needed, small pyx with gluten free hosts.

• Water cruet, Bowl, and Towel: These vessels are used by the priest to wash his hands before the Consecration.

• Sacramentary: The large red book containing the priest’s prayers (Opening and Closing Prayers, Prefaces, and Eucharistic Prayers).
TABLE FOUND AT THE AISLE BREAK IN THE CHURCH

• Wine decanter: A pitcher filled with wine to be consecrated at Mass. This is brought up in the offertory procession.

• Paten: A plate of gold or silver upon which rests the large host raised by the priest at the consecration. This is carried up by members of the parish.

• Ciborium: A gold or silver bowl which will be full of hosts to be consecrated and brought to the altar with the unconsecrated wine before the consecration.
CANDLES

- Taper/Extinguisher: While this tool takes its name from putting out candles, it is also used to light them. It is a pole-like instrument 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 retract the wick and put the flame out. The other side of the top is a cup for extinguishing the candles.
CANDLES CONTINUED

• Light six (6) candles which are found at the front of the altar-three (3) on the left side and three (3) on the right side.

• Light two (2) candles which are found on the altar-one (1) to the left of the tabernacle and the other one (1) to the right of the tabernacle.
ALTAR SERVER GENERAL MASS GUIDELINES

• Presence: Always maintain a prayerful presence. When the hands are not in use, they should be folded—except when the server is seated. The sign of the cross should be made reverently and thoughtfully. Walking should be done with grace and smoothness.

• Cross-bearer: Leads the procession, setting the pace for the whole group. The bottom of the pole should be about knee high. The right hand holds the pole about neck level and left hand is placed about a foot below. The figure of Christ always faces outward. When replacing the cross on the stand face the figure of Christ to the parishioners.

• Carrying the candles: to hold the candle correctly, the outside hand goes at the knob and the inside hand at the base.
ALTAR SERVER GENERAL MASS GUIDELINES CONTINUED

• Silence: Except for making the proper responses, silence is kept at all times. Sit erect with the palms of your hands flat against your legs and the edge of the fingers close to your knees. Do not slouch standing. Stand erect with hands properly folded.

• The altar server is a part of the celebration, listening all the time. Parishioners will see you participating through your praying and singing. This will help them to feel more comfortable about praying and singing themselves.
PROCESSION: CROSS-BEARER, ALTAR SERVERS WITH CANDLES, MASS COORDINATOR, LECTORS, DEACON, CELEBRANT PRIEST

- Procession reaches altar
  - Cross-bearer returns cross to stand facing the figure of Christ to parishioners
  - Altar servers return unlit candles next to the credence table
- Let us pray
  - At this time do not Present book to priest-he will be using the small podium which holds the book due to the Revised Roman Missal.
PROCESSION CONTINUED

• Alleluia-All stand
  • Priest rises, steps forward & bows in prayer, is the signal for altar servers to proceed to the area where candles are to be lighted. Note: No candles during Lent. Priest proceeds to lectern to read the gospel. Altar servers will bring lit candles to each side of lectern and hold till priests finishes reading the gospel. Then altar servers return unlit candles next to the credence table.

• Prepare Altar
  • From the credence table place on the side of the altar (not center): Chalice-Large Red Book--Communion cups-Pyx if needed
PROCESSION CONTINUED

• Present Gifts
  • Mass coordinator leaves bench with cross-bearer and proceeds to the front of the altar-then turns to face the altar-bows-turn and both together go to the middle aisle break. Presenters remove the gifts and returns to present the gifts to the priest.

• Receive Gifts
  • Priest hands gifts to altar servers who take gifts to the altar along with water cruet without top. Altar servers then wait at the side of the altar until the priest hands back the cruet & decanter to altar servers who then put them on credence table.
PROCESSION CONTINUED

• Washing of hands
  • Two Altar servers present water cruet, bowl and towel for priest to wash hands before Consecration

• Ringing of bells
  • When priest raises host bell ringer keeps ringing of bells until the host is lowered to the altar
  • When priest raises chalice bell ringer keeps ringing of bells until the chalice is lowered to the altar

• Our Father, Sign of Peace
  • After the Sign of Peace Altar server brings the stacked Individual Ciboria to the altar.
PROCESSION CONTINUED

• Communion
  • Mass coordinator receives communion first from the priest followed by the precious blood of Christ and assists the priests in delivering the host and precious blood of Christ to the altar servers and Eucharistic Ministers. Altar servers should come out in front of bench to receive communion and then return to sit in pew till host and precious blood is completely distributed to parishioners.

• Purification of the Chalice
  • Immediately-as the Priest returns to the altar after distribution of Holy Communion-the altar server presents the Priest with the water cruet, waits until the Priest hands the cruet back to the server who returns it to the credence table. The altar servers then return to the altar and take the Chalice etc. to the credence table.
PROCESSION CONTINUED

• Let us Pray
  • Altar server does not need to present red book to priest-he will already have it on small podium.

• Dismissal
  • Altar servers obtain cross, lit candles and proceed to center of altar. Priest returns from altar, bows, (cross bearer and altar servers with candles do not bow) turns and all file in procession to back of the Church
End of Mass

- Altar servers return to Sanctuary and proceed as follows:
  - Return cross to stand with figure of Christ facing parishioners
  - Unlit candles returned next to the credence table
  - Credence table is cleared with cruets, etc. returned to sacristy
  - Altar candles are extinguished using the taper only
  - Alb, cincture and cross returned to closet and placed on hangers
  - Priest dismisses altar servers
NOTES

• If you are unable to make your assigned Mass, it is your responsibility to find a replacement.

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