

# Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church

## ALTAR SERVER TRAINING BOOKLET



By: Deacon Raymond Elias  
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## **ALTAR SERVER'S PRAYER**

Loving Father, Creator of the universe, you call your people to worship, to be with you and each other at Mass. Help me, for you have called me also. Keep me prayerful and alert. Help me to help others in prayer. Thank you for the trust you've placed in me. Keep me true to that trust. I make my prayer in Jesus' name, who is with us in the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## **DEFINITION OF ALTAR SERVER**

It is a great privilege to serve at the Altar of our Lord and therefore Servers are chosen from those who display a desire for a more intimate union with our Lord and God, Jesus Christ. Our loving Savior becomes present on the Altar, just as He was at the Last Supper and Calvary.

Accordingly, Servers have a solemn responsibility to do their assigned duties with dignity and reverence.

Our parish has Altar Servers (boys and girls), who start after their first communion and continue for as long as we can keep them. All people of good faith are welcome and those who think they may desire to serve are encouraged to do so. All that is required is a desire to server at the Altar of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

## **DRESS CODE FOR ALTAR SERVERS**

- ❖ **SHOES** – dress shoes should be worn (*no flip flops, sandals or tennis shoes*).
- ❖ **HAIR** – Hair should be neatly combed, appropriate for boys and girls. Girls or boys with long hair should make sure, if not tied back, that it doesn't obstruct their ability to see.
- ❖ **JEWELRY** - Do not wear anything that will make noise and/or will be distracting, or that will cause you to have problems serving. Girls may wear "*appropriate*" earrings to serve.
- ❖ **VESTMENTS**
  1. Beginner - Alb and Cincture (with appropriate color for the mass).
  2. Experienced Altar Server – Alb, Cincture (with appropriate color for the mass) and Wooden Cross.

## **ALTAR SERVER RULES**

- ❖ Arrive a minimum of 15 minutes before the Mass starts to get dressed and make sure that the Altar is prepared.
- ❖ Serve at every mass as scheduled. It is your responsibility to find a substitute, if you're unable to serve as scheduled. Substitutes should be arranged no later than 24 hrs. prior to scheduled date. Contact deacon Raymond if you're unable to find a replacement.
- ❖ Altar Servers should not leave the sanctuary area after the start of Mass for any reason, except bathroom emergencies, illness, or when directed to do so by the priest or deacon.
- ❖ Make sure the candles are lit, bread, wine, water, towels, bowl, prayer book, and any other sacramental items are in their proper place.
- ❖ Perform the duties assigned during the mass in the prescribed orderly manner.
- ❖ Be attentive and respond immediately when the priest or deacon asks for help.
- ❖ Maintain a prayerful posture at all times in the Sacristy (if you are not doing something your hands should be folded in your lap).
- ❖ Be quiet and respectful while in the Sanctuary area (Altar), you are role models.
- ❖ After the mass, return to the Sanctuary, Sacristy, and preparation areas and assist the Sacristan to make sure that everything is set up for the next mass.
- ❖ After mass: Make sure that your alb and cincture are neatly hung up. Please inform the deacon if you find an Alb or Cincture that needs repair.
- ❖ Please make sure to PAY ATTENTION
- ❖ Make sure to attend Altar Server Training Classes, as scheduled.
- ❖ THANK YOU for your willingness to serve God in this very important ministry.

## **ALTAR SERVERS STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE**

### **BEFORE MASS:**

1. Arrive and be dressed 15 minutes before the Mass begins
  - a. Make sure the alb is the RIGHT SIZE, the bottom should be right above the tops of the shoes
  - b. Check the calendar to make sure the cincture is the correct color
2. Check to make sure that everything is set up, on the altar, for the mass (If there is a visiting priest, talk to him ahead of time to see if you need to do anything differently for him)
3. Gather in the Cry Room with the priest, deacon, lectors, Eucharistic ministers, and anyone else who will be in the entrance procession.
  - a. Make sure you talk to the other servers to determine who will carry the candles and be the cross-bearer
  - b. Remember, candles are only used if there are at least 3 servers
  - c. Light your candles and leave them on the table until after the prayer is done

### **ENTRANCE PROCESSION:**

1. After prayer, the altar servers will line up in the following order:
  - a. ALTAR SERVER #1-Cross-Bearer, who will line up in front of the Baptismal Font
  - b. ALTAR SERVERS #2 and #3 (Candle bearers)
    - a. If there is only one server, the person will carry in the cross
    - b. If there are only two servers, then no candles will be used and the server will line up behind the cross-bearer
    - c. If there are more servers than four servers, they will line up next to each other behind the candle bearers.
2. Once the choir has begun to sing, the cross bearer will begin to process in
  - a. The Cross-Bearer will walk to the right of the Baptismal Font, along with the candle bearer on the right
  - b. The candle bearer on the left will walk on the left side of the baptismal font
  - c. WALK AT A NORMAL SPEED, Do not run down the aisle
3. The Cross Bearer will keep walking, bow their head when they reach the bottom of the steps, and go the right of the Altar, and put the cross in the stand (in the room behind the altar)
4. The candle bearers will keep walking, bow their heads when they reach the bottom of the steps, and go the left of the Altar, and put the candles on the counter in the room behind the altar (They stay lit the whole mass)

5. The altar servers bow their heads when they reach the foot of the Sanctuary steps, then go to their chairs on the left or right, and stay standing
  - a. The server who carried the cross in will usually be responsible for the Sacramentary
  - b. The servers that brought the candles in will sit; one in the chair behind the pulpit and the other one behind the priest.

