

Our Lady Queen of Martyrs

Altar Server's Guide

Objective: To introduce servers to the basic knowledge, procedures and commitment necessary for assisting in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

Section 1: Knowledge

Around the Altar:

Sanctuary: The holy area at the altar where the Tabernacle is located.

Sacristy: The room to the right of the sanctuary where the vestments and sacred vessels are stored.

Vestments:

Alb: The long white robe worn under the Chasuble. Altar servers also wear the same white robe while serving Mass.

Stole: A long strip of colored cloth worn around the neck by the celebrant and deacon across the shoulder.

Chasuble: The outer garment worn by the celebrant. The color of this vestment reflects the color of the feast day or Liturgical Calendar.

Vocabulary Used During Mass:

Chalice: The cup which holds the Blood of Christ.

Ciboria: The cup used to hold the body of Christ.

Cruets: The glass bottles used to hold the water and wine.

Credence Table: The table to the right of the altar which holds the cruets, chalice and ciboria until placed on the altar.

Section 2: Training

Cross/Book Bearer:

Light the candles on the altar before mass.

Lead the procession from the sacristy to the altar at the beginning of the mass and back to the sacristy at the end of mass.

Walk at a normal pace, (slow, reverent pace).

Make sure the cross is facing forward and held high.

May be asked to hold the book for the celebrant while he reads the prayers during mass.

(Trigger words: "Let Us Pray").

Set up the altar with the Chalice and Ciboria(s) during the offertory.

Ring the bells at the consecration during the elevation of the Host and Chalice.

Gift Bearers:

Before mass, assure the chalice, Ciboria(s) water and wine are in their proper place.

Assist the celebrant with accepting the gifts at the offertory.

Bring the water and wine to the celebrant at the offertory.

Bring the water boat, basin and towel to the celebrant at the washing of the hands.

Kneel at the side of the altar beginning at the Holy, Holy, Holy. (do not look at the people)

After Communion, when the Tabernacle door is closed, immediately rise to bring the water cruet to the celebrant for purification of the sacred vessels.

Clear the altar of all sacred vessels.

Responsibilities before and after mass:

Before Mass:

Light the candles on the altar.

After Mass:

Remove the vessels from the credence table and return to the Sacristy if there is no other mass for the day.

Extinguish the candles on the Altar.

Section 3: Commitment

Assignments are made to the mass you would normally attend on Saturday afternoon or Sunday morning.

Schedules are made to make serving convenient for both you and your parents.

Active altar servers must agree to serve the weekend mass they are assigned.

Repeated absences (without calling for a replacement) can result in the removal of your name from the active server's schedule. Everyone has times when schedules conflict. If you cannot attend your assigned mass, servers must call in advance so that we may arrange for someone to replace you.

Like wise, you may be called upon to serve a weekend mass for someone else with a schedule conflict if you are available.

Altar servers must report to the sacristy at least 10 minutes before the beginning of mass.

Remember to:

Genuflect when passing before the Tabernacle.

Bow to the altar when passing before the altar.

Walk at a normal pace. (Never run).

Keep hands folded when walking or kneeling at the altar.

Sit and stand *straight* during mass. Good posture reflects a positive attitude.

Pray and sing along with the people, use a missalette if you would like. You are setting an example for others.

Be alert and attentive during mass. Daydreaming may cause you to miss your queue to tend to your duties.

While in the sanctuary, keep conversation with others at a minimum.

Laughing and joking in the sanctuary area during mass is not tolerated. Inappropriate conduct may result in the removal of your name from the active server's list.

An altar server's responsibility comes with a basic reverence and respect that must be observed while on the altar....
REMEMBER....

You are in the presence of the Lord.