

**PROCEDURES  
FOR  
MINISTERS  
OF  
ALTAR SERVING**

## **PROCEDURES FOR MINISTERS OF ALTAR SERVING**

As Altar Servers you are role models in the community with regards to your behavior. This applies in Church as well as at other times when you are looked upon as representatives of our Church community. You have been blessed with an opportunity to serve our Lord and should act accordingly.

The Church (both our main Church and the country Church) is a holy place of worship and requires your utmost respect and reverence at all times. When the Eucharist is present in the tabernacle it is proper to show respect by bowing when approaching the altar or crossing in front of the tabernacle.

### **Schedule Integrity**

**You should always make your best effort to fulfill your commitment to the Altar Server schedule. If, however, you are unable to serve at Mass when you are assigned, you are responsible to ensure coverage by another qualified Altar Server.**

### **Prior to Mass**

- Attire: You are viewed by your appearance. Please respect God's house with appropriate dress and personal grooming. Remember that you are attending Services to worship and give thanks to our Lord.
  - Men: Slacks and collared shirt. No jeans, shorts, or T-shirts. Dress Shoes. No tennis shoes.
  - Ladies: Appropriate dress, slacks, or skirt and a blouse. No shorts. Dress shoes. No tennis shoes. Hair pulled back if it could interfere with candles.
- Time to Arrive: 25-30 minutes prior to the start of a Service.
- Where to Dress/Prepare for the Service:
  - Vest in the room to the right of the altar (for this document the ramp is at the right side of the altar no matter which way you are facing).
  - Albs and cinctures are on hangers in the room to the right of the altar.
    - The cincture is to be worn at waist level.
    - Wear a wooden cross.
  - Light the altar candles 15 minutes prior to the start of the Service.
  - Remain in the hallway by the Sacristy door until lining up for the Entrance Procession.

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## **Introductory Rite**

- Procession into Church/Gathering
  - Altar Servers process into the Church behind the Cross Bearer, Server 1 on the left and Server 2 on the right (for this document the ramp is at the right side of the altar no matter which way you are facing).
  - Servers process directly to the foot of the steps at the front of the altar leaving room for the Celebrant and any other Clergy participating in the Mass.
  - The Deacon or a Lector will place the Book of Gospels on the Altar.
  - When the Priest arrives and bows, the Altar Servers bow.
  - When the Priest ascends to the altar the Altar Servers follow, Server 1 to the left of the altar and Server 2 to the right of the altar, and stand in front of chairs assigned for Altar Servers.
  - Server 2 should get the binder and be prepared to hold it for the Priest or Deacon as needed.
  
- Greeting and Penitential Rite
  - Server 2 holds the binder for the Priest or Deacon when needed.
  
- What to do if only one Altar Server?
  - If there is only one Altar Server available, he/she should process in as Altar Server 2 and must perform the duties of both Altar Server 1 and Altar Server 2.
  
- Gloria
  - Both Servers stand in front of assigned chairs and recite the Gloria. Towards the end of the Gloria, when we say “You alone are the Holy One, You alone are the Lord, You alone are...”, Server 2 should get the Sacramentary and be prepared to hold it for the Opening Prayer.
  
- Opening Prayer
  - Server 2 holds Sacramentary for the Priest.
  - At the conclusion of the Opening Prayer Server 2 keeps the Sacramentary at the chairs (do not put the Sacramentary on the Altar at this time).
  - Both Servers sit when the Priest sits down.

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### **Liturgy of the Word**

- Servers sit with Priest for the First reading, the Responsorial Psalm, and the Second reading.
- Both Servers stand when the Priest stands for the Gospel. Both Servers remain standing during the Gospel.
- Both Servers sit during the Homily.
- Both Servers stand with the Priest for the Profession of Faith and recite the Creed.
- Towards the end of the Creed, when we say “One Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church”, Server 2 should get the binder and be prepared to hold it for the Priest for the General Intercessions.
- Server 2 holds the binder for the Priest during the General Intercessions.
- Both Servers sit when the Priest sits after the General Intercessions.

