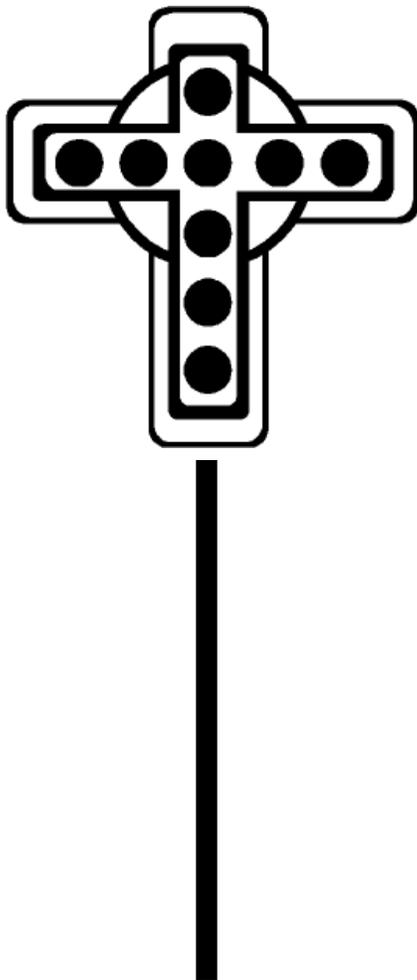


Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament

Altar Server Guidelines



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Altar Server's Attire

Altar Servers should arrive **10 minutes before Mass** and put their albs on in the Altar Server Sacristy. Each server has been given an alb and a cincture for their use. It is not theirs to keep but to use during the time they are serving at Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament. The alb should reach the ankles. When a server outgrows an alb, it should be exchanged for a new size. Please wear appropriate shoes and clothing. (No sloppy sneakers!) The ones hanging in the sacristy for daily mass should be hung up properly after use.

Preparation Before Mass

Altar Servers should bring their cleaned and pressed alb with cincture from home whenever they are assigned to assist at a weekend Mass. The knot for the cincture should be on the left. After putting on the alb, go to the Priests' Sacristy to sign in on the sign-in-sheet and check with the sacristan to see if there is any changes for the Mass. Return to the Altar Server Sacristy to bring the Processional Cross (careful; don't hit doorways or stations of the cross) and the two candles (lit) from the altar to the vestibule of the church, using the side aisle. If the candles are not lit, ask the sacristan to light them. Hold candles erect to avoid the glass tops from falling and breaking.

Beginning of Mass

Proceed from the Altar Server Sacristy down the side aisle to the back of the church. While you are waiting for the entrance procession to begin, stand in the area behind the pews. When the cantor announces the song, stand under the balcony in the center aisle about 4 pews up. The tallest server will hold the Processional Cross (corpus facing forward) approximately six inches from the floor. The two Candle Holders will hold their candles so that the candles are both at the same height as their partner. Please walk with the Cross Bearer slightly ahead of the 2 Candle Bearers.

Begin to process down the center aisle when the people start to **sing** the opening hymn. Proceed at a solemn pace, **not too fast**. No running. You set the pace for all who follow you.

When there are only two Servers, candles will not be used. The tallest Altar Server will hold the Cross and the second Server will walk directly behind him/her. When you arrive at the altar - pause a second. The Cross Bearer will step up and go right -into the Altar Server Sacristy and place the cross in the holder. The Candle Holder on the right, places the candle back in holder on right side of the altar and goes to his/her seat. The Candle Holder on the left places the candle on the left side of the altar and proceeds to the back of altar across and to his/her seat. **It is not necessary to bow at the cross.** The Cross Bearer takes his/her seat. The Candle Bearers prepare for the Opening Prayer.

Opening Prayer

Note: some priests may want missal after greeting for Penitential Rite. The Roman Missal should be opened to the Prayer for the Mass of the Day. (Check the Page with the ribbon pulled up before mass). The Server with the Missal should be walking forward with it open during the end of the Gloria and before the Priest says, "Let us pray." Go to the Priest and stand in front of him with the book raised for him to read. At the end of the prayer, the Priest will either close the Missal or the congregation will say "Amen." You then return with the Missal to your seat. (when there is no Gloria during Lent or Advent, go earlier during the Lord Have Mercy).

