

THE MINISTRY OF ALTAR SERVERS

(Parents please read & review with child.)

Ministry means SERVICE. An altar server serves God and his people by assisting the priest at Mass. Why? There are items to carry, bells to ring, and other ways to be helpful.

PREPARATION

1. Check your schedule with a parent. Wear shoes and Church clothes and be in the sacristy 15 minutes before Mass starts. Choose a robe that does not drag on the floor. Altar Server #1 or #2, lights the candles.
2. Altar Server #2 make sure the necessary items are on the credence table near the sacristy door [Normally, an adult will put these on the table before you arrive). These items include the priest's chalice (1), cups (2), purificators (3), corporal, water (2: 1 for the priest to use on the altar and 1 for a server to use for pouring over the priest's hands), small glass bowl and small hand towel.
3. When you are ready, meet the priest and the other servers at the back of the church.

THE MASS - SERVING STEPS

PROCESSION

1. Join the priest for the entrance procession. Altar Server #1, your hands must be folded reverently. You will process single file in the following order:
 - Altar Server #2 (Cross Bearer), Altar Server #1
[if there are ever three servers, the Cross Bearer will go first, and the other two will follow, side-by-side.
 - The priest
2. Process in at a normal walking pace—not rushing, but not really slowly, either.
3. When you reach the Altar:

Altar Server #2 move slightly to the left and Altar Server #1 move slightly to your right to make room for the priest in the center

- Altar Server #2 bow before the altar
- Altar Server #1 genuflect on your right knee with the priest

Altar Server #2

- Place Cross in the holder along the wall next to the credence table.
- Stand in front of one of the chairs along the wall between the credence table and the holder for the Cross.

Altar Server #1

- Staying on your side, walk around and directly behind the Altar [no need to go up the steps to the level with the priest's chair] and stand in front of your chair next to Altar Server #2.
4. Once you have reached your chairs please pick up a hymnal [or the booklet for Mass] and join in the singing. Remember you are participating in the Mass, which means praying and singing along with the rest of the congregation.

INTRODUCTORY RITES & LITURGY OF THE WORD

Altar Server #1 As the last part of the Introductory Rites, the priest will say [or sometimes, sing], "Let us pray." When he does that, walk from your chair to stand at a lower level in front of the priest. If he does not pick up the Roman Missal and give it to you, pick it up from the table next to him and hold it steady while he reads the prayer. When the priest is finished, he might take the Missal from you; if not, place it back on the table next to him.

All Altar Servers

- Stand for the prayers, sit for the readings; stand for the Gospel. Follow along in the booklet for Mass near your chair and participate in singing the Responsorial Psalm. Sit and listen to the priest's homily; remember **many other people in the church** can see you!
- When sitting you may sit with your hands flat on the top of your legs or you may sit with your hands folded on your lap.
- When standing, have your hands folded reverently.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

After the Prayer of the Faithful, Father and the congregation will sit down. The greeters will start taking the collection and the choir will sing. While this is happening you have the following duties:

Both Altar Servers

- Prepare the Altar for Father.
- Take the Roman Missal and place it on the altar
- Go to the credence table near the door of the sacristy. Take the chalice, with the paten, host and corporal and purificator that are on top of it. Place it on the corner of the altar.
- Place the corporal in the middle of the Altar. Unfold it properly.
- Place the paten, with the host on it, in middle of the corporal.
- Place the chalice on the corporal, on the right side of the paten
- Place the purificator on top of the chalice.
- Take the two smaller metallic cups from the table and place them on the upper right corner of the corporal
- Take the two purificators from the table and lay them next to the small cups
- Place the cruet of water on the corner of the altar for Father to add to the wine

- The photo below shows how the altar should be at this point
- It should now be time for the presentation of the gifts.



Presentation of the gifts

- Both altar servers walk to the front of the altar, Server #1 end up to the left side of the priest, and Server #2, to the right side of the priest
- After you receive the gifts, depending on which of the gifts you have received place it in the following locations:
 - Ciboria: place it on the altar
 - Vessel of Wine: place it on the altar
 - Basket: place it on the floor on the side of the altar facing the choir's area
 - The altar should now look like the following photo



Altar Server #2

- Return to the table and bring the small glass bowl and small pitcher of water for Father to wash his hands

Altar Server #1

- Take the towel open it up then holding it by the corners, stand to the left of Altar Server #2 and hand it to Father to dry his hands on.

Altar Server #1 and #2

- When Father is done drying his hands return the small pitcher, bowl, and towel to the credence table
- Fold the towel back the way it was

When it is time to kneel for the Consecration:

This has changed: the bells will now be between the servers.

Altar Server #1

- Kneel closer to the candle stand

Altar Server #2

- Kneel to the left of the pillow with the bells on it, lined up near the corner of the altar so it will be easier for you to see what the priest is doing

Ringling of the bell –

Altar Server #2

- The first ringing of the bells takes place just before the Consecration (when the priest prays to the Holy Spirit to change the gifts of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.) Your cue to ring the bell is when the priest first brings his arms down and over to stretch his hands over the bread and wine. Shake the bell with a continuous shake for a short time. (Some priests might wait for the ringing to stop before continuing to pray; others might go right ahead as the stretch out their hands. Don't worry too much about this one way or the other.)
- The second ringing of the bells takes place when the priest lifts the Eucharist in the air to present the Body of Christ. This ring needs to be three separate shakes.
- The third ringing of the bells takes place when the priest lifts the chalice containing the Blood of Christ. This ring needs to be three separate shakes.

THE COMMUNION RITE

Stand for the Lord's Prayer. Servers shake hands for the exchange of the Sign of Peace. The priest may also exchange of the Sign of Peace with the servers.

Be ready to receive the Eucharist and the Cup, or stand back if not taking Cup. After you have received Communion, move to the step in front of your chairs, kneel down, and pray reverently while the rest of the congregation receives Communion. This is NOT a time to talk or be silly. Remember, you are on the altar.

After everyone has received Communion, Altar Server #1 and #2 move to the front of the altar and take the two cups containing the Blood of Christ from the ministers of the cups and set them on the Altar for the priest to clean.

After Communion, the priest will purify (clean) the vessels.

Altar server #1 and #2

- Take turns alternately taking things from the priest as he finishes with them and return them to the credence table. Items will either be handed to you by the priest or set on the corner of the Altar for you to get.
- Once the priest is done and the Altar has been cleared return to your chairs

When the priest sits for quiet meditation, all Altar Servers will also sit.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

When the priest stands and says, "Let us pray," Altar server #2 move up in front of the priest and hold the Missal steady for him while he reads the concluding prayers.

THE RECESSIONAL HYMN

Altar server #2

- Take the cross from the cross holder on the side of the Altar and wait next to the credence table for the priest to move down and reverence the altar.

- Altar server #1
 - Wait at your chair singing the recessional hymn wait for the priest to move down and reverence the altar.

After Father kisses the Altar both servers move down in front of the Altar with the priest.

- Altar Server #1 genuflect with the priest on your right knee
- Altar Server #2 bow
- Process out of church in the following order Altar Server #2 then Altar Server #1 followed by the priest.
- Process out at a walking pace there is no need to process out slowly.

AFTER MASS

1. Return to the sacristy.
2. Altar Servers #1 and #2 return to the altar to put out the candles.
3. All altar servers are to hang up their robes.

Thank you for serving! If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask Janell Greisen, Joe Louie or Fr. Chuck. We are all here to help you.