



GESU

CHURCH OF THE GESU

GUIDE FOR ALTAR SERVERS

Dress Code for Altar Servers

- Please dress modestly and respectfully for Mass
- In warmer months boys may wear shorts and girls may wear dresses, skirts, pants, or shorts that hit about mid thigh
- Please no flip flops or slippers - nice sandals, and **school appropriate sneakers** are allowed
- Please wear only dress shoes if serving weddings or funerals.

General Guidelines

- As a general courtesy, when you attend mass on Sunday, please look to see if the mass you are attending has all server positions have been filled. If not all positions are full and you are able to serve, we would love for you to consider serving that mass even if you had not signed up.
- Before mass: **light candles on altar**
- The signaling of the start of mass begins when the presider gives the “thumbs-up” to the sacristan who rings the bells. The opening hymn begins, the server carrying the crucifix steps through the doors, and as the hymn is sung, the procession begins.
- During mass: hold/fold hands reverently, respond to all prayers, DO NOT set anything on the altar please!

Regular Mass—Candles

Be sure to keep the candles upright as much as possible

Procession

- Follow right behind the crucifix bearer, both candle servers next to each other
- When reaching the altar, one server goes to the right side and other to the left.
- The cross bearer will be on the far right and Father and lectors will be in the middle.
 - (Left to right) candle, book server, lector, priest, candle, cross
- Bow before entering the sanctuary
 - Genuflect when tabernacle (if not holding anything)
- Fr. Laniauskas bows twice
 - Bow 1, Father enters final steps of the sanctuary and kisses altar, returns to steps, bow 2, everyone enters the sanctuary
 - Other presiders do not kiss the altar, so everyone bows once and then enters the sanctuary

- After the bow, return the candles to their places next to the ambo and go to your seat

Gospel

- Rise when Father rises and the music begins for the Alleluia
- Once the cantor begins singing, go to the ambo and lift your candles
 - Proceed, with candles, to the altar.
 - Stand on either side of Father while he picks up the Gospel Book
 - Face the other candle bearer.
 - Once the priest (Fr. Laniauskas and Fr. Serva) picks up the Gospel Book, lead the way to the ambo. Father will follow you.
 - ***IMPORTANT: If there is no Gospel Book on the altar, do not bring candles to the altar. Pick them up at the ambo and remain at the ambo
 - Take a step backwards and hold the candle upright and off the ground during the Gospel
 - After stating “Glory to you, O Lord,” face other candle bearer with the candle
- After the Gospel is proclaimed, return the candle to its place and return to your seat
- Ensure your hands are folded reverently when you are not carrying the candle

Offertory

- After the Prayers of the Faithful/Petitions/Intercessions, retrieve candles and proceed down the center aisle to the back of church
 - If gifts are not being processed in (at some funerals), candles will not be used during offertory
- In the back of the church, the gift bearers will be waiting.
 - Upon reaching the end of the aisle, turn around and lead the gift bearers to the front of the church
- Upon reaching the sanctuary, bow and split apart so candle bearers stand on the outsides of the other servers, facing the congregation.
- After Father has received the gifts and given them to the other servers, return the candles to their places and go to your seat

Eucharistic Prayer

- After the Sanctus/Holy Holy Holy, go the side of the altar and kneel
- Rise but stay in your place after the Great Amen (sung) and remain there during the Our Father and the Sign of Peace
- After the Sign of Peace, go to the bench and wait to receive Communion
- After receiving Communion, please return to your seat.

Recessional

- After Father says “The Mass is ended. Go in Peace” and the recessional hymn begins, retrieve your candles and line up in front of the altar in the same position as at the beginning of Mass
- Follow after the crucifix bearer, and process down the center aisle and through to the back of the Church

Regular Mass—Book

Processional

- Follow behind the candle bearers
- When reaching the front of the altar, stand to the right of the far left candle
- The cross bearer will be on the far right and Father and lectors will be in the middle.
 - (Left to right) candle, book server, lector, priest, candle, cross
- After the bow, go to your seat (next to the Roman Missal)
 - Genuflect before entering the sacristy when the tabernacle is behind the altar

