

Roles and Responsibilities of the Altar Server

St. Joseph Parish

Dear Altar Servers,

You have chosen a privileged ministry here at Saint Joseph Parish. Psalm 23 says that the Lord has “prepared a table” for us. Jesus did this by offering his own Body and Blood to us at the Last Supper. You, though, through your ministry as altar server, are now part of preparing the table of the Eucharist for the people of God. When you are faithful to your schedules, arrive on time, and assist reverently, you will aid in creating a prayerful celebration at Mass, as well as, grow yourself in love, becoming more and more like Jesus.

Mrs.P. Nemetz, Mrs. C. Schabel & Fr. Kevin Klonowski



Preparations

Before Arriving:

- Serving at the Altar is an amazing responsibility. Consider going to the Sacrament of Reconciliation sometime during the week before you serve at the altar, so that your heart might be in the right place.
- Pray: Lord’s Prayer, Hail Mary, Glory Be, or an Act of Contrition
- Dress Appropriately: there are many reasons why our attire, in general, has become more informal at Mass, but those serving in any capacity should be dressed in a manner worthy of the role they fulfill. Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors, Cantors, Ushers, and Altar Servers should be appropriately dressed. The general rule of thumb is that server’s attire should be appropriate for the season and the Eucharistic Celebration.

Boys:

- * Collared shirt and dress pants (No Shorts)
- * Dress socks and shoes (No flip flops)
- * Hair groomed

Girls:

- * Dress pants with appropriate top, dress
- * Dress shoes (No Flip Flops)
- * Hair styled

Before Mass:

- Arrive 15 minutes before Mass
- Sign into the Server's Binder
- Put on correctly sized Alb (ankle length)
- Pray the Altar Server's Prayer
- Check Roman Missal and announcement books for readiness
 - *Ask the priest, deacon or sacristan
- Place announcement book on the right arm side of the priest chair
- Place the Roman Missal on the lower shelf of the Credence Table or chair
- Place the Host bowl and the wine cruet on the Offertory Table in the rear of the church

Processional Entrance

Entrance Procession: Meet in the Gathering Area, center aisle

- Procession Order
 - * Incense
 - * Cross Bearer
 - * Candle Bearers
 - * Lector
 - * Clergy (deacon/priest)
 - When the choir begins singing, the cross bearer commences the procession.
 - The procession moves down the center aisle:
 - Cross Bearer
 - * Upon reaching the first step of the Sanctuary, NOT BOWING, go immediately to the Baptismal font to return the cross to it's holder.
 - * Move immediately to your chair on the opposite side of the Sanctuary.
 - Candle Bearers
 - * NOT BOWING, go to the left, up the step, into the Sanctuary and place the candles on the second credence table.
 - * Move immediately to your chairs near the presider's chair.
- All remain standing.



If Incense is Used

Procession before Mass: Incense-Boat

- Approximately 10 minutes before Mass, light the charcoal and place it into the thurible.
- Before the procession begins, the priest will place incense over the charcoal.
- Server holding the thurible, slowly swinging the thurible from his/her side leads the procession.
- Upon reaching the Sanctuary, server proceeds behind the altar, stands facing the Altar.
- Priest/Deacon venerates the Altar then priest takes the thurible from the server and incenses the Altar.
- Server remains in position behind Altar.
- Priest, upon completion returns the thurible to the server.
- Server returns the thurible to the stand in the Sacristy.

Eucharistic Celebration (Mass)

Introductory Rites

- Servers remain standing through the opening prayer.
- Immediately after the Gloria, the cross bearer retrieves the Roman Missal.
- After the priest says, “Let us pray”, the book is brought to him at the presider’s chair.
- When the priest finishes the opening prayer, the cross bearer returns the Roman Missal to the Credence Table and all altar servers are seated.