### **GREETING:**

1. The priest begins the mass with the Sign of the Cross
2. The Priest begins with an introduction explaining the readings, or welcoming people to the mass
3. Penitential Rite-the priest or deacon asks us to recall our sins and ask God for forgiveness, we then respond with the “Lord Have Mercy, Christ Have Mercy, Lord Have Mercy”
4. The Gloria will then be recited or sung
5. After the Gloria, the priest will say, “*Let us pray...*” which is the signal for the server with the Sacramentary to bring the book over for the priest to read the opening prayer. Stand on the right side of the priest (in between the priest’s chair and the deacon’s chair, so that the priest can look out at the whole congregation)
6. After the priest is done with the prayer, the server will close the book and place it on the altar (left side of the altar-closest to the priest). Everyone will be seated to listen to the first reading, the psalm, and the second reading.

### **LITURGY OF THE WORD**

1. First Reading-The Lector will come forward to read the First Reading (No action is required by the altar servers)
2. The psalm will be recited or sung (No action is required by the altar servers)
3. Second Reading-The Lector will come forward to read the Second Reading (No action is required by the altar servers)
4. Gospel Acclamation (Alleluia)-When the choir begins to sing the Alleluia, the two servers that brought in the candles will go and get their candle, and stand on either side of the altar, facing towards the people (one hand holding the base, and the other hand holding the stem of the candleholder). After the Priest or deacon bows to the altar the altar server closest to the Ambo will lead and stand on the right side of the ambo facing the priest or deacon. The other candle bearer will follow the priest or deacon and stand on the left side of the Ambo facing the priest or deacon (make sure to stand still and not rest on the Ambo while holding the candle).

5. The priest/deacon will read the Gospel and then end with "*The Gospel of the Lord.*" Everyone, (including the altar servers) respond by saying; "Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ." Once everyone has responded, and begin sitting down, the candles may be put back. After the candles are put back on the credence table, the servers may go back to their seats and be seated.
6. The priest/deacon will then perform his Homily
7. After the Homily, the priest/deacon will go back to their seat, then the priest will stand for the Profession of Faith. Everyone stands to recite the Nicene Creed.
8. The priest will start the Prayers of the Faithful, and then lector or deacon will read the petitions of the church (everyone, including the altar servers respond; "*Lord, hear our prayer*"). After the lector or deacon has finished the petitions, the priest will say a prayer. All will respond with "*Amen,*" and the congregation will then sit down.

## LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

1. OFFERTORY COLLECTION-After everyone has been seated, the ushers will walk forward with the baskets to collect money.
  - a. The Cross Bearer will check to make sure the Sacramentary is on the altar; then they will go get the cross and go to the back of the church to lead the procession of the gifts
  - b. While the cross bearer is going to the back of the church, one of the other servers will bring forward the Chalice, and put it on the altar. The server will then sit down and wait for the priest to accept the gifts.
  - c. The priest will then get up and go to the bottom of the steps to receive the gifts.
    - i. The servers will go up and stand on either side of the priest (If there is a deacon, then on either side of the priest and deacon)
    - ii. The Cross Bearer will then be instructed (the priest will normally gesture for the cross bearer to come forward) to lead the gifts. The cross bearer will walk slowly forward, bow their head when they get in front of the priest and then proceed up the steps and put the cross back. They will then go to the other side of the altar, by going through the back room, to help prepare the altar.
    - iii. The servers standing on either side of the priest will take the gifts after the priests accept them.

1. The server on the left of the priest will take the basket of money and put on the wooden stand in between the tabernacle and the cart that holds the wine glasses. They will then go over to the Credence Table, with the cross bearer, to help prepare the altar
2. The server on the right of the priest will take the wine decanter and place it on the altar. Then they will go over to the Credence Table, with the other servers to help prepare the altar

## 2. PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS

- a. One of the servers will bring THE FOUR COMMUNION CUPS TO THE ALTAR ON THE SIDE WHERE THE PLASTIC COVER IS LOCATED. Also bring over the four little cloths (purificators) to the altar.
- b. One of the other servers should bring the cruet of Holy Water to the altar. Take the top off and leave it on the table. (DO NOT SET IT ON THE ALTAR) Wait for the priest or deacon to take the water, mix it with the wine, and then it will be handed back to the server. When the cruet is returned to the server, they will bow to the priest or deacon and put it back on the Credence Table.
- c. The other two servers will then bring forward the small pitcher of water, the bowl, and the towel. The server will pour a small amount of water onto the hands
  - i. One server will hold the bowl and towel (Carry the towel on your left arm)
  - ii. The other server will hold the pitcher
- d. The servers will then return their seats and remain standing, because the priest will then invite the congregation to stand as well to enter into the Eucharistic prayer

