

Guidelines for the Ministry of Altar Server

*St Martin de Porres Catholic Church
Revised October 5, 2019*

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Welcome!

Thank you for your willingness to serve!

- ♦ Importance of ministry
- ♦ Service to community of faith
- ♦ Sign of calling us to prayer and worship, reverence and sacred
- ♦ Leaders, especially order, experience servers



*****Before Mass:**

- ♦ **Appropriate dress:** Clothes for Mass: Neat and Clean
- ♦ **Shoes:** cleaned and shined, NO TENNIS SHOES or FLIP FLOPS
- ♦ God may not care what we wear to Church, but we should out of respect, honor and worship. We dress well for other occasions, sometimes that have nothing to do with God.

*****Arrive no later than 15 minutes before Mass, Sign In!**

- ♦ Use the bathroom **BEFORE** Mass if needed.
- ♦ Find alb that fits, ankle length, with cincture, not too long, tied properly.

Commitment to serving at weekend Masses

- ♦ All altar servers will be on a schedule.
- ♦ If you cannot serve at the Mass you are scheduled, **You** are responsible for putting in a sub-request.
- ♦ Three “no-shows” without contacting someone or the office, server will be off the schedule.

Guidelines for Ordinary Sunday Mass

1. **Sign in** on Ministries Sheet in Work Sacristy [No more than (4) Altar Servers Per Mass and a minimum of (3) Altar Servers]
2. Wash hands prior to dressing.
3. Vest in **Alb** (Robe) and **Cincture** (White Rope). Alb needs to be at least ankle length. Cincture tied in slip knot.
4. Light Candle near **Ambo** prior to the beginning of Mass. **Do Not** pull back candle wick. Blow out.
5. Wait in Work Sacristy until 5 minutes prior to the beginning of Mass. At 5 minutes until Mass, Cross Bearer gets Cross and Candle Bearers get Candles near Altar. Meet Priest and Readers near the hallway of the Priest Sacristy in order to pray together before Mass begins.
6. After Prayer, candles are lit and everyone lines up in Narthex in the following order: Cross Bearer – Candle Bearers – Book Bearer – Liturgical Minister – Priest] away from the Main Church doors.
7. When Music begins, the Priest will let the Altar Servers know when to begin processing from the Narthex in the same order as listed above. Once altar server is on other side of Baptism font, next one goes.

