



Guidelines for Altar Servers

PROPER CLOTHING

Altar servers are to come to church wearing their Sunday best.
After all, they are coming to give their best in their service at Holy Mass.

Appropriate attire:

Young men are to wear:

- Plain white dress shirt
- Long pants
- Black or brown dress shoes with matching dark socks

Young women are to wear:

- Plain white blouse
- Long skirt (or pants)
- Black or brown flats with nylons or matching dark socks

No gum or cell phone use before or during Mass.

BEFORE MASS

- 1) Please arrive at least 20 minutes before Mass and sign in on the attendance log.
You may arrive as early as you want, but 30 minutes before Mass is ideal.
 - a) If you are substituting for someone, please record this on the attendance sheet.
 - b) If a server is missing and it is 10 minutes before Mass, a substitute should be sought.
 - c) If you are late and someone has already dressed to take your place, the vested person should serve
 - d) An alb fits if it either touches or is within a few inches from the tops of your shoes. A wooden cross is placed around the neck.



2) After vesting, place the following on the credence table:

- a) Chalice
- b) Water and wine cruet
- c) Tray of patens with bread
- d) Lavabo bowl and finger towel
- e) Three purificators and one corporeal
- f) The aspergillum and aspersorium during the Easter Season (including Pentecost Sunday)

3) Light the altar candles, paschal candle (during the Easter Season), Advent wreath (one for each week; the third week candle is pink)

4) Before and after Mass, whenever anyone crosses the center of the Sanctuary, he or she should reverence the tabernacle by bowing or genuflecting.

PROCESSION

Thurifer and Boat Bearer

Crucifer (Processional Cross)

Two servers with candles next to each other

Reader

Deacon with the Book of the Gospel

Priest

During the procession, please walk slowly while keeping the about two pews between yourself and the person in front of you. When you arrive at the steps bow your head if you are carrying something. If you do not have anything in your hands walk with your hands folded. After bowing, proceed directly to your seats.

[In the back of the church, the priest posts the incense for the procession and incensation of the altar. The thurifer holds the thurible with their hand and holds the boat in their left hand if there is no boat bearer. When the thurifer (and boat bearer) arrive at the steps, they bow. After bowing and advancing straight up the steps, the thurifer moves to the left of the altar and stands in front of the pulpit waiting for the priest and deacon.]



When the deacon arrives at the foot of the altar, he does not make any reverence. Instead, he goes directly up the steps, places the Book of the Gospels on the altar and steps to the right.

When the priest arrives at the foot of the altar, he may bow or genuflect. Following he walks up the steps in and reverences the altar along with the deacon.

INCENSATION OF THE ALTAR

After the deacon and priest reverence the altar, the deacon takes the thurible and hands it to the priest who incenses the altar. No incense is posted. If no deacon is present, the priest receives the thurible from the thurifer. The deacon leads the priest around the altar with hands folded.

After the priest has concluded, the thurible is handed to the deacon who hands it to the thurifer. The thurifer proceeds to place the thurible on the stand and goes to his/her seat.]

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The priest begins the Mass by making the Sign of the Cross; all make the Sign of the Cross in unison with him.

During Advent and Lent the priest prays the Confiteor, strike your chest one time at the words, “through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault.” Following the absolution there is a Kyrie. The Gloria is not said or sung during Advent and Lent. Towards the end of the Kyrie or Gloria (depending upon the season), the book bearer approaches the priest with the Roman missal. Then, the priest says, “Let us pray.” The server stands in front of the priest and holds the missal high enough so that it can be read. Following the amen all are seated. At the end of the second reading on Christmas and various other special celebrations, incense is prepared. [See page 6]

On Easter Sunday, the Creed is not recited. There is the Renewal of Baptismal Promises followed by the sprinkling rite. The book bearer holds the Roman missal open to page 382 for the priest. Another altar server stands next the priest with the aspergillum and aspersorium and walks through the church with the priest as he sprinkles the people with holy water following the baptismal promises.

