Guidelines for Acolytes

Always remember you are serving the Lord and your congregation in an important way when you are the acolyte at mass.

Before Mass:

- Arrive at church 15-20 minutes before mass. Take a moment to pray.
- Pick out an Alb that fits you and check to see what color the cincture (rope belt) should be worn.
- Wear suitable shoes and check on your appearance.
- Make sure the hand-washing bowl (lavabo) and towel are at the window near the altar. Make sure the water cruet has water and is there as well.
- Make sure the collection baskets are in place both on the altar and the front row of the seats.
- Light the candles about 5 minutes before mass. Make sure the bells are in place. If there are two servers, decide who will serve Father with the Sacramentary.
- Pray with the ministry servers before mass and then get your candle for the entrance procession. You are directly behind the cross bearer in the procession. You do not bow at the altar when you are carrying the candle.

During Mass:

- While you are on the altar you are expected to participate with the prayers and the singing.
- Try to act in a smooth reverent way when you are on the altar. Be mindful of how you sit and stand so you do not distract the congregation.
- When you kneel be erect and do not sit on your heels. Pay attention to what is going on at the altar. Keep your attention focused on the actions of the priest and deacon so you know what to do.
- At the start of the collection, place the ciborium and the chalice on the altar. Next, go forward to the front of the altar with the celebrant to accept the gifts that are being brought up. Remove the tops of the wine and water cruets. Prepare to offer the two cruets to the priest. The wine should be in your right hand with the handle facing the priest/deacon. While the priest has the wine cruet, switch the water cruet to your right hand with the handle facing the altar. After the priest has finished, accept the cruets from the celebrant. Place the wine cruet at the window. Pick up the wash bowl with your left hand, with the towel draped over your wrist. Hold the

water cruet in your right hand so you can wash the celebrant's hands. Return everything to the window area and kneel near the priest with your hands folded.

- As the priest extends his hands over the chalice to begin the consecration, ring the bell once. As the priest raises the Eucharist you again ring the bells. When he raises the chalice, you also ring the bells.
- After you receive communion, kneel at the altar with your hands folded.
- When the priest returns from distributing the host he will want to rinse the chalice and ciborium. Uncap the cruet and put some water in the chalice and ciborium.
- When the priest is finished and has reassembled the chalice, he will hand it to you to place on the shelf.

After mass:

- Be sure the candles are out.
- Bring the collection baskets to the sacristy.
- Empty the water from the bowl. After the 10:30 mass, all of the materials are returned to the sacristy. The bowl, towel and water cruet can remain on the windowsill after the 4:00 and 8:30 masses. After the 10:30 mass put the bowl, cruet and pitcher away in the cabinet above the sink.
- Take off your Alb and hang it back in its proper place.