

ALTAR SERVER JOB DESCRIPTION & RESPONSIBILITIES

Attendance:

The role of the server is very important. A server accepts the responsibility of being present for his/her assigned scheduled serving times. If you are unable to serve your scheduled Mass, it is your responsibility to get a substitute.

Appearance:

Proper clothing should be worn while serving Mass. Please be sure to wear a robe that is long enough to come to your ankles. Dress as you would to go anywhere important. Male servers should dress in collared shirts, dress pants or khakis. Female servers should wear dresses, skirts, or some other appropriate attire. Blue Jeans, beach attire, gym clothes, and T-Shirts are never to be worn at Mass. Such clothing is not appropriate dress for serving at the altar.

- NO SNEAKERS, WORK BOOTS, or FLIP-FLOPS. Appropriate dress shoes should be worn, (preferably black shoes for male servers.) Also, black sneakers are discouraged

Please do not chew gum or eat candy. Be attentive and watch for any changes that Father might make. Stand or sit-up straight, and move slowly and solemnly – never run!

Typically, there will be three servers assigned to a particular Mass on Sunday. The three positions will be defined as the following.

The Cross Bearer; Server One; Server Two.

The Cross Bearer: This is the server who carries the cross during the Entrance, and Closing Processions. This server will be responsible for lighting the candles before Mass as well as extinguishing them afterwards. The Cross bearer should supervise other servers, and will make sure everything is in its proper place before and after Mass. He or she will be responsible for also holding the book for the priest during the opening and closing prayers (a.k.a. the "Let us Pray" prayers); during the preparation of the gifts, going down to the foot of the altar with the priest to receive the gifts

Server One: This server is one of the candle bearers for the opening, gospel, and closing processions. Server One will also be responsible for the following tasks: Bringing the book to the altar during the preparation of the gifts, going down to the foot of the altar with the priest to receive the gifts, holding the wine for the priest and deacon, assisting in the washing of the hands, and taking the book off the altar to the side table after communion.

Server Two: Like Server One, this server is a candle bearer for the opening, gospel, and closing processions. However, during the Offertory, this server will bring up the chalice to the altar, and will be responsible for un-assembling and re-assembling the chalice during the appropriate times at Mass. Server Two will be responsible for the following tasks: assist in receiving the gifts at the foot of the altar with the priest,

holding the water for the priest and deacon during preparation of the altar, holding the bowl of water when the priest washes his hands.

Important Note: On occasion, there will be a need for other servers to serve as an incense bearer (Thurifer) and candle bearers (bat guys) on special liturgical occasions. These servers will be responsible for lighting the incense, and disposing of the left over charcoal after Mass.

The Order of Mass

Before Mass & Entrance Procession.

15 minutes before mass all servers should gather in the sacristy and decide who will be server number one and two as well cross bearer. Make sure you sign in at this time. Ask the mass coordinators if they need any help, they always do.

- All servers should be vested and ready to go 10 minutes before Mass.
- The altar candles are lit by the cross bearer 10 minutes before the start of Mass. Use the appropriate instrument to light the candles.
- A brief prayer will be said 5 minutes before the start of Mass with the priest and other liturgical ministers in the narthex.
- The procession forms at the main entrance in the narthex of the Church.
- The order of procession will usually consist of the following: (1) Cross, (2) Servers One and Two holding the candles, the lector(if there is no deacon), deacon (if present), and the priest. In cases where there is an incense bearer, that server will lead the procession (ahead of the cross).

Cross Bearer

Server One; Server Two

Lector (with gospel book if no deacon)

Deacon (With gospel book)

Priest

- please begin the procession as soon as the singing begins. Please do not walk too quickly.
- Once at the altar, do not stop or bow, the cross bearer should proceed to place the crucifix in the proper stand, and then go to your place.

- The Candle Bearers should proceed and place their processional candles at the appropriate place by the side table. The servers then go to their places.

Opening Rite.

- After the procession, the servers stand at their respective places.
- The Gloria will be recited or sung, except during Lent and Advent. At the words, "Let Us Pray.," the **Cross Bearer** will approach the priest with the Sacramentary (the big red book on credence table) When the priest is finished, the server will put the book back to the proper place on the credence table.

Liturgy of the Word.

- After the Opening Prayer, all the servers sit to listen attentively to the Word of God.
- We use the candles for the Gospel procession. During the Alleluia, all stand. After the Deacon or Priest approaches the altar to pick up the Gospel book, **servers one and two** come forward with the processional candles to lead the deacon or priest to the pulpit.
- The servers will stand on opposite sides facing each other during the proclamation of the Gospel. After the Gospel, the candle bearers place the candles in the appropriate place and go to their seats.

Preparation of the Gifts

- **Immediately** after the Prayer of the Faithful is completed (and the people sit down and the collection begins), Server One brings the Sacramentary to the altar, and places it at the left hand side of the altar. The chalice and other cups are placed on the altar at this time by the other two servers. Do not bring ciborium at this time.
- **Servers One and Two and cross bearer** will proceed with the deacon and priest to the front of the altar to receive the gifts of bread and wine. After you receive the gift proceed and stand next to the altar and wait for priest/deacon to take the gifts from you. Do not place the gifts on the altar.
- When the priest goes to the altar to say the offertory prayers, **Servers One and Two** will remain at the altar with the cruets with wine and water to be poured into the chalice. Please open the cruets and make sure you hold them in away the priest can easily take them from you. Either the deacon or the priest will take them from you. After the pouring is completed, return the cruets back to the side table. After the offertory prayers have been said, the priest will turn to his right, and servers one and two should come forward to the priest with the bowl of water and towel to wash his hands After this action is completed, the servers should return to their place.

Liturgy of the Eucharist.

- **Important note to all servers:** Please exchange the sign of peace with those immediately around you. Although it is well meaning, it is liturgically improper to go around the Church to exchange peace, for it disrupts the flow to the liturgy. Server one at this time should take the ciboria from side table and place them on the altar.
- After the Extraordinary ministers approach the altar after the Lamb of God, the altar server's stand in their respective places with the Communion ministers to receive Holy Communion.

End of Mass.

The cross Bearer will proceed with the book to the priest for the prayer after communion at the words, "Let US Pray."

- After the final blessing and dismissal, Servers One and Two will immediately pick up the processional candles, along with the Cross Bearer and the cross, and proceed to the front of the altar waiting for the priest. The closing procession will follow the same order for the servers.

Duties after Mass:

- Help clean the side table
- Extinguish all the candles
- Hang up your robes properly and return the ties to the appropriate place.

Mass Server Terms

Altar: The table where we celebrate the Eucharist

Chalice: The cup which holds the wine

Ciborium: A dish, sometimes covered, that holds the hosts

Corporal: A white square cloth placed on the altar

Cruets: Vessels used for the water and wine at Mass

Gift Table: A small table from which the bread and wine are brought to the altar.

Side Table: A table in the sanctuary that we put the chalice, cruet of water, towel, bowl for washing hands, and the extra ciboria.

Host: Consecrated bread that is used at Mass.

Ambo/Pulpit: The stand for holding the Lectionary and from which the readings take place.

Easter Candle: A large candle with specific markings that is used between Easter and Ascension and at all Baptisms and funerals.

Purificator: A folded white cloth used to wipe the lip of the chalice.

Sacramentary: A large book containing the prayers for Mass (usually on the altar)

Sanctuary: The area of the church containing the altar, pulpit, and chairs for the priest and servers. Also, the space from which the liturgy is lead.

Tabernacle: The place where the blessed hosts are kept between celebrations of Eucharist. It is opened and locked with a special Tabernacle key. The word itself means "small tent".