Solemn Procession with the Book of the Gospels

When the Lector has finished the second reading and the Alleluia verse is starting, the Candle Bearers will go get the candles from the altar and proceed to the step of the sanctuary platform-**without going down**. Together, turn in place facing the altar. At this point the Priest or Deacon will go to the front of the altar and bow. He will then proceed up to the altar to get the Book of the Gospels. He will take the book and proceed down. At this point, both Candle Bearers will turn left towards the pulpit to lead him and the Book of the Gospels to the pulpit. The left Candle Bearer will stop at the pulpit, approximately one foot away, and the right Candle Bearer will continue towards the pulpit, turn left around it and turn left

again to face his/her partner. During the reading of the Gospel by the Priest, Candle Bearers should remain motionless - directing their eyes toward the candles.

They do not sign themselves with crosses as others do. Note: if there is no Gospel Book on the altar, then there is no procession with candles.

At the completion of the Gospel reading, both Candle Bearers will turn toward the altar. Together - step up into the sanctuary. Left Candle Bearer goes to left side of altar. Replace candle. Go around back of right altar to your seat. Right Candle Bearer goes around the back of the altar and returns his/her candle and returns to his/her seat.

Offertory-Procession

After the Prayer of the Faithful, the Priest will sit and the collection will take place. Once the ushers have begun taking up the collection the Cross Bearer sets the altar. A deacon may help or the Candle Bearers may help. A corporal is opened in the center. The main chalice is placed on it, upper right. The three chalices are lined up to the right so that the people see only one. The 4 purificators are placed in one pile to the right of the corporal, lower right. Finally, the Roman Missal is placed to the left of the corporal at an angle, or for Fr. Bob, front and center, opened to the same page as opening prayer.

Then the Candle Bearers will get their candles and proceed down the center aisle to the center of the church where the Offertory Table is located. When the Gift Bearers and ushers are ready, turn (always turn in toward the center when turning) and walk slowly to the Priest. The Priest will be waiting at the sanctuary in the center aisle and the Cross Bearer on his left. Just before reaching him, the left Candle Bearer will go left and replace candle on the altar. The right Candle Bearer will go right and replace candle. Note: This procession is not done if there are only two servers and no Deacon.

If there are only two servers and no Deacon, no candles are used, one prepares the altar and the other goes to assist the priest, accepting the gifts from his left.

ALWAYS return to the altar with the Offertory Gifts from the Altar Server side of the sacristy. The wine is placed to the left of the corporal. If you have the bread, hand it to the Priest when he arrives.

The first altar server at the credence table will take the water, no top, to the Priest's side and wait while he places some in the main chalice and then hands it back to you along with the wine flagon.. The altar server bows to the priest and goes back to the table. If a Deacon is present give the water to him as he will fill the Priest's chalice, add the water, and hand it back to you. The other server can take the wine flagon from the deacon after he has filled the 3 other chalices. Two altar servers should get ready with the small water pitcher, the finger bowl, and the small hand towel. One should have the water pitcher and the bowl. The other should have the cloth opened for the P. Go up **one** step together. The server with the bowl and pitcher should be on the right, and the server with the towel OPENED on the left. Pour the water over the Priest's fingers (A LITTLE - a small amount will suffice) and offer the OPENED towel to the Priest. The Priest will return the towel to the server. Both servers should give a small bow to the priest and return the items to the credence table.

Consecration of the Bread and Wine

After the Holy, Holy, Holy, go to the altar step to the left in front of you and kneel on the pads. The cross bearer should be closest to the wall to ring the bells. At the Consecration of the bread into the Body of Christ the Priest raises the host and the bells are rung 3 times. The same will be repeated with the wine.

Kneel after the Lamb of God is sung when the people kneel. After the Priest receives holy communion, stand and put your pads away and line up for communion in the center aisle, walking behind Eucharistic Ministers if possible. If Music Ministers line up in the center aisle, let them get ahead of you since they need to begin the song. During the distribution of the Eucharist to the faithful, the Cross Bearer clears the altar, i.e., the Missal and the folded Corporal, unless something is on it. If so wait. Do not move or remove any vessels for the Body and Blood of Christ. Let the other ministers do that.

During the silence after Holy Communion, one of the Candle Bearers opens the Missal and goes to the priest as soon as he stands to say “Let us pray”. Note: Opening, Offertory, and Closing Prayers are all on the same page, same ribbon. After the Prayer, return the Missal to its place. The Cross Bearer at this time goes to get the Cross.

When the Recessional Hymn is announced by the Cantor, the Candle Bearers will get their candles and go immediately to the center aisle at the top step, where the Cross Bearer will be standing.

When all three are all together step down and proceed into the aisle, approximately bench number 4-5 - and then turn around, facing the altar. The Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion and the Lector will fill in in front of you. After the Priest reverences the altar with a kiss, he will go to the front of the altar and reverence it with a bow. At this point all in front of you will bow with him. The servers holding candles and Cross never bow. When the Priest turns to leave so do you. Proceed out reverently - **no racing** - to the vestibule and exit to the left. Return to the Altar Server Sacristy, returning items into their holders and extinguishing the candles with the snuffer. Thank you for your service.

