

# Altar Server Training





# Role of the Altar Server

- Before Mass
- Introductory Rites
- Liturgy of the Word
- Liturgy of the Eucharist
- Concluding Rites
- After Mass
- Special Tasks



# Before Mass

- Prepare yourself to serve
  - Frequent reconciliation
  - Fast one hour before communion
  - Appearance
    - Clean and neat
    - Long hair pulled back
    - Fingernails trimmed and clean
    - Solid color clothes for under the alb
    - Shoes



# Before Mass

- Upon arrival at church
  - Arrive 30 minutes before mass
  - Sign in
  - Put on alb, cincture, and crucifix
  - Organize kids bulletins
  - Light altar candles
  - Stage bells for mass
  - Bring the processional cross and candles to the narthex
  - Light the candles
  - Pray with priest and other ministers



# Introductory Rites

- Processional
  - Line up
  - Process to the altar
  - Pause and reverence the tabernacle
  - Put the cross and candles carefully into holders
    - Turn the cross toward the congregation



# Introductory Rites

- Candle bearers proceed to the pew and remain standing
- The book holder, usually the cross bearer, stands behind the deacon's chair
- Book holder
  - Holds the binder for priest
  - Stand behind deacon's chair during the Gloria
  - Hold the red missal for the Collect prayer
  - Take your seat in the pew



# Liturgy of the Word

- Listen with respectful posture to the first reading, responsorial psalm and second reading
- At the end of the second reading when the lector says “The word of the Lord” the candle bearers take the candles to the front of the altar and meet the reader at the bottom of the stairs.



# Liturgy of the Word

- Bow together and proceed to the altar.
- One altar server on each side of the altar
- The priest will raise the Book of the Gospels for the congregation to reverence
- Then the candle bearer, on the altar server side, will walk around the front of the altar and stop on the choir side of the ambo
- The other candle bearer will stand on the tabernacle side of the ambo



# Liturgy of the Word

- At the end of the Gospel the priest will say  
The Gospel of the Lord: Praise to you,  
Lord Jesus Christ.
- The two candle bearers will walk down the  
steps to the center of the altar. Both turn  
to face the tabernacle and bow
- Return the candles to their stands and  
return to your pew



# Liturgy of the Word

- Remember you are sitting in the front pew so the congregation can see you. Sit and listen reverently to the homily
- After the homily, the priest will sit. When he stands again the book holder will be needed for the Profession of Faith and Prayers of the Faithful



# Liturgy of the Eucharist

- Two servers (candle bearers) go to the back of the church to lead up the offertory gifts
- The book holder and fourth server help the acolyte prepare the altar
  - The clear book holder is removed from the altar and the red missal is placed on the altar



# Liturgy of the Eucharist

The acolyte will usually be the one preparing the altar but the servers must be attentive and help by bringing the trays over from the credence table. If the trays are too heavy, take a few pieces at a time



# Liturgy of the Eucharist

- The prepared altar:
  - Three corporals
  - On the left are the filled chalices and purificators
  - The center is the red missal
  - On the right are the ciboria with hosts and the empty large chalice
  - Cruet of water, with lid removed





# Liturgy of the Eucharist

- After the altar is set, join the celebrant at the front to receive the offertory gifts.
- The priest may hand you one of the gifts.  
All bow together.
  - The baskets go under the altar
  - The wine cruet and large ciboria should be handed to the priest to be placed on the altar.
    - \*Don't put them on the altar yourself.
    - Take the stopper off of the wine cruet.





# Liturgy of the Eucharist

- One server should wait for the priest to pour the wine and water into the chalice and take the two cruets back to the credence table.
- The other servers prepare to wash the celebrant's hands. One holds the towel, one the bowl and one the pitcher of water.
- Return these items to the shelf under the credence table.



# Liturgy of the Eucharist

- Take your seat in the pew
- When it is time to kneel, use the kneeling pads and prepare the bells.
- During the Eucharistic Prayer, the priest consecrates the bread into the body of Jesus Christ, when the host is elevated, ring the bells vigorously three distinct times. Repeat for the Precious Blood at the words “Do this in memory of me” and the chalice is elevated.



# Liturgy of the Eucharist

- After the Lord's prayer and the sign of peace, line up on the altar for communion.
- The large red missal goes back to the table between the celebrant's chairs. Take a seat or kneel during communion.
- After communion, one or two servers should assist the acolyte and the priest by taking the items from the altar to the credence table. The priest will generally set the items on the right side to be taken.



# Liturgy of the Eucharist

- After the priest puts the covered ciboria into the tabernacle, he will hand the tabernacle key to a server to place on the tray on the credence table.
- Sit down (The book holder may stand by the chair.)



# Concluding Rite

- When the celebrant stands, the book holder holds the missal for the final blessing.
- Prepare the children's bulletins to be distributed. Give a stack to each server and to the priest.



# Concluding Rite

- After the final blessing, the cross bearer and candle bearers should line up for the recessional in the main aisle, even with the first pew.
- The acolyte and fourth server line up in front of them.
- Bow with the priest and turn and recess out of the church.



# After Mass

- Return the processional cross and candles to their stand. Blow out the candles.
- Extinguish the two altar candles.
- Back in the minister's room, change out of the alb and hang it up.
- Put the cincture and crucifix neatly back in the drawers.



# After Mass

- Feel Great About Yourself
  - Know you are blessed and enjoy the rest of your day!



# Special Tasks

- Helping in the case of a spill of the Holy Eucharist or Precious Blood
- Assisting with incense or holy water blessings
- Special instructions for weddings, funerals or other special liturgies



# Contacts

- To find a substitute or scheduling requests:
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