

## GUIDELINES FOR ALTAR SERVERS

- ✧ Be reverent during Mass – stand straight and tall, heads erect. Hold hands in attitude of prayer – hands joined, fingers pointing up (*please be sure they point up, not out or down; and keep palms together*). Also, as a sign of respect, stand every time Father or Deacon approaches the Celebrant’s Chair. Sit when Father sits. Always stand and sit together.
  
- ✧ Every time you enter the Sanctuary, bow to the Altar. Every time you leave the Sanctuary, turn and bow to the Altar.
  
- ✧ Server #1 carries a candle and walks on the right (*facing the altar*), sits in the chair closest to the Pulpit, hands the Sacramentary to Father, hands him the wine, takes the pitcher of water and the basin, and rings the bells.
  
- ✧ Server #2 carries a candle and walks on the left (*facing the altar*), sits on the chair closest to the Credence Table, hands the brass book stand, chalice and ciborium/a to Father, hands him the water, carries the towel. After Communion, #2 takes the water to Father for purifying the chalice.

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- 1) Procession in - Cross Bearer goes first. An Usher carries the Cross. The Servers each carry a candle. Candles are to be carried with the flame at approximately eye level. *The candles are to be carried with two hands at all times. If you are on the right, your right hand should be on top and left hand on bottom. If you are on the left, your left hand should be on top and right hand on bottom.* The candle bearers are second in line. The Lector is next, carrying the Gospel Book, and Father is last.
  
- 2) When you reach the front of the Altar, the Usher with Crucifix goes to the right, Server #1 goes to the right and Server #2 goes to the left. Father only bows. Let Father start up the steps first, then server #2 goes up the steps BEHIND Father (and Deacon) and places the candle on the candle stand beside the Altar. The Usher places the Cross in the stand. Server #1 goes up the steps on the right and places the candle on the candle stand next to the Altar. To avoid a collision with Father or Deacon, #1 SHOULD GO DOWN THE STEPS AND BACK UP ON THE LEFT OF THE ALTAR and takes his/her place by the chair closest to the

- Pulpit. (Server #1 should NOT go behind the Altar at this time!) Server #2 goes to the chair nearest to the Credence Table.
- 3) The Lector reads the first reading, steps back as the Cantor sings the Psalm. Servers, SING the Response to the Psalm with the congregation. The Lector reads the second reading. When the Cantor intones ALLELUIA, both Servers move towards the candles (#1 WILL go behind the Altar at this time; Father (Deacon) will be going down the steps to take up the Gospel book). #2 will remove the candle (s)he placed on the stand and stand next to the railing, closest to the Cantor. #1 will remove the candle on the far side of the Altar, go down the steps, and then back up to take their place next to Father (Deacon) at the Ambo (Pulpit). Both servers should be standing opposite each other and facing each other. Servers remain in position until the Gospel reading is completed and the congregation says "Thanks be to God." You then put the candles back on the candle stands and sit during the homily.
  - 5) During the Creed, be sure to bow with the priest during the words, "by the power of the Holy Spirit he was born of the Virgin Mary and became man." (Maybe more people in the congregation will bow if they see you bow with the priest.)
  - 6) At the beginning of the Collection, both servers and Father (Deacon) will dress the Altar. Server #2 will hand Father (Deacon) the brass book stand FIRST and #1 will hand Father (Deacon) the Sacramentary book SECOND. Then, both of you will hand Father (Deacon) the Chalice and the ciborium/a. You will then remove the candles from the stands and process down the aisle, side by side, to meet the Gift Bearers. When you are close to the Gift Bearers, turn and face the Altar. Proceed back up the aisle in front of the Gift Bearers. Do not stop when you are close to Father. Keep going right up to the candle stands (*server #1 goes to the right and #2 goes to the left*), put your candles on the stand, and quickly go back down to help Father with the gifts. When there is one server, you do the same thing, only alone.
  - 7) The money basket goes in front of the Altar. The water and wine to the Credence Table.
  - 8) Server #1 carries the wine and stands closest to the Altar. Server #2 carries the water and stands to the left of Server #1, closest to the Credence Table. (*Please be sure to check your container and be in the correct position when you hand the wine and water to Father (Deacon)*). After Father or the Deacon has received both the wine and water, both servers bow together at the same time and return to the table.
  - 9) Server #1 carries the pitcher of water and basin and stands closest to the Altar. Server #2 holds the towel up from the fringe end and stands to the left of Server #1, closest to the Credence Table. When Father has finished washing his hands,