Liturgy of the Word

- During the 1st Reading, Responsorial Psalm, and 2nd Reading, all servers remain seated
- Gospel
- At the conclusion of the Second Reading, the Candle Bearers secure their procession candles.
- Candle bearers moving behind the altar, position themselves at the ends of the altar and wait.
- The priest/deacon raising the Gospel Book, the candle bearers step up onto the platform, one on each side, even with the priest or deacon.
- Candle bearers turn when the priest/deacon turns toward the ambo.
- One candle bearer leads priest/deacon to the ambo. Second candle bearer follows.
- Candle bearers face each other on either side of the ambo and remain there until the Gospel is finished being proclaimed.
- Upon the Gospel’s completion, candle bearers, together, turn, step down from the platform and return their candles to the second credence table.
- Candle bearers return to their chairs and are seated.

If Incense is Used

Proclamation of the Gospel”

- Sacristan usually lights and prepares the charcoal in the thurible.
- Upon completion of the Psalm the server proceeds to the stand in the Sacristy to retrieve the thurible and incense boat.
- The server proceeds to the priest at the presiders chair and hands the priest/deacon the incense boat.
- Server raises the top of the thurible so the priest can place incense onto the charcoal.
- Server takes the thurible, stands behind the altar, facing the altar.
- The priest/deacon process to the ambo to proclaim the Gospel. The server follows and stands behind the the priest/deacon at the ambo.
- After proclaiming the words, “A reading from the Gospel of...” the priest/deacon take the thurible from the server, incenses the Gospel book and return the thurible to the server.
- Server positions themselves behind the Proclaimer, off the platform during the Gospel Reading.
- At the conclusion of the gospel, the thurible and boat are returned to the stand.

Creed and Prayer of the Faithful

- Servers Stand

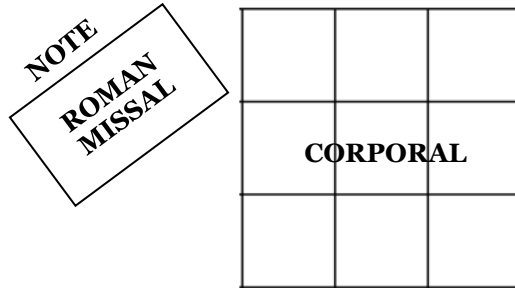


The Liturgy of the Eucharist

Preparation of the Gifts

- After the prayers of the faithful, the congregation and priest sit down.
- Servers prepare the altar if no deacon is present. (If a deacon is present he will prepare the altar with servers assisting).
 - *Altar Preparations:
 - ◇ Corporal opened, laid in the center of the altar pulled completely to the front.
 - ***When opening the corporal it should be laid flat on the altar and unfolded. It should never be shaken out to lay it flat. The corporal is folded the way it is so that when folded back it might protect any crumbs of the Eucharist that fall into it.***

- ◇ The Roman Missal is placed on the ...
...Left side of but not on the corporal



- ◇ Place the principal chalice along with purificator to the right side of the corporal (Not on top)
- ◇ Secure the tray with filled chalices and purificators from the credence table and place it on the right end of the altar where there will be a corporal already opened.
- ◇ Cross bearer returns to his/her chair, sits, and waits for the priest to receive the gifts.
- ◇ Candle bearers accompany the priest/deacon to receive the gifts (bread-wine).
- ◇ Cross bearer secures the water cruet and waits for the priest/deacon and servers to return to the altar.
- ◇ Server having the ciborium of bread either hands it to the deacon or priest. (never directly on the in the altar) Server then returns to the credence table.
- ◇ Server having the water cruet moves to the Altar and meets the server with the wine cruet.
- ◇ Servers, together with cruets' handles facing the priest/deacon, offer the wine cruet followed by the water cruet to the priest/deacon.
- ◇ Upon completion of offering the cruets, servers return to the credence table together and set the cruets on the table.
- ◇ Servers securing the finger washing bowl, water pitcher and finger towel return to the altar and, together, step up to the priest to wash his hands.
- ◇ Upon completion, they, together, return bowl, pitcher and towel to the credence table.
- ◇ Servers return to their chairs and remain standing.

