

(12-20-2018)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ALTAR SERVERS

There are usually 2 altar servers assigned for each Mass with the exception of special Masses, i.e. Christmas and Easter and Holy Week. We will try to assign one older server with a younger server if at all possible. If you see that we do not have at least 2 servers, please go up to the Sacristy to see if they need another server.

Preparation:

- . Please come to Mass at least 15 minutes early so that you can be dressed and perform the other duties that are needed before Mass. If you come early, we can be sure that all servers are there. Please dress appropriately as what you wear underneath the robe can be seen (i.e., no short shorts...).
- . You should choose an alb (robe) that fits you. There are a variety of sizes.
- . You should light the candles about 10 minutes before Mass begins. Be sure when you **are crossing in front of the Tabernacle before Mass, that you move reverently and genuflect facing the Tabernacle.** Take the wine cruet, collection basket and ciborium with unconsecrated hosts to the gift table at the back of Church if this has not yet been done. Please be careful.
- . Decide what duties each of you will perform during Mass. (Bells/Book/Cross).
- . If you notice that we do not have 2 servers, please see if there is anyone in Church to help if they have not come up to check. If you are not scheduled to serve, please volunteer if needed. Servers would need to be dressed and in place as soon as possible but **at least before** the First Reading.

The Mass:

. Procession

- . One altar server leads the procession with the crucifix. Proceed slowly and reverently. When you reach the front of the altar, proceed to the stand for the cross and proceed to the chairs at the right side.
- . The next altar server(s) will follow the first server about 3 pew lengths. Again the server(s) should be proceeding slowly and carrying the side altar candles. When you reach the front of the altar, you should separate to each side leaving room for Father, the Lector and Eucharistic Minister.
- . All will bow. The server(s) will place the candles in the stands and then proceed to the chairs at the left.

. Greeting and Responses

- . After the entrance song, **all will make the sign of the cross. Please make all responses** along with the congregation (people in the pews.) If there is a prayer, such as the Penitential Rite (I confess to Almighty God...), prayer cards are provided on your chairs for you to read from.

. The Readings

- . After the Gloria, the priest will read a prayer from the Sacramentary (big red book). (*Remember during Advent and Lent, the Gloria is not said and you will need to pick up the book at the end of the introductory prayers.*) The server sitting next to the priest will pick up the Sacramentary. If you are taller than the priest, you should step to one side as you hold the book for him to read.
- . When the prayer from the book is finished, the priest will close the book and you should place it back on the small table beside the chairs for the server and the priest.

- . The Lector will read the Epistles (First and Second Readings). Sometimes the Lector will read the Responsorial Psalm between the readings and sometimes it is sung. **Please follow along with all responses.**
- . It is then time for the priest to read the Gospel. Servers should pick up the candles by the altar and proceed in front of the priest as he carries the Gospel up to read. Each server will stand to one side of the lectern. *You will practice this so you are familiar with how it should go.* The priest will then read the Gospel and give his Homily (talk). After the Gospel, and before the Homily, the candles should be placed back in the stands and the servers return to their seats.
- . After the Homily, the Profession of Faith follows. **Please pray along with the congregation.** Hands are to be folded and not hanging by your side. The priest will give the introduction to the Prayers of the Faithful (read by the Lector).
- . **The Offertory**
- . After the Prayers of the Faithful, the priest will sit down.
- . Wait just a minute, then the server on the left, near the credence/side table, should carefully bring the large chalice with the purificator, pall, and corporal (if not already on altar) and place it on the altar. Please place one hand on top so that something does not slip off. **If Communion will be under both species,** the server will also get the cups and purificators and place them on the altar. Do not hurry! Then proceed to stand with the priest in front of altar to receive the gifts of wine and unconsecrated hosts.
- . The server on the right should get the book from the table and place it on the altar. If there are only 2 servers, he/she proceeds to stand next to the priest to help receive the gifts.
- . The priest will hand one server the wine and the other the ciborium (hosts in gold bowl on gift table.) The collection basket will be brought up by the ushers and placed in front of the altar. The priest will proceed to the altar. The two servers will go to the side of the altar and wait until the priest takes the water and wine from them. If you are hold the water/wine cruet, **be sure to turn it so that the handle is facing the priest to make it easier for him to take it from you.** After mixing the water with the wine, he will hand them back to you. If he places them on the altar, pick it up and take back to the side table.
- . The two servers are now at the side table. The bowl with water and the towel (opened up) are brought to the priest. If only one server, they can do both the bowl and towel. *If there is no water in the bowl, bring the water cruet with the handle facing the priest and pour the water over the priest's fingers into the bowl.*
- . When the priest has finished washing his hands, take the towel and water bowl back to the side table. The server with the towel can fold it and place it next to the bowl.
- . **The Consecration**
- . Servers should now leave the side table and kneel on the steps. One server will be ready to ring the bells and the other server kneels beside the server ringing the bells. The bells will be rung lightly (twice) as the priest places his palms over the chalice.
- . At the conclusion of the "Holy, Holy, Holy", servers will kneel with the congregation. The server with the bells will ring the bells 3 times as the priest elevates (holds up) first the Consecrated Host (the Body of Jesus) and then 3 times when the Chalice containing the Blood of Jesus is elevated.
- . At the conclusion of the prayer that ends, "through Him, with Him, and in Him," join hands or raise your hands and **join the congregation in praying the Our Father.**