Opening Prayer

- When the Gloria is nearing its end (when “Amen” begins to be sung), pick up the Roman Missal and bring it to Father, standing in front of him and slightly to his left
 - Note that during Advent and Lent, there is no Gloria, so at that time, after the Penitential Act (“Lord Have Mercy”)
- Father will say “Let us Pray”
- He will open the Roman Missal and pray the Opening Prayer/Collect
- After Father says “Amen,” close the Roman Missal, return it to its spot, and take your seat

Offertory

- After the Prayers of the Faithful/Intercessions/Petitions, pick up the Roman Missal and bring it to Father at the altar. Do NOT set the Roman Missal on the altar - hand it to Father.
- Then, follow Father to receive the gifts and stand on his right side
 - He will hand you either a cruet of wine, a cruet of water, or a ciborium of hosts. Walk with Father to the altar
 - Hand these to Father at the altar and then go to the bench
 - DO NOT set gifts on the altar, hand them to Father

Eucharistic Prayer

- After the Sanctus/Holy Holy Holy, go the side of the altar and kneel
 - Ensure your hands are folded reverently as you kneel
- During the consecration, Father will raise the Host and say, “*Take.. this is my body.. do this in remembrance of me...*” when Father has finished speaking and is still raising the host, ring the bells 3 times. **1 (pause for a second) 2 (pause) 3 (set bells down).**
- Then, Father will raise the Cup and say, “*Take... this is my blood... do this in remembrance of me...*” when Father has finished speaking and is still raising the host, ring the bells 3 times. **1 (pause for a second) 2 (pause) 3 (set bells down).**
- Rise but stay in your place after the Great Amen (sung) and remain there during the Our Father and the Sign of Peace.
- After the Sign of Peace, receive Communion at the bench by the sacristy. After receiving Communion, return to your seat.

Post-Communion

- After Father has finished purifying all vessels on the altar, the cross bearer will retrieve the tray and give it to the sacristan. When this server goes to retrieve the tray, this is your cue to bring the Roman Missal from the altar back to its place next to the presider’s chair

- After Father returns to his chair after Communion, he will stand up. This is when you pick up the Roman Missal
- Father will say “Let us Pray”
 - Bring him the Roman Missal like at the start of Mass, standing slightly to his left
 - After Father says “Amen,” close the Roman Missal and return to your seat
 - Note: Father may want to use a special, solemn blessing and in that case he will ask for your assistance after the announcements

Recessional

- After Father says “The Mass is ended. Go in peace,” and the recessional hymn begins, join the other servers in front of the altar in the same position as at the beginning of Mass.
- During the procession out of the church, again follow behind the candle bearers

Cross

Procession

- Unless there is incense, lead the procession to the altar. Start when the cantor begins singing the opening hymn
 - If there is incense, follow after the thurifer (server with incense, sure to give them plenty of room)
- When reaching the altar, stand on the far right of the line of servers
 - (Left to right) candle, book server, lector, priest, candle, cross
- Bow before entering the sanctuary. Be careful not to tip the cross forward when you bow.
 - Fr. Laniauskas bows twice
 - Bow 1, Father enters final steps of the sanctuary and kisses altar, returns to steps, bow 2, everyone enters the sanctuary
 - Other presiders do not kiss the altar, so everyone bows once and then enters the sanctuary
- After the bow, bring the crucifix back to the sacristy and place it in its stand
 - Then return to your seat

Offertory

- After the Prayers of the Faithful/Intercessions/Petitions, carry the tray from the Credence Table (near the sacristy) to the altar
 - Set it on the small table behind the altar
- Then follow Father to receive the gifts join him on left side
 - Father will give you either a cruet of wine, a cruet of water, or a ciborium of hosts
 - Hand these to Father at the altar
- Then go to the Credence Table and get the lavabo (pitcher, basin, and towel)
 - Unless there is incense, when Father raises the chalice in prayer, bring him the lavabo and pour water over his hands (into the basin). He will take the towel off your arm and dry his hands.
 - If there is incense, this step comes after the server incenses Father
 - Bow to father and return the lavabo either to the Credence Table or the sacristy

Eucharistic Prayer

- After the Sanctus/Holy Holy Holy, go the side of the altar and kneel

- After the Sign of Peace, receive communion at the bench near the sacristy.