8. Cross Bearer goes directly to the Cross stand without bowing.
9. Candle Bearers bow head ONLY at first step, proceed to place candles all the way down in candle stands near Altar and then bow facing candles and each other, then go to seats.
10. Book Bearer **genuflects** before first step and proceeds to bench. Book Bearer should sit on bench closest to Priest side.
11. After **Opening Song** and **Gloria ("Let Us Pray")** Book Bearer holds **Roman Missal** for Priest for Collect (Opening Prayer). [Hold the Book with ribbons facing Priest and stand at designated spot on Altar]
12. All sit quietly and without distraction after Collect for Liturgy of the Word.
13. For Prayers of the Faithful, Book Bearer comes forward at the beginning of the Creed.
14. After Prayers of the Faithful, Altar Servers get the Altar ready for the **Presentation of the Gifts**.
15. Book Bearer places **Roman Missal** on Altar left of the **Corporal** at an angle. Book Bearer will then stand by the **Credence table**.
16. Cross Bearer and Candle Bearers will bow and go to the **Credence table**.
17. One Altar Server will bring the **Chalice** to the Altar and place it to the right of center of the **Corporal**.
18. The other Altar Servers will bring the **Cups** (2 at a time) and line the **Cups** up by two (Left to Right) on the **Corporal** with the **Purificators** on the inside. Also, place the **Water Cruet** to the right of the cups.
19. At this point, all Altar Servers will stand near the **Credence table** and prepare to join the Priest to receive the **Gifts**.
20. When the Priest stands to receive the Gifts, the Altar Servers will follow and stand on the top step to receive the Gifts from the Priest.
21. One Altar Server will receive Bread and place Bread on Altar in front of **Chalice**.
22. One Altar Server will receive Wine and place Wine on Altar to the left of the **Chalice**. Remove the stopper from the Wine Decanter and place on **Credence table**.
23. One Altar Server will receive the **Offerings Basket** and place in front of the Altar.
24. Two Altar Servers, one with the **Lavabo Bowl & Pitcher** and one with the Towel (**Unfolded**) should be ready and standing near the Ambo on top step. Walk toward the Altar as soon as the Priest bows for prayer.
25. After Priest washes hands, bow head to acknowledge thank you and return items to **Credence Table**. The empty wine decanter should be placed on the Credence Table close to the tray.
26. Altar Servers will then line up on steps near Ambo and remain in place for the **Liturgy of the Eucharist**. Cushions should be passed down to kneel on.
27. After the "**Sign of Peace**" and during the "**Lamb of God**" two Altar Servers will bring **Communion Plates** to the Altar. (No more than 2 at a time) (**Do not stack**)
28. Return cushions to original location, remain standing and allow **Extraordinary Ministers** access to approach the Altar.
29. Receive Communion and follow path behind Church seating. Allow everyone in the left-hand section of the Church to receive Communion before returning to seats. The Book Bearer will remove the **Roman Missal** from the Altar and return it to the bench.
30. After Communion, Book Bearer will bring the **Roman Missal** (Holding it appropriately) when the Priest says "**Let Us Pray**"
31. The Book Bearer will then return to seat and sit during announcements and closing.
32. The Cross Bearer will get the Cross at the end of Mass and wait in front of the doorway.
33. When closing music begins and the priest goes to reverence the altar, the Cross Bearer will walk to the main aisle, followed by the Candle Bearers without holding candles and then the Book Bearer; all turn facing altar.
34. When the Priest genuflects in front of the Altar, **all** of the Altar Servers except for the Cross Bearer will also **genuflect**.
35. All turn to recess out in procession.

At the end of Mass:

The Cross Bearer will return the Cross to the stand.

One of the Altar Servers will carefully and slowly snuff out the Candles on the Altar.

ALL Altar Servers will hang the **Albs** and **Cinctures** back in the closet. DO NOT put on floor of closet!

Thank You for your ministry as Altar Server. You are a leader of prayer and service to God's People.

LEARN NAMES OF VESSELS, FURNITURE, AND BOOKS USED AT MASS

- Chalice, Communion cups, Ciborium (ie.), Communion plates
- Corporal, purificator, hand towel
- Paschal Candle, Sanctuary lamp
- Baptismal font
- ♦ Roman Missal and Lectionary
- Cruets, lavabo bowl
- Thurible, incense boat
- Funeral pall

Vocabulary Words

Alb - the white vestment common to all ministers to reflect the baptismal garment and common baptismal call from which we all serve.

Altar-it is the table of the Lord. It is a fixed, consecrated table, freestanding to allow the ministers to walk around it easily and Mass to be celebrated facing the people. It is placed as the focal point and also known as the Table of Sacrifice.

Altar Bread - unleavened bread made from wheat and is one of the two elements absolutely necessary for the consecration to become Eucharist.

Altar Wine - a special wine especially made for sacramental use only and is one of the two elements absolutely necessary for the consecration to become Eucharist.

Altar Candles - are used at every liturgical service as a sign of reverence and festiveness, symbolizing the "light of Christ". There are to be lit candlesticks at each Mass, at least two, but even four, or six or seven if the bishop of the diocese celebrates Mass.

Altar Cloth - fine fabrics used to drape the Altar out of reverence for the celebration of the Eucharist. The size, shape and decorations of the altar cloth should be in keeping with the design of the altar.

Ambo - is the podium where the Word of God is proclaimed; aka: the Table of the Word.

Aspergillum - the bucket and/or sprinkler used to hold holy water for the sprinkling rite.

