

OLPH Altar Server Notes

Before Mass

- Please try to arrive at least 15 minutes before Mass is scheduled to begin.
- Remember to sign in at the table near the reading area (this is the only way I have for keeping track of your attendance). When you are scheduled to serve, sign above your name. When you are substituting for someone, sign above their name. When you fill in at the last moment, sign in the blank space next to the word, "acolyte." Those serving for School Mass please check in with Mrs. C.C.
- Select a robe that goes to your ankles, if possible.
- Say a short prayer to put yourself in the right frame of mind for the Mass.
- Light altar candles 15 minutes or less before Mass. Light Processional candles 5 minutes or less before Mass.
- Try to remain quiet in the Sacristy and mentally prepare to serve the community.

Procession

- Form up outside the Sacristy by the Gift Table, keeping close together so that people can pass.
- If there is nothing in your hands, keep them folded in an attitude of prayer.
- When the Entrance Song starts, the Cross-bearer starts walking when the singing begins, and those behind the Cross-bearer step up to be even with the pole.
- When the person in front of you gets even with the line where the Baptismal Font was removed, you then begin walking, trying to keep that same distance during the Procession.
- When you get to the foot of the Sanctuary, if you have something in your hands, give a slight bow of the head, then turn and place your item where it belongs, then proceed to your place.
- If you have nothing in your hands, genuflect at the same time as the person next to you, if any, then proceed to your place (NOTE: If you cannot genuflect for medical reasons, you may bow instead).

Cross-bearer

- Remember to always face Jesus away from you so that He is leading us; keep your hands spread apart from each other for better control.
- After you process in, place the cross in its stand between the doors to the storeroom and the Altar Society room.
- When it is time for the Offertory, take the cross to the Gift Table by walking around the back of the congregation and escort the Gift-bearers to the foot of the Sanctuary, then place it back in its stand.
- At the end of Mass, when the priest or deacon finishes saying, "Go in peace," get the cross and go to the center aisle. Turn to face the altar. When the priest or deacon genuflects, you bow with a slight nod of the head, then turn and process out, reversing the path that you used when coming in.

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- Continue to the vestibule and wait for a blessing, then replace the cross in its stand near the icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

Book Holder

Keep your attention on the presider (either Father or the Deacon) for a signal to bring up the book. The book will be called for at various times when the presider is in his chair or near it.

Candle Holders

- After you process in, place the candles in their stand between the doors to the storeroom and the Altar Society room.

If the Book of the Gospels (the gold book) is used

- When the lector is finished reading, get the candles and stand in front of the altar, leaving enough space for the priest or deacon to stand between you. If you align yourself with the outer edges of the Altar, that should be fine.
- When the priest or deacon joins you, turn and walk around the base of the Sanctuary and climb up in front of the railing near where you have been sitting.
- The lead candle crosses to the far side of the Ambo; the other candle stops on the near side. Face the Ambo. Place the candles on the floor, but keep a firm grip on them.
- When the priest or deacon closes the Book of the Gospel, turn towards the congregation and go down the steps on the same sides of the Ambo that you have been standing. Turn to face the Ambo. If there is something blocking the normal route, then process around the Ambo and down the steps on the front side of the Sanctuary.
- When the Book is placed, give a slight bow, then turn and process back to place the candles in their stands.

If the Book of the Gospels (the gold book) is NOT used

- When the lector is finished reading, get the candles and stand on each side of the Ambo. Face the Ambo. Place the candles on the floor, but keep a firm grip on them.
- After the Gospel reading, if the Book is to be placed in the front of the Ambo, turn towards the congregation and go down the steps on the same sides of the Ambo that you have been standing. Turn to face the Ambo. When the Book is placed, give a slight bow, then turn and process back to place the candles in their stands.
- After the Gospel reading, if the Book is not moved, then turn and process back to place the candles in their stands.
- At the end of Mass, when the priest or deacon finishes saying, “Go in peace,” get the candles and follow the Cross-bearer to the center aisle. Turn to face the altar.

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When the priest or deacon genuflects or bows, you bow with a slight nod of the head, then turn and follow the Cross-bearer out.