During the Easter Season from the Second Sunday of Easter through Pentecost the Penitential Act is replaced with the Rite of the blessing and sprinkling of water. The book bearer holds the Roman missal open to page 1453 for the priest. Another altar server



stands next the priest with the aspergillum and aspersorium and walks through the church with the priest as he sprinkles the people with holy water following the Eastertime

prayer. The priest returns to the presidential chair, the altar server returns to their place. The book bearer holds the Roman missal open to page 1456 for the priest to pronounce the absolution. The Gloria is then, sung. Following the Gloria, the priest says, "Let us pray." The server stands in front of the priest and holds the missal high enough so that it can be read.

PREPARING THE INCENSE FOR THE GOSPEL PROCESSION

- 1) The thurifer holding the thurible in their right hand and the boat in his left approach the priest. The thurifer hands the boat to the priest. The thurifer carefully opens the thurible while lifting the thurible with the chain. The priest posts the incense. The priest hands the boat back to the server. The server closes the thurible and takes one-step back.
- 2) While the above action is happening the two candle bearers stand by the candles
- 3) The deacon approaches the priest for a blessing. The deacon proceeds to the altar raises the Book of the Gospel.
- 4) The thurifer leads the deacon to the pulpit followed by the candles. The candle bearers stand on either side of the pulpit. The deacon enters the pulpit and the thurifer stands behind the deacon. After the deacon announces the Gospel, he takes the thurible and incenses the book of the gospel. He, then hands the thurible back to the thurifer who will swing the thurible during the Gospel proclamation. After the Gospel is proclaimed the servers put the candles, back in their stand, the thurible is returned to its place and all sit for the homily.
- 5) After the homily, the thurifer lights another coal.

The Creed is prayed. All bow at the words "and became man." At the end of the Creed, the book bearer approaches the priest with the general intercessions. They hold the binder containing intercessions like the Roman missal.



LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

After the petitions, the servers prepare the altar. The Roman missal is placed to the left. The corporeal is opened in the center of the altar. The cups, chalices, and ciboria are placed on the altar.

While the collection is being taken the cross bearer approaches the offertory table and waits for the priest to come to the foot of the altar.

After receiving the gifts, the priest moves to the altar. The servers present the water and wine.

[If there is incense the thurifer and boat bearer approach the altar. If there is a deacon, he hands the boat to the priest. If there is a deacon, he hands the boat to the deacon. The thurifer lifts the thurible for the priest to post incense. The boat is handed to the thurifer. The deacon takes the thurible from the server and hands it to the priest. The deacon leads the priest around the altar with hands folded. After the priest has concluded, the thurible is handed to the deacon who incenses the main celebrant, then the concelebrants(s) and then the congregation. Then, deacon hands the thurible to the thurifer. The thurifer proceeds to place the thurible on the stand and goes to his/her seat.

Then the servers approach the priest with the lavabo and finger towel.

There is no incensation during the consecration.

After the Preface, Consecration, Our Father, and Sign of Peace, the priest will distribute Holy Communion first to the deacon(s) and then hand the deacon a chalice to offer to the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion [EMs] and servers.

During the distribution of communion, the altar servers remove the Roman missal, chalice, and corporeal from the altar.

After communion, all stand and face the tabernacle. All bow when the tabernacle doors are closed.

When priest says, "Let us pray," the server stands in front of the priest and holds the missal high enough so that it can be read.

Then the reader will make the parish announcements.



Immediately after the announcements, the priest blesses the people. When you hear the words, “Thanks be to God,” all servers retrieve whatever they carried into the church and line up facing the altar. After bowing, we process out of church in the following order:

[Thurifer with Boat Bearer]

Crucifer (Processional Cross)

Server with candle Server with candle

Reader

Deacon with the Book of the Gospel

Priest

[At daily Mass: In the sacristy facing the crucifix, which is above the vesting case, the priest will say, “Prosit,” which means “May the Mass be for your benefit.” All bow.

CLEAN – UP

Place on the vesting case various vessels, cruets, chalice, and extinguish all candles, including the candles on the Advent wreath and the Pascal Candle. Refill the cruets and place them back in the refrigerator. Place all laundry in the bags in the closet.

De-vest and hang up your albs, cinctures, and crosses on a hanger.

Thank you for serving. May God bless you.