Communion

- After receiving Communion, return to seats
- Once Father returns to the altar, he will purify the sacred vessels (chalice and ciboria). When he is done, he will put them and other altar linens on the tray
 - At this point, take the tray from the table next to the altar to the Credence Table or the sacristy and then return to your seat.
 - When you go to retrieve the tray, the other altar server will retrieve the Roman Missal

Recessional

- After Father says “The Mass is ended. Go in peace,” and the recessional hymn begins, join the other servers in front of the altar in the same position as at the beginning of Mass.
- Regardless of whether we have incense, lead the procession down the center aisle and through to the back of the church

Incense

Lead procession at the start of Mass

- Right before Mass, give boat to Father who will add incense to the thurible
- Begin procession once the cantor has begun singing the opening hymn
- If incensing for a funeral, begin procession after the funeral attendants and pallbearers are ready to process with the casket

Single bow at the altar

- After the bow, come to the back side of the altar and give Father the thurible
- When he is done incensing the altar, receive the thurible and return it to the sacristy

Gospel Procession

- During the second reading, return to the sacristy to get the thurible and boat
- Once the music begins for the Alleluia, go to Father’s chair and give him the boat
 - He will add incense to the thurible
- Proceed with Father to the ambo
 - Be sure to bow when passing the altar
 - Stand a step or two behind the candle bearers in the middle of the ambo and sway the thurible from side to side
 - Father will say “A reading from the Holy Gospel according to ____.” At this time, hand him the thurible, and he will incense the Book of the Gospels
 - When Father is done, receive the thurible and return to position. Again, sway it from side to side
- When the Gospel is over, return the thurible and boat to the sacristy
 - Be sure to bow when passing the middle of the altar

Incensing the Altar at the Offertory

- When Father goes down to receive the gifts, return to the sacristy to get the boat and thurible
- After Father raises the chalice in prayer, go up to him and give him the boat.
 - He will add the incense to the thurible
 - Then hand Father the thurible and he will incense the altar
 - At this point, return the boat to the sacristy and wait by the side of the altar
- Once Father has finished incensing the altar, he will give the thurible back to you
 - Look Father in the eye and bow
 - Then incense him using the pattern of 2-2-2
 - 2 times in front, two to the right, two to the left
 - Look Father in the eye again and bow again
 - If there is another priest in the sanctuary, go over to him and repeat this process
- Go to the middle of the sanctuary
 - If the congregation has not gotten to their feet, make a motion indicating to stand
 - Look the congregation in the eye and bow
 - Incense the congregation using the same 2-2-2 pattern
 - Look the congregation in the eye again and bow again
- Return the thurible and boat to the sacristy

Eucharistic Prayer

- After the Sanctus/Holy Holy Holy, join the other servers and kneel

Recessional

- Do NOT get the thurible and boat
- Line up with the lector and other servers at the altar
- Go down the center aisle alongside the Book Server

Notes for When Serving a Funeral in the Chapel

- Smaller tray used at side table. It never gets moved during the Mass
- Chapel Cross is used
- Before the presentation of the gifts, the priest prepares the altar. Server brings only chalice and cloths on top of it to Father. Do not put it on the altar.
- Receives gifts with Father. Wait to hand gifts to priests. Do not put on altar cloths.
- Wait until priest uses the water and wine which he will give back to you
- Return WINE to the tray, keep the water, and pick up lavabo glass dish for handwashing. Return to water and glass dish to tray.
 - If there is a second server this server can pick up and hold the dish.
- Server sits where the bells are and rings them at appointed times during the consecration.
- Sacristan will have incense ready to go. He will hand it to you. You will hand it to Father when he is ready.
- If only one server, cross will not be used to exit. INCENSE always first! Sway incense

Please contact Director of Faith Formation, Kylie Gillespie at kgillespie@churchofthegesu.org with any questions or concerns. Thank you for your faithfulness in this ministry!