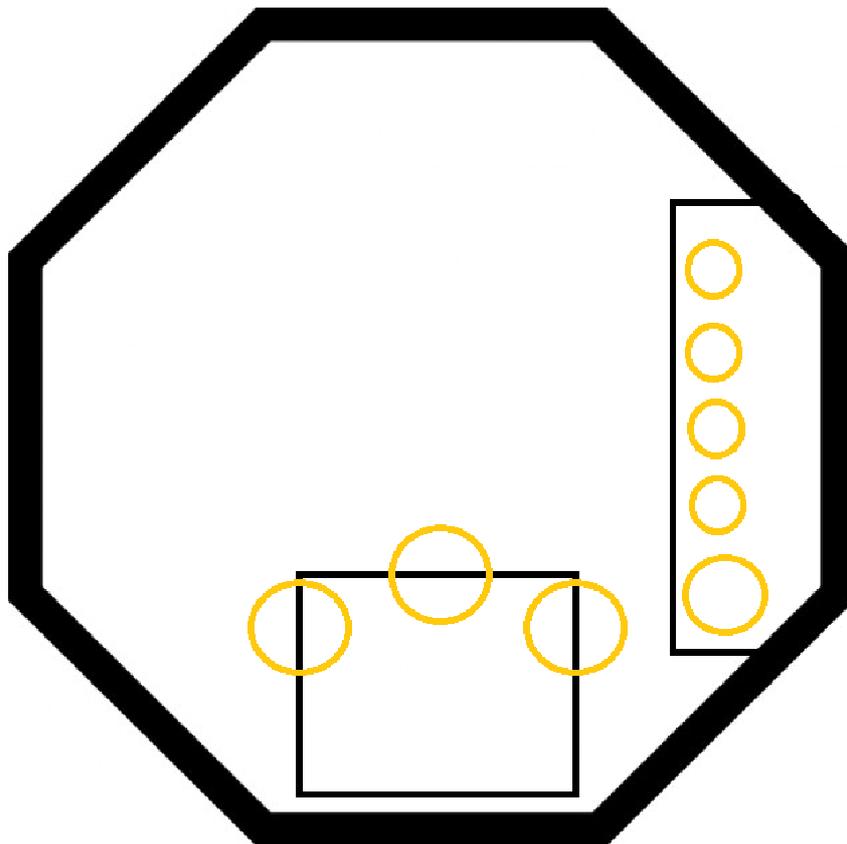
- Wait in the vestibule for a final blessing before gently blowing out the candles and returning the candles to their storage space in the Sacristy.

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Setting the Altar

At the Offertory, bring the ciboria and chalices to the altar and follow the directions of the priest or deacon. Generally, the vessels go as shown in the diagram below. The diagram shows the four small chalices and the priest's large chalice on the cloth to the right. Place a purificator next to each chalice. The three ciboria go on the other cloth as shown. If there is a pyx, it goes near any of the ciboria. The diagram shows the largest setting that we use. Some Masses may use fewer vessels. In that case, use the diagram as a guide and position the vessels in a similar manner.

Remember that the Priest's Chalice (the big one) always goes on the end nearest to the priest.



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Wine Vessel, Water, Bowl, and Towel

- When the priest moves to the foot of the Sanctuary to receive the Gifts, get the pitcher of water and stand in the Sanctuary near the Altar.
- Hold the pitcher with the handle facing away from you so that the priest or deacon may easily take it.

If there is only one Server:

- When the priest or deacon has finished pouring the wine, he will give it to you and take the water pitcher from you. Take wine pitcher and place it on the Credence Table near the Lectionary and candlesnuffer.
- Take the bowl and towel back up to the side of the altar and wait for the priest to come to you. The towel should be draped over the arm holding the bowl.
- Pour water over the priest's fingers until he indicates for you to stop (usually he will simply lift up his hands). He will take the towel, use it, and put it back on your arm.
- Bow slightly to each other, then return the items to the credence table and return to your seat.

If there are two Servers:

- One of you stands ready to take the wine vessel from the priest or deacon; the other holds the water pitcher with the handle facing away from you toward the priest or deacon.
- When the priest or deacon hands you the wine vessel, immediately bring it to the Credence Table. Place it near the Lectionary and candlesnuffer, and get the bowl and towel. Return and stand next to the Server who is holding the pitcher. If the Server will pour with the right hand, stand to the left; if the Server will pour with the left hand, stand to the right.
- The Server with the pitcher pours as above, and the priest uses the towel as above.
- After the priest returns the towel, bow slightly to each other, then return the items to the credence table and return to your seat.

Bells

At each elevation of the Body and Blood, ring the bells three times. Each ring should be loud and quick, clearly separated from the previous one. Let the third one ring out for a few seconds before you put down the bells.

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After Mass

- Put out the altar candles. Preferably, use the snuffer to put out the candles. You may instead blow gently on them, but try not to blow the molten wax onto the glass.
- Get the Book of the Gospel (if used) from the Ambo, and get the Lectionary from the Credence Table. Return them to the counter in the center of the Sacristy.
- Return your robe and cross to the correct storage space.
- Say a prayer of thanksgiving, then rejoin your family.