- both servers bow together at the same time and return to the table. Pour the water back into the pitcher, wipe the basin and fold the towel.
- 10) Both servers go to the front of the Altar. Server #1 will ring the bell. Server #2 will be on his/her right
  - 11) Sing, "Holy, Holy, Holy Lord", etc., with the congregation, then kneel.
  - 12) When Father raises the Host and finishes saying "This is My Body", Server #1 rings the bell, and continues ringing the bell until Father places the Host on the Paten (*bells should ring entire time hosts & chalice are elevated*). When Father raises the Chalice and finishes saying "Do this in memory of Me", Server #1 rings the bell again, and continues ringing the bell until Father places the Chalice on the Altar.
  - 13) When Father says "Let us proclaim the mystery of faith", SING "The Memorial Acclamation" with the Congregation.
  - 14) When Father raises the Chalice and Paten and says "Through Him, with Him, in Him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is Yours, Almighty Father, for ever and ever. SING "Amen" with the congregation.
  - 15) After the "Our Father" when Father says "Deliver us, Lord, from every evil, and grant us peace in our day, etc., SING "For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are Yours, now and forever".
  - 16) At the Sign of Peace, shake hands WITH FATHER FIRST, and then shake hands with each other, then with a few people in the front row, then with the cantor. In this way, you deliver Father's sign of peace to the congregation
  - 17) Return to the front of the Altar. When Father finishes taking the Host, and drinks from the Chalice, Server #1 again rings the bell. You then join the Eucharistic Ministers in the Sanctuary for Communion.
  - 18) Receive Holy Communion, but remember to bow before you receive (we bow to show a special reverence to the Body of Christ), then stand near chairs until the Eucharistic Ministers leave the Sanctuary, then you may be seated.
  - 19) After Communion, after Father has given the Ciborium/a to the Deacon or Eucharistic Ministers to return to the Tabernacle, Server #2 brings the water to Father.
  - 20) Both Servers assist in taking the sacred vessels from Father and returning them to the Credence Table. Return to your chair and be seated.

- 21) At the end of Mass, the Usher takes the Cross, both Servers remove the candles to carry in the Procession. Cross bearer ALWAYS goes first. Do NOT blow out your candles until you reach the Sacristy. Return them to the counter next to the door of the Confessional.

### DUTIES of the ALTAR SERVER

#### BEFORE MASS

- 1) Gum chewing is never allowed in Church at any time, under any circumstances.
- 2) One-hour fast before the time that you receive Holy Communion.
- 3) Get dressed – white robe, proper colored cord around your waist, cross around your neck. Do not remove your white robe until all the sacred vessels are brought back to the Sacristy, and you have set up for the next Mass, if you are asked to do so. You are never to enter the Sanctuary until you are clothed in your white robe. Wear your regular church clothes under your white robe. *Shorts are not acceptable in Church at any time.*
- 4) Remove the candles to be carried from the stands next to the Altar – light them just before leaving the Sacristy.
- 5) Get the wine and water from the Sacristan and place them on the small table in front of the glass doors. Also, place Father's ciborium along with the wine and water on the same table. This is the "gifts" table.
- 6) Make sure the pitcher, basin, and towel are on the small table to the left of the Altar, known as the Credence Table.
- 7) Also, take the Chalice and Ciborium/a to the same table.

#### AFTER MASS

- 1) Extinguish candles with the candle snuffer. **DO NOT BLOW OUT THE CANDLES WITH YOUR MOUTH!!** (When you blow the candles out with your mouth, you may spray liquid wax in any direction.). If there is another Mass following the one just completed, you may leave the candles in the Sanctuary. If there is no Mass to follow, place the candles back on the stands next to the Altar.
- 2) Bring back the water and wine, chalice, basin and pitcher from the Credence Table. Place the chalice on the cupboard next to the sink in the Sacristy, place all the ciboria on the cupboard as well. The Sacristan will clean the sacred vessels and put them away, or if someone needs to set up for the next Mass, the Sacristan may ask for your help.

- 2) Ask the Sacristan if there is anything else he/she would like you to do before you remove your white robe, and leave. In some cases, especially at 5:00 p.m. Mass on Saturday, you may be asked to help set everything up for the first Mass on Sunday. The same applies to 9:00 a.m. Mass in the winter when we have 7:30, 9:00 and 10:30 Masses, and no Sacristan at 9:00. Then we ask the Sacristan at 7:30 Mass to set up for 9:00 Mass.

*revised 1/17/07*