

Altar Server Instructions

Thank you for serving at the altar for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass! In the words of Pope Saint John Paul II, “The altar server has a privileged place in the liturgical celebrations. Those who serve at Mass present themselves to a community. They experience from close at hand that Jesus Christ is present and active in every liturgy.” To aid you in your experience as an altar server, we have compiled these instructions.

Before Mass

- Arrive 15 minutes early so that you can be prepared to serve.
- Check the calendar in the sacristy to find out what color cincture you will need to wear.
- Find and put on the appropriate size alb.
- Decide who will carry the cross and who will carry the processional candles.
- Turn on the processional candles with the remote.
- Take the processional cross.
- Wait with Father in the back of the church, greeting people as they enter.
- Process in to the Church during the processional song in the following order:
 - Cross Bearer
 - Light Bearers
 - Deacon with the Book
 - Father
- Line up in front of the sanctuary and wait for Father. As Father genuflects, if you are holding an item, bow to the altar, if you are not holding anything, genuflect with Father.
- Go to your seat and put the candles and cross in their appropriate spots.

The Liturgy of the Word

- Always be paying attention to the mass.
- After the Gloria, be ready to bring the Roman Missal to Father for the prayer.
- After the prayer, bring the Roman Missal back to the credence table and be seated for the readings.
- During the Alleluia the Light Bearers should take the candles and stand in front of the stairs to the sanctuary before the Ambo.
- At the end of the Gospel return the candles to their appropriate spots.
- Be seated for the homily.
- Stand for the Creed and Intercessions.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

- When the ushers begin the offertory collection:
 - The Deacon or priest goes to the altar to set it up for Mass.
 - The Priest and two servers then collect the offertory gifts brought forward.
 - One server will be given the ciborium
 - One server will be given the Wine
 - One server may also be given the basket.
 - The basket is placed near the side of the altar.
 - Servers then go to the LEFT SIDE of the altar and the deacon or priest will take the ciborium and the wine from you.

- Hand Washing:
 - While two servers are receiving the offertory gifts, the third server gets the bowl and towel for the hand washing ritual.
 - The server with the bowl and towel then moves to the side of the altar and waits for the priest.
 - One of the other servers will receive the cruet of water.
 - Wash Father's hands by pouring the water over them.
 - Father will take the towel, dry his hands and give it back.
 - If Father bows to you, bow back.
 - Return the items to credence table and go to your seat.
 - When returning to your seat, use the second row of pews so you can kneel for the CONSECRATION.
- CONSECRATION - BELL RINGING
 - RING THE BELLS ONCE - When the priest holds his hands PALMS DOWN over the gifts at the altar and calls upon the Holy Spirit to come down.
 - RING THE BELLS THREE TIMES – When the priest holds up the host.
 - RING THE BELLS THREE TIMES – When the priest holds up the chalice.
- COMMUNION
 - At communion time all servers will proceed forward to receive from their place in the pew.
 - After receiving Holy Communion, the designated server must remove the Roman Missal from the Altar and take it back to your seat.

The Recessional

- Take the candles or the Cross like in the procession.
- Line up in the same fashion as the processional.
- Bow or Genuflect when Father does.
- Recess out in the following order:
 - Cross Bearer
 - Light Bearers
 - Deacon
 - Father

After Mass

- Return the Cross and Candles to their appropriate location in the sacristy.
- Make sure to hang up your Alb and cincture.
- Go and snuff the candles at the altar with the snuffer.

Thank you for Altar Serving! It is truly a blessing to have you enter into the mass in such an important fashion. May God bless you and your families abundantly!