- . At the end of “Peace be with you,” offer each other the sign of peace.
- . The Eucharistic Minister will be standing during the “Lamb of God”; however, you should **kneel at the same time as the congregation.**
- . **Communion**
- . When it is time for Communion and the Eucharistic Minister is ready to distribute the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, stand so that you may also receive. After you have received, you should kneel and pray for a few minutes and then you may sit down in the chairs, unless you are holding the handled paten for the priest.
- . When you notice that the Communion line is nearing the end, the book server can go pick up the book and bring it back to their chair by the table.
- . The servers on the left should watch so that when the priest comes to the altar to begin cleaning the vessels, the Eucharistic Minister will place the ciborium in the Tabernacle.
- . The priest will look for the water cruet so that he can clean the vessels. Once they are cleaned, they are to be taken from the altar and placed on the side table. The priest will then sit down for a few minutes.
- . **On Sundays...when the priest stands he will ask the Homebound Minister to come forward and he will offer a prayer.**
- . When the priest says, “Let us Pray,” the book should be brought up so that the priest can read the Prayer After Communion. He will then close the book and you are to place it on the table and return to your seat.
- . After the “final blessing,” and the music begins, the priest will come to the altar and all the servers should come up to the priest’s “wings” and after he kisses the altar, the servers will bow. The server on the right will pick up the cross and proceed to the front of the altar. The other servers will pick up the candles and along with the Lector and Eucharistic Minister and the priest, will stand in front of the altar. When everyone is in place they will bow, except for the server carrying the cross, and the recessional hymn will be place as they process to the back of the Church.
- . **After Mass**
- . If you are at the back of Church, you may go around back to the Sacristy but do not go back to the altar until the music has stopped and all the people have begun coming out.
- . Please stay dressed in your robe, etc., while putting out the candles. If you have time, you may help by setting the vessels in the Sacristy. There is a Sacristan who will clean the vessels and put them away.
- . Please hang up your robe, etc. so that it will be ready for the next server.

Thank you for serving at Mass. If you have questions, please ask!

If incense will be used at a Mass, the servers who will be serving that Mass may be asked to attend a short refresher/training a couple of days before the Mass.

IF YOU CANNOT SERVE AT A SCHEDULED MASS, PLEASE CALL SOMEONE TO SERVE.

Terms:

CRUET (water and wine pitchers)

LAVABO BOWL (water bowl)

TABERNACLE (on the back of altar where the consecrated hosts (Body and Blood of Jesus) are kept)

CHALICE (cup where water and wine are mixed to become the Precious Blood of Jesus)

PATEN (gold plate)

CIBORIUM (host container on the gift table, and altar when necessary, and also in the Tabernacle)

PURIFICATOR (cloths to catch any drippings of Precious Blood)

PALL (white cardboard covered with cloth to cover the chalice)

ALTAR CLOTH (white/or colored cloth on the altar)

CORPORAL (white folded cloth which is opened on the altar for the placement of vessels)

VESTMENTS (clothing worn by the priest)

ALB (white vestment) STOLE (colored long sash placed over alb)

CHASUABLE (robe) CINCTURE (rope)