Rev. Robert Whelan, Pastor

INCENSE GUIDELINES

When incense is used another server is needed, the Thurifer. The Sacristan should light the charcoal ten minutes before the Mass so it can turn hot and gray, ready for incense. The Priest will tell you at what points he will use it. These are the possibilities:

1. Opening Procession. The Thurifer carries the Thurible on a chain with the burning charcoal within it, while holding the Incense Boat in the other hand. As the procession is about to begin the Thurifer goes to the Priest who will put some incense in. Then the Thurifer leads the procession, allowing the Thurible to swing at his/her side while walking. The Thurifer will wait for the Priest behind the altar where the Priest will take the Thurible and incense the altar. Wait off to the side and then take it from him when he finishes and return it to the sacristy so there will not be too much smoke by your seats.

2. Gospel Procession. At the Alleluia the Thurifer brings the Thurible and the Incense Boat to the Priest at the Chair. Give the Priest the incense to put in while you hold up the Thurible higher so he can reach in. Then line up between Candle Bearers in front of the altar. When the Priest or Deacon begins to come down with the Book of the Gospels, the Thurifer leads the procession to the Pulpit, where he stands behind the Priest or Deacon. After the Gospel is announced, the Priest will take the Thurible and incense the Book, then hand it back to you. Remain there, a step or two back behind priest, gently swinging Thurible from side to side in front of you.

When it's over, return behind the altar to the Altar Server's Sacristy.

3. Offertory. While the other server brings up the water, the Thurifer gets the Thurible and Incense Boat and waits at the step for the Priest to come. Hand him the Incense Boat and hold up the Thurible higher. After he gives you the Boat back he will take the Thurible. Wait there until he finishes and then bring the Thurible and Incense Boat back into the Altar Server Sacristy. Note: A Deacon may do some of this for you.

4. Recessional. At the Blessing go and get the Thurible and Incense. This is the only time you may put a little incense onto the charcoal. Line up with the Cross Bearer and Candle Bearers so that you lead procession out after the Priest bows and turns toward you. After Mass, the Sacristan dispose of the coals.

FUNERAL GUIDELINES

After vesting, Cross Bearer gets Cross and the other server the Holy Water Bucket. Lead the Priest from the Priest Sacristy down the center aisle to the Baptismal Font and step aside by the Font. After greeting the people the Priest will need the Holy Water. Bring it to him. When he turns around to process, line up in the middle of the aisle and process forward when the singing begins. Put the Cross away and the Holy Water on or near the Credence Table. Then a server goes to the Priest at the Chair for the opening Prayer. Note: there is no sign of the cross, just “Let us Pray”. Candles are not used for the Gospel or the Offertory. The altar is set as usual. Help the Priest with the Gifts. After the Water for the Chalice, the other server gets the Thurible and Incense Boat. (See Incense Guidelines for the rest). Ring the bells and receive Holy Communion as usual. Following the Prayer after Communion, or Eulogy by Family Member if there is one, bring Thurible and Incense Boat to the Priest at the Chair and wait there while he incenses Casket. Then return it to Altar Server Sacristy and get the Cross and Holy Water and both servers line up in center aisle behind Casket, facing the altar. Leave room for the Priest when he joins you after prayer. When he turns, you also turn and process to the back, slowly. The procession often stops while the family lines up so glance behind and stop if the priest stops. Then stop by the candles at the front doors. The Priest will use the Holy Water again. Once the immediate family passes, you may return, especially if you are going back to school. The Director normally tips you, but do not ask for it.

WEDDING GUIDELINES

After vesting, go to the Priest Sacristy. Lead him and Groom and Best Man out to altar when the Priest/Deacon tells you the Wedding Party is ready to come up the aisle. Carrying nothing, with hands folded, bow in front of altar together and go to your seats. Hold the book for the Priest/Deacon at “Let us Pray”. No candles are used for Gospel or Offertory. After homily the Rite of Marriage takes place. Bring the plate with rings from the altar and the Holy Water to the Priest/Deacon after the Bride and Groom speak their vows. If it is a Mass, set the altar and help with the gifts as usual. The Priest/Deacon may signal for you to hold book for the blessing. At the end, after watching Wedding Party process out, Turn to face altar with the Priest/Deacon, bow, then lead him into Priest Sacristy. A tip is normally given to you by the Best Man, but it is not to be asked for.