If Incense is Used

Offertory:

- Sacristan will prepare the charcoal and place it into the thurible.
- When the priest goes down to retrieve the gifts the server proceeds to the Sacristy to procure the thurible and boat and proceeds with the thurible and the boat to stand behind the altar.
- At the appropriate time the priest turns to the server who presents the boat to the priest/deacon.
- Server lifts the lid so that the priest may place the incense onto the charcoal.
- Server presents the thurible to the priest.
- Server takes the boat the remains standing behind the altar.
- Upon the conclusion of incensing the Altar, the priest will return the thurible to the deacon or to the server.
- In the absence of a deacon, the server will incense the priest at the Altar and then go and incense the congregation.
- Server returns thurible to the Sacristy upon conclusion of the blessing.

Eucharistic Prayer: (cushion kneelers)

- After the singing of the “Holy, Holy, Holy”, the servers kneel on cushion kneelers.
- When Father elevates the Host and the Chalice after consecration, the server rings the altar bells with three quick pulses.
- Servers stand immediately after the singing of the “Great Amen”.

Sign of Peace:

- Before anything else is done, the servers move to the altar to offer a sign of peace to the priest/ deacon.
- Cross bearer goes to the credence table, secures the tray of ciboria (bowls) and places the tray on the left side of the altar where a corporal will already be placed.
- Cross bearer remains at the altar to receive the emptied large bowl from the priest/deacon and returns it to the Credence table.
- Server joins the other servers



behind the altar at the far left. (EM line-up)

Communion:

- Servers receive Communion with Extraordinary Eucharistic Ministers.
- After the EMHC leave to distribute the Eucharist the servers clear the altar.
 - ◊ Remove the Roman Missal and place on the credence table.
 - ◊ DO NOT remove the corporal, ciboria tray or chalice tray.
 - ◊ Place the water cruet on the Credence Table by the sacristy so that a priest/deacon may purify the vessels.
 - ◊ Servers return to their chairs and remain standing until Communion is complete.
 - ◊ Servers turn to face the Tabernacle while the priest/deacon returns the Eucharist to the Tabernacle.
 - ◊ Servers sit when priest/deacon sit.

Prayer after Communion:

- Servers rise as priest/deacon stands
- Server secures the Roman Missal and goes to the priest when he says, “let us pray”.

Announcements:

- Servers remain standing at their chairs.

Final Blessing/Recessional

- After the final blessing, cross bearer moves behind the Altar, secure the Cross
- Cross bearer, having the Cross, faces the altar, waits.
- Candle bearers secure their candles and return to their chairs.

- When the priest/deacon move to reverence the altar the Cross bearer and candle bearers move to the main aisle facing the altar.
- Priest/deacon kiss the altar then comes down to the main aisle.
- Servers bow to the altar when the priest does and then bows to the Tabernacle as the priest does.
- Upon the priest/deacon turning, servers slowly turn and lead the priest/deacon to the Gathering Area of the church.

After Mass:

- Servers are to wear albs while completing all duties in the Sanctuary.
- Cross bearer returns the Cross to it's stand.
- Candle bearers return processional candles to the center counter area in the Sacristy.
- Return all vessels and items from the Credence Table to the sacristy.
- Return Roman Missal and announcement books to the Sacristy.
- Return all trays, vessels and purificators to the Sacristy.
- Server's albs are to be correctly numbered and properly hung in the server's closet.
- Inform the Sacristan that you are leaving.

Server's Schedule Responsibilities

- Server, you are to be present at your assigned Mass or service.
- Server, you are responsible for securing a substitute for your assigned Mass if you are unable to serve.
- Server, failure to show up or failure to secure a substitute more than twice will be cause to meet and discuss the situation with Fr. Kevin, Mrs. Nemetz, Mrs. Schable or be removed from the server's schedule.