### **Liturgy of the Eucharist**

- Preparation of the altar
  - As the ushers start to take up the collection both Altar Servers leave their chairs, go to the center of the altar facing the tabernacle, and bow:
    - Server 1:
      - Goes to the Credence table and takes all chalices (two at a time) and one purificator from the Credence table and place them on the left side of the altar.
      - Return to sit with the Priest as the collection is being taken up.
    - Server 2
      - Take the Sacramentary from the area of the chairs and place it on the right side of the altar. Return to sit with the Priest as the collection is being taken up.
- Prayer over the Gifts
  - Both Servers stand with the Priest and go with the Priest to the foot of the steps in front of the altar to receive the gifts.
  - Server 1 on the left side of the altar
  - Server 2 behind the Priest to the right side of the altar

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- Server 1 takes the collection basket from the Priest and places it in front of the altar then goes to the Credence Table and gets the water cruet, removes the stopper and leaves it at the Credence table such that it will not roll around, and goes to stand at the left side of the altar with the water cruet.
- Server 2 takes the wine flagon from the Priest and goes around the right side of the altar, and places the wine flagon on the left side of the altar. Server 2 remains at the left side of the altar standing by Server 1 to receive the wine flagon and stopper.
- Server 1 hands the water cruet to the Priest or Deacon - handle first.
- When the Priest or Deacon returns the water cruet to Server 1, Server 2 should have the empty wine flagon and stopper. Both Server 1 and Server 2 bow and return to the Credence table.
- Server 2 places the empty wine flagon and stopper on the Credence table.
- Both Servers return to the Altar for the washing of hands:
  - Server 1 with Lavabo dish and water cruet.
  - Server 2 with a finger towel.
  - After washing the Priests hands both Servers bow and return the Lavabo dish, water cruet, and finger towel to the Credence table.
  - Both Altar Servers go to stand at the bottom of the steps on the ramp side of the altar, bowing as they pass in front of the tabernacle.

### The Eucharistic Prayer

- Both Servers stand at the bottom of the steps on the ramp side of the altar for the Preface.
- Both Servers kneel on the bottom step at the ramp side of the altar for the Consecration.

### The Communion Rite

- Both Servers stand at the bottom of the steps on the ramp side of the altar for the Lord's Prayer.
- Both Servers share the Sign of Peace then:
- Both Servers go to the Credence table, bowing as you pass the tabernacle, and move the following from the Credence Table to the altar:
  - All purificators (to the left side of the Altar by the chalices).
  - Any empty ciboriums or patens (right side of the altar).
- Both Servers return to the bottom of the steps on the ramp side of the altar, bowing as you pass the tabernacle, and stand for the Prayer at Communion ("I am not worthy ...") and the Priest's reception of Communion.

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- After the Priest has received both Bread and Wine, both Servers go up the steps (at the same time the Eucharistic Ministers approach the altar) and stand at the right side of the altar.
- The Priest will distribute Communion to the Servers.
- The Deacon or a Eucharistic Minister will distribute Wine to the Servers.
- During distribution of Bread and Wine to the congregation the Servers will sit. Server 2 will get the Sacramentary from the altar and take it to the chairs before being seated.
- Both Servers remain seated with the Priest after Communion.
- Both Servers will stand with the Priest for the Prayer after Communion and the Concluding Prayer. Server 2 holding the Sacramentary.

### **Concluding Rite**

- After the blessing and dismissal both Servers leave the altar area with the Priest.
  - Server 1 will go to the left of the altar
  - Server 2 will go behind the Priest to the right of the altar
- Both Servers line up for the recessional by the cross bearer (should be lined up at the edge of the carpet facing the altar).
- When the Priest bows, both Servers will bow, turn inward, and process out of the church behind the cross bearer.

### **Duties after Mass**

- Return to the altar area after singing of the recessional hymn has stopped.
- Extinguish candles at the altar.
- Remove alb and cincture in room to the right of the altar. Be sure to neatly put alb and cincture on hangers and return them to the rack.