Book Stand - the stand located in front of the Ambo on which the lector places the Lectionary after the second reading

Bread paten - the large plate that unconsecrated communion bread is placed on before the celebration of the Eucharist. It is placed on the gift table before the beginning of Mass and offered during the Presentation of the Gifts (POG)

Chalice - The largest of the sacred vessel cups used by the priest for the consecration and distribution of the precious blood. Other smaller vessels are called communion cups.

Charcoals - self lighting briquettes used inside the thurible or other appropriate vessel for the burning of Incense.

Ciborium - a vessel used to reserve the Blessed Sacrament following Mass and is stored in the tabernacle.

Cincture - a rope like belt that can be used to tie around waist of the priest or altar server.

Corporal - a cloth of fine fabric that is spread on top of the altar cloth to place the vessels of bread and wine for the consecration of Eucharist.

Credence table - A small table for the purpose of holding the cruets, purificators and communion vessels required for the celebration of Eucharist.

Communion Plate - used by the Eucharistic ministers to serve the consecrated host.

Cruet – small vessel that holds water or wine used in the consecration of Eucharist

Easter Candle - the largest pillar candle in the Church lit for the first time from the new fire at the Easter vigil, remains lit for the 50 days of Easter. Also present at baptisms, funerals, confirmation, weddings and is also called the “Paschal Candle”, “Christ Candle”

Flagon - vessel with a handle, spout and lid used to store the Altar Wine for the Eucharistic celebration. It is placed on the gift table before Mass and offered during the Presentation of the Gifts (POG)

Gift table - a small table placed near the main doors of the church for the purpose of holding the gifts of bread and wine required for the celebration of the Eucharist offered during the Presentation of the Gift (POG)

Holy water font - usually located at each doorway and holds holy water for the sign of cross reminding ourselves of baptism and “new life” as Christians.

Incense - granules placed on lit charcoal that produce fragrance when burned. (see Psalm 141)

Incense boat - a vessel used to hold the incense granules for the thurible.

Lavabo bowl/pitcher - vessels used by the celebrant to wash his hands after the Offertory.

Monstrance - vessel used in Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction

Oil Ambry - located near the altar in the sanctuary space to store the Chrism oil, the Oil of Catechumen, and the Oil of the Sick.

Chrism - special perfumed oil consecrated by the bishop which is used at baptism, confirmation, ordination and dedication of churches and altars.

Oil of Catechumens - special oil blessed by the bishop used in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults for those preparing for Baptism.

Oil of the Sick - special oil blessed by the bishop used to anoint the sick.

Presider’s chair - a moveable piece of furniture, strong and simple in structure, located in the sanctuary, facing the congregation which the presider occupies at appropriate times within the liturgy.

Processional cross - the basic Christian symbol used to lead the community into their gathering place for worship.

Purificator – special cloth used by the priest or lay minister to wipe the communion cup during distribution of the Eucharist, and then “purified” before washing.

Pyx - a container that holds Eucharistic hosts that is being brought to the sick and/or shut-ins.

Sacrarium - an unusual sink in the sacristy with a drain pipe, having no joints or elbows that leads directly into the earth (Life to Life). This allows the reverent disposal of baptismal water, water used in ritual purifications, holy oils from a previous year, or ashes made from burning liturgical items for reverent disposal.

Sacristan - person in charge of the sacristy and cleaning of the Altar linens.

Sacristy - a room in the church for the storing of vessels, usually located near the Altar.

Tabernacle – Large vessel used for reposing the Blessed Sacrament, near a sanctuary candle.

Thurible - portable vessel on a chain that holds the charcoal and incense.

Towel - a terry cloth used by the priest to dry his hands at the Preparation Rite.

Vesting room - located in the front of the church where priest and deacon vestments are stored along with Altar Servers robes for the celebration of the liturgy.

Vestments – generally refers to the outer robe-like garment worn over the alb by the priest.