

ALTAR SERVER CHECKLIST

As an altar server, you set an example at Mass. Be reverent and know what you are doing at all times. People from the community look up to you. Make sure you are doing the right thing.

When serving, please dress nicely. Please wear a nice pair of shoes instead of sneakers or boots. Rubber bottoms are preferred. No flip-flops. Traditionally, people in the past would dress up in their "Sunday Best" when they went to church, so please make an effort and wear nice clothes and a nice pair of shoes.

- **BEFORE MASS:**

- Arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the start of Mass.
- Go to the vesting sacristy and put on your robe, one that reaches near ankles, not below.
- Light the candles on the altar if they are not already lit.
- The MC would be responsible for checking the credence table and make sure that there is:
 - Chalice and Purificators
 - Water cruet
 - Basin
 - Towel
 - Gifts on the Offertory Table
- The MC will assign altar server roles.
- A few minutes before Mass begins, gather in the vesting sacristy for a prayer.

- **DURING MASS:**

- Walk **slowly** and **reverently**, keeping your hands folded when walking, kneeling and standing
- Bow together slowly
- When sitting, sit up do not slouch
- When kneeling, do not sit back on your feet
- Always stand, sit, kneel, and bow together, work as a team
- No talking to each other, making faces to each other or at anyone in the congregation
- If someone makes a mistake, go with it
- Do not make the priest wait, you should be the one waiting

- **AFTER MASS:**

- Hang up your robe
- If you have time, help do a sweep through of the church, picking up trash and putting up the kneelers
- After the 5:00pm and 11:00am Masses, blow out the candles

ALTAR SERVER INSTRUCTIONS FOR MASS

1. OPENING PROCESSION:

- Order of Procession:
 - Cross and candle bearers side by side
 - Other servers
 - MC
 - Lector
 - Deacon
 - Priest
- Cross and candle bearers **slowly** process down the aisle side by side.
 - Pause at the foot of the altar (head nod, no bow), all go right, cross near the Tabernacle behind the pillar and candles to the working sacristy. Blow out candles. Candle bearers go to seats on the credence table side from the working sacristy. Other server (not carrying anything) will go to seat at tabernacle side. If there are more servers than usual, try to split up sides evenly.

2. OPENING PRAYER:

- At the beginning of Mass, the MC prepares the Roman Missal (Red Book), opens it and gives it to the server.
- At the end of the Gloria, the priest will say, “Let us pray”. Server brings the book up to the priest.
- When he finishes the prayer, the server returns to the MC with Missal open. MC takes book; all are seated for the readings.

3. LITURGY OF THE WORD:

- Servers sit reverently and attentively while the Old Testament and New Testament readings are proclaimed.
- During the Gospel, servers on credence table side turn around and face the pulpit while the priest reads the Gospel.
- Following the Gospel, servers sit and attentively listen to the homily.

4. PROFESSION OF FAITH AND PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL:

- Servers stand and recite the profession of faith with the congregation.
- During the Prayer of the Faithful, servers on credence table side turn and face the pulpit as they did for the Gospel.

5. SETTING THE ALTAR AND PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS:

A server from the credence table side, with the help of the MC, will bring the priest's chalice to set the altar as follows:

Place chalice at side of altar.

Open up corporal (square cloth) at the center of the altar, making sure that the cross will be on the bottom center. If not, turn corporal around in a discrete way.

Place purificator (rectangular cloth) along side the corporal, chalice above the purificator and pall, (square card) along side of the chalice.

Server from tabernacle side will bring Roman Missal to book stand on altar and open it to the white ribbon.

Meanwhile, other servers will bring the cups to the side of the altar with purificators.

Ciboria with hosts will be placed at the upper right hand corner of the corporal.

See diagram on last page.

After the altar is set, two servers (from credence table side) will go to meet the gift bearers and process up the aisle. Remaining servers will go with priest to front of altar on his left to receive the gifts. Servers coming up to the altar will stand on the priest's right. The priest will hand the dish to the server on the left and the cruet of wine to the server on his right. All return to the altar from their sides.

Server with wine cruet will go directly to their side of the altar and wait for the server with the cruet of water. The MC will hand the water cruet to the server who then goes to stand next to the wine.

The server with the dish will hand the dish with hosts to the priest for the preparation rite.

Priest will take wine and water and return them to the servers, who then go back to the credence table to get the pitcher and basin with towel from the MC.

Pitcher and basin go to priest for him to wash his hands and return to credence table to hand back to the MC. All proceed to their seats for the Eucharistic Liturgy.

EPICLESIS:

- As the priest calls the Holy Spirit upon the gifts (*Epiclesis*), server 1 or 2 rings the bells 1 time.
 - The signal to ring the bells will be when the priest extends his hands over the gifts. This is the only time throughout the entire prayer he extends his hands over the gifts.

6. EUCHARISTIC PRAYER:

- When the priest holds up the bread and says, "...which will be given up for you," server 1 or 2 rings the bells three times. Let the ring echo until the priest genuflects.
- When the priest holds up the wine and says, "Do this in memory of me," server 1 or 2 rings the bells three times. Let the ring echo until the priest genuflects.

- All servers kneel reverently for the remainder of the Eucharistic Prayer.

7. THE *OUR FATHER*:

- Following the singing of the “Amen”, servers stand and recite the *Our Father* with the congregation.

