

Guidelines for Altar Servers
April 18, 2006

Christ the Redeemer
ALTAR SERVERS' GUIDELINES

Your role as an altar server is very important. Participate in the prayers and music throughout the Mass. Be reverent during Mass, and realize that any misconduct is a distraction and will not be allowed. Mistakes happen, we all make them. But there is no excuse for misbehaving during Mass.

BEFORE MASS

1. You should arrive at the church no later than 15 minutes before the scheduled time of the Mass and go to the altar servers room (second door on the right down the left hallway) to get vested.
2. Put on an alb (white garment) of appropriate size. The hem length should reach the cuff of the trousers or the top of your ankles.
3. After vesting in your alb, gather in the Conference Room in Atonement Hall. Here you will pray with the other ministers and also receive any special instructions from the priest.

PROCESSING IN

1. The Procession begins in the baptistry of the church. At the signal from the Presider, the procession begins. The Cross Bearer leads the procession through the center aisle, presenting the Cross for the adoration of the faithful. Slightly behind, the servers accompany the Cross. If there is no Cross nor candles, simply process down the aisle. Either a single server followed by the other two servers or two servers together.
2. The Cross Bearer stops at the bottom step. Keeping the Cross erect the Bearer bows his head slightly in reverence to the altar before proceeding up the steps. Moving to the right of the Altar the Bearer brings the Cross to the place of honor and secures it within the fixtures.
3. The servers bow profoundly to the Altar at the bottom step. (Profound means that your hands should be on your knees and your body bent at the waist.) Moving to the right the servers go to their seats where they remain standing.
4. When the Presider reaches the chair, a server brings the Sacramentary to the chair area, where the celebrant will open the pages. After the prayer with the Amen, the Presider will close the book. Place the Sacramentary on the small table provided. Then all the servers are seated for the first two readings and the psalm. Stand for the reading of the Gospel and take your seat for the homily. Stand for the intercessions.

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AT THE OFFERTORY

1. After the intercessions are completed, the two servers come to the front of the Altar, reverence the Lord's table by bowing profoundly, proceed down the middle aisle all the way to the baptismal font to meet the gift bearers.
2. The third server dresses the Altar. He places the Sacramentary on the left, and then brings the priest's chalice from the table on the left of the Altar and places it toward the center of the Altar with the purificator (the cloth). The third server receives the two trays from the Eucharistic Minister leader. He then places the trays with cups and purificators on the right corner of the altar. The third server then brings the cruet of water and waits to hand it to the priest. NOTE: With two servers, one will go for the gifts and the other will dress the Table. The second server will then go the center with the priest to assist with the gifts.
3. The two servers will carry the bread and wine gifts to the altar. Move to the left side of the sanctuary via the floor. Present the bread and wine to the priest. (DO NOT PUT THEM ON THE ALTAR YOURSELF.) Present the bread first and then the wine. As the priest is filling the chalices go to the Table to pick up the empty bowl along with the cruet of water for the hand washing. The second /third server brings the towel to dry the hands of the priest. The cruet is presented to the priest, who places a drop of water in the chalice. After the cruet is returned, hold it and wait for the priest to wash his hands.
4. As the priest comes toward you, one server will have the empty bowl to catch the water during the hand washing. Another will have the cruet to pour the water over the priest's hands. The third server will have the towel, which is used to dry the priest's hands. All wait until the washing is over and then return to the floor level of the left side of the platform.
5. After placing the water, bowl, and towel on the table, the servers stand on the floor on the left side of the platform. Servers will stand for the Preface of the Eucharistic Prayer. After the "Holy, holy, holy", servers will kneel. There are three cushions for kneeling on the first step.
6. The servers rise at the singing of the Great Amen. Then continue to stand through the Lord's Prayer. They kneel for the Lamb of God.

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AT COMMUNION TIME

1. At the Sign of Peace, bring the empty ciboria (silver dishes on the trays) to the Lord's table.
2. When the other ministers come to the altar, join them to receive Communion, in line next to the pulpit facing the choir.
3. **DO NOT LIFT ANYTHING FROM THE ALTAR UNTIL HANDED IT BY THE PRIEST OR DEACON.** After you receive Communion, wait until the ministers have started giving Communion, before clearing the Lord's table of the Sacramentary (returned to the right side of the Altar where the servers seats are). During Communion remain kneeling on the left of the platform.
4. As Communion ends, the servers come to the Lord's table. The priest/ Eucharist Minister will hand you the empty ciboria and the empty cups. Place them on the small table on the left side of the Altar. When the Altar is completely cleared then the servers return to the right side of the Sanctuary.
5. When the priest says, "let us pray", server two brings the Sacramentary to the Presider for the Prayer, Blessing and Dismissal. When the Presider closes the Sacramentary, the server returns with the book to his place.

PROCESSING OUT

1. As the recessional hymn begins the Cross Bearer approaches the sanctuary and removes the Cross from the wall fixture. Moving to the right of the Altar the Cross Bearer moves to a place between the front pews in the middle aisle facing the Altar. Two servers join on either side of the Cross. The third server stands directly in front of the Cross.
2. The Presider will venerate the Altar by kissing it and returns to the floor level, facing the sanctuary. When the Presider bows profoundly, the Cross Bearer bows his head slightly and the three servers bow profoundly.
3. The procession moves through the church to the lobby.
4. Remove your albs, and **HANG THEM UP** before you leave.