## **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

1. The priest then begins with the preface and then will enter the congregation into the HOLY HOLY, which will be sung or recited
2. The congregation, along with the altar servers, will kneel and the priest will continue with the Eucharist prayer by recalling the Last Supper
  - a. The priest will first pick up the host, to be consecrated, by saying “...take this, all of you and eat it; this is my body which will be given up for you.” The priest will raise the Body of Christ above his head, and the server will ring the bells for 3 seconds.
  - b. The priest will kneel and then pick up the chalice and say, “...take this and drink from it, this is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new and



everlasting covenant. It will be shed for you and for all so that sins may be forgiven, do this in memory of me.” The priest will raise the chalice above his head, and the server will ring the bells for 3 seconds. Once complete the bells will be placed back on the pillow, and moved back to the side of the chair (DO NOT put them under the chair, because they might be kicked and cause a disruption)

3. The priest will then proclaim the mystery of faith, which will be sung or recited
4. The priest will then finish up the prayer by remembering the saints, all those who have departed before us, and chant or recite, “Through Him, with Him, and in Him....”
5. The Great Amen will be sung or recited
6. All members will rise to recite the Our Father
  - a. The altar servers will rise and proceed to the altar, to hold hands with the priest.
  - b. After the prayer, the servers will step off to the side, so they can share the Sign of Peace, when the priest will get to that part of the mass
7. After that the priest will then ask the congregation to share with each other a Sign of Peace
  - a. After the altar server has shared the Sign of Peace with the priest, they need to go over and get the 4 wine glasses and the 4 purificators. These should be lined up on the plastic with a purificator in front of each wine glass.
  - b. Then the server may share the Sign of Peace with the parent/guardian
  - c. When the server returns, they need to go to the left of the altar and line up facing the altar to receive communion

## COMMUNION

1. The Lamb of God will either be sung by the choir or recited by the priest, and the congregation will join in
2. The congregation will kneel, while the servers and Eucharistic ministers will be lined up to receive communion.
3. The priest will distribute the Body and Blood of Christ
  - a. Once the altar server has received both, they will go back to their pillow to kneel
4. Once the priest is done distributing communion, he will return to the altar to purify and clear the altar (The servers will line up, like they did to receive communion, to receive items. When a server takes something back to the table, the next server will slide over, and this will continue until the altar has been cleared.)
  - a. The cross bearer will get up and go to the other side of the altar (the side

- with the Credence Table) through the back room (be careful of the Eucharistic ministers in the room)
- b. The first thing that needs to be brought up to the altar is the cruet of holy water (take the top off before bringing it to the priest)
  - c. The priest will then instruct the server to pour the holy water into the chalice. When the priest is done, the server will bow his head and take the cruet back and place the top on it.
  - d. The priest will then begin to hand things for the servers to place on the Credence Table. When the priest gives you something, bow your head and place it on the table. Then return to the altar to receive the next item
  - e. The cross bearer will take the Sacramentary, and then go to the other side of the altar, by going through the back room. Once everything has been taken care of, the altar servers may go back to their seats.

### **CONCLUDING RITE**

1. The priest will then stand, and then present the announcements.
2. Then the priest will ask everyone to stand and pray (the closing prayer)
  - a. The priest will say, "Let us pray..." which is the cue for the server with the Sacramentary to bring the book over for the priest to read the opening prayer. Stand on the left side of the priest (in between the priest's chair and the deacon's chair, so that the priest can look out at the whole congregation)
3. The priest will then conclude the mass with the Sign of the Cross
4. The choir will then start the final song
  - a. When the final song begins the cross bearer will go get the cross and leave the altar
  - b. The other servers will get the candles and stand next to each other in front of the cross bearer
5. The priest will then go to the altar and come to the bottom of the steps
6. The priest will then bow and turn (the servers will bow at the same time as the priest and turn around and process out)
7. The servers will walk out of the church and gather at the dedication plaque in the community room, the priest will say a blessing, and the servers will respond "And also with you."
8. The servers can then put back the cross and candles (blow them out), and then hang back up their albs and cinctures

### **\*\*REMINDERS**

- When you are standing or sitting, and not doing anything, keep your hands folded. Do not play with your cincture or do anything else
- PAY ATTENTION, especially to the priest, you never know when they may call you over.

- If you need to use the restroom, or get a tissue use the facility in the sacristy. Close the door to the bathroom, so that the congregation can not hear you flush the toilet.

If you are assigned to serve, please follow the Dress Code