8. SIGN OF PEACE:

- At the sign of peace, servers stay at their seats and exchange a sign of peace with the priest and servers standing next to them.

RECEPTION OF COMMUNION:

- While the Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharistic are in line receiving communion, the servers walk down to the center aisle and form two lines at the first pew.
- After receiving communion, servers return to their seats for silent prayer.

9. AFTER COMMUNION:

- Eucharistic Ministers will return cups and dishes to the working sacristy.
- The priest will purify his own chalice at the altar.
- A server will be ready with the cruet of water for him to purify and return to the server when done.
- After priest has purified his chalice, he will re-assemble the chalice and a server from the credence table side will retrieve the chalice and return to credence table. A server from the tabernacle side will retrieve the Roman Missal.

10. CLOSING PRAYER:

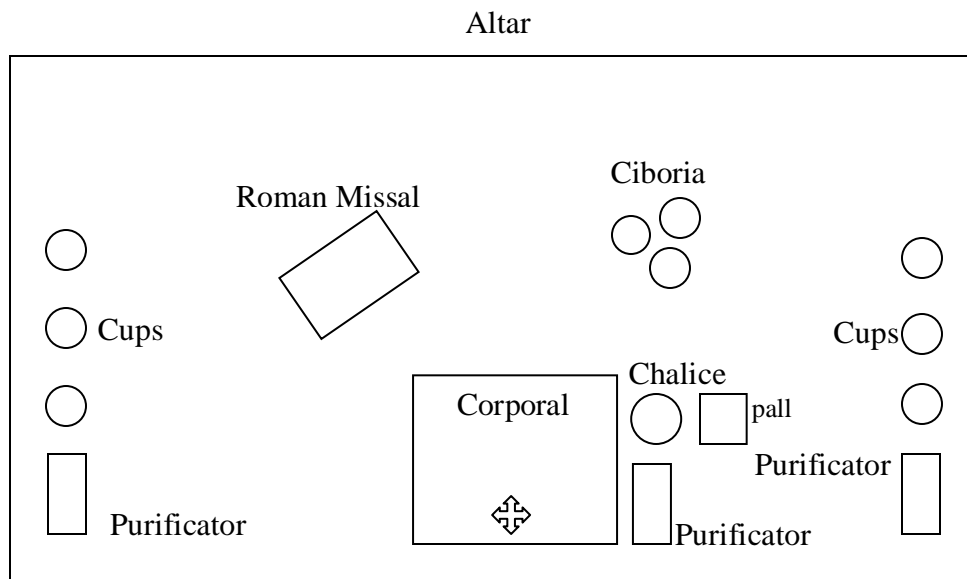
- MC will prepare the Roman Missal and give to server.
- When the priest stands and says, “Let us pray,” server brings the book to the priest for the closing prayer.
- When he finishes the prayer, **the server returns to MC with book open. MC will take book from server.**

11. CLOSING PROCESSION:

- At the start of the closing song, cross and candle bearers will gather and proceed to the center aisle (out to about the second pew), turns and faces the altar.
- Additional servers will go with candle and cross bearers to center aisle.
- The priest moves to the center aisle and faces the altar and bows.
 - The cross-bearer gestures a head nod.
 - Servers with candles gesture a head nod.
 - All servers not carrying anything fully bow with the priest.
- After bowing, servers turn and proceed to the back of the church in a **slow** procession.

- Servers Return to the vesting sacristy.
 - Cross-bearer returns the cross to its place in the sacristy.
 - Candle bearers place candles on Vesting Sacristy counter and blow candles out.
 - All servers hang vesting garments to the closet.

DIAGRAM FOR SETTING UP THE ALTAR:



VOCABULARY LIST

- Alb:** A priest's long, white robe. An alb is worn under the chasuble during Mass.
- Altar Table:** The special table in the sanctuary where the priest consecrates the bread and wine during the sacrifice of the Mass.
- Altar cloth:** The fabric that covers the altar
- Blessed Sacrament:** Consecrated hosts reserved from Mass and kept in the tabernacle. Jesus is really present in the Blessed Sacrament.
- Chalice:** The cup that holds the wine the priest consecrates during Mass.
- Chasuble:** The outer vestment of the presider at Mass. The color of the chasuble is symbolic.
- Ciborium:** The covered receptacle for holding the consecrated hosts.
- Corporal:** The white linen cloth on which the consecrated elements are placed during the celebration of the Mass.
- Eucharist:** The word Eucharist means, "to give thanks." It is the sacrament in which we receive the Body and Blood of Christ.
- Finger towel:** The towel the priest uses when he washes his hands before he consecrates the bread and wine at Mass.
- Holy Communion:** The Body and Blood of Christ.
- Paten:** The plate used to hold the hosts during Mass
- Purificator:** The cloth used to clean the chalice after the celebration of Eucharist.
- Tabernacle:** A special place in our parish church where the Blessed Sacrament is kept.
- Sanctuary:** The area that contains the altar and lectern where the priest presides over the celebration of the Mass
- Sanctuary Lamp:** The lamp that is near the Tabernacle and is always lit when the Blessed Sacrament is present in the Tabernacle.
- Vestments:** The special garments worn by the priest when he presides at Mass, such as the alb and chasuble.