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**ALTAR SERVERS**



**St. Titus Parish**

**ALTAR SERVER GUIDE**

## **SAINT TITUS ALTAR SERVER GUIDE**

Thank you for choosing to be an Altar Server at St. Titus Church. Our entire Parish family appreciates your willingness to serve.

The role of the Altar Server is important in the celebration of the Mass. As such, we ask each Altar Server to take this privilege very seriously. As part of your responsibilities, we ask you to become familiar with this Altar Server Guide so you completely understand your role as an Altar Server. Also, we expect that you make sure to serve your assigned Masses or find a replacement.

We hope your time as an Altar Server proves to be a holy and joy-filled time. Please know how much joy your ministry brings to God and blessings to your family!

Something very important for you to remember... Don't worry about making mistakes. We all make them. Mistakes are not tragedies; they are opportunities. Opportunities to learn and to grow. If you have any worries or concerns, be sure to talk to Mrs. Klampfer or Deacon Granese about them.

### **ALTAR SERVER'S PRAYER**

Loving Father, Creator of the universe, you call your people to worship; to be with you and each other at Mass. Help me, for you have called me also. Keep me prayerful and alert as I serve you at the altar. By my example, help me to help others in prayer. Thank you for the trust you've placed in me. Keep me true to that trust. Father God, I make this prayer through Jesus your Son, who is with us in the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### **PREPARING FOR MASS**

Please arrive at ***least 15 minutes before Mass.***

Please put on a correctly-fitting alb and cincture (your alb should reach down to your ankles after tying your cincture around your waist). The cincture color will match the color of the season or for the solemnity of that particular day. For example, green during Ordinary Time; white, during the Easter Season; red for Pentecost; purple in Lent and Advent.

If there is more than one Altar Server for the Mass, the servers can decide among themselves which roles they will assume (for example, cross-bearer, book-bearer). If there are three Altar Servers, two will carry lighted candles beside the cross-bearer.

Father Len will say a pre-Mass prayer in the vesting room before you exit for the entrance procession.

### **INTRODUCTORY RITES**

#### **Entrance Procession**

Servers line up in the back of the Church. The cross-server is in the center with a server on either side, if there are at least three Altar Servers. If there are only two Altar Servers, then the second

server lines up behind the cross-server, and in front of the Lector, Deacon and Priest Celebrant. **The server's hands should be folded, as if praying.**

Upon hearing the first words of the entrance hymn, the cross-server **slowly** leads the procession down the center aisle. When they reach the bottom step of the Sanctuary, the remaining servers will genuflect. The cross-bearer does not need to bow because s/he is carrying the cross.

**NOTE: Please remember when an Altar Server is standing or kneeling throughout Mass and has nothing in his\her hands, s/he should have hands folded in a prayerful position.**

### **Entering the Sanctuary**

The cross-bearer places the crucifix in the stand to the right of the Sanctuary. The cross-bearer and other servers proceed to the right, to the seats behind the Priest and Deacon chairs.

When the Priest-Celebrant arrives at his chair (called the Presider's Chair), the book-server stands in front of the Priest, and receives the Missal from the Deacon (or Priest if the Deacon is not present) and holds the book until the completion of the Opening Prayer (called the Collect). The Missal is then placed on the table next to the Altar Servers' chairs.

## **LITURGY OF THE WORD**

All Servers sit while the first and second readings are read and the Psalm is sung. However, all stand when the Priest or Deacon proclaims the Gospel. All then sit for the Homily.

After the Homily, the book-server proceeds to his or her position in front of the Celebrant and holds the Missal. The Deacon will open the Missal to the Creed. After the Creed, the Priest will lead the introduction to the Prayer of the Faithful (also called the Universal Prayer). The Deacon or lector will then lead the people in this prayer. Father then will pray a closing prayer. Once he completes this, place the Missal on the altar and return to your seat.

## **LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST**

Upon completion of the Prayer of the Faithful, the book-server and cross-server are to remove the following items from the credence stand in the left corner of the sanctuary and place them on the Altar:

- Priest's chalice (paten, large host pall and purificator)
- Four additional chalices
- Four additional purificators

While the Altar is being set, the remaining server(s) goes down the steps, bows to the Altar and then proceed up the center aisle to the back of the Church and position themselves to lead the Offertory procession (called the Procession of Gifts) down the center aisle. **NOTE: Please remember when an Altar Server is going down the aisle to greet the Offertory procession and lead the procession, hands are to be folded in a prayerful position.**

Once all are ready with the gifts of hosts, wine and the collection, the servers begin to slowly proceed up the aisle, leading the people who will present the gifts of bread and wine to the Celebrant. The Priest-Celebrant will hand gifts to the Deacon and servers. The lector receives the gift of the monetary collection.

The Deacon and Altar Servers place the gifts on the altar.

The Servers bring the cruets (water and wine) and proceed to the side of the altar. The wine cruet is presented first to the Deacon or Priest, followed by the water cruet. Both cruets are to be presented with the handles facing the Deacon/Celebrant. After the Deacon/Celebrant hands the wine and water cruets back to the Servers, they slightly bow to each other.

Once the cruets are placed back on the credence table, the Servers proceed to the side of the Altar. One Server will hold the water bowl as the Celebrant washes his hands. The other server will hold out the unfolded towel for the Celebrant to dry his hands. The towel and water bowl are then placed on the credence table.

**Note:** On limited, special occasions, Mass procedures will change slightly. Rather than go into these in detail here, we will go over them together when the occasion arises.

The Server rings the bells at:

- Father Len/Hemsworth lays out his hands over host and chalice (one ring)
- The elevation of the Host (one ring) when Father has raised the host over his head
- The elevation of the Chalice (one ring) when Father has raised the chalice over his head
- After the last verse of Lamb of God is finished (one ring)

After the servers receive Holy Communion from the Priest or Deacon and while the congregation receives Holy Communion, the Altar Servers may sit down with hands folded in prayerful position.

When the Celebrant stands at his chair, the book-server returns to stand in front of him, taking the Missal and holding it in front of him. The Deacon will open the missal to the final prayer.

When the Priest and Deacon reverence (kiss) the altar, the Servers will take their positions in front of the Sanctuary.

Facing the Altar, the cross-bearer with the candle-servers on either side, is to stand in the center aisle next to the first pew.

When the Deacon/Celebrant genuflect/bow, the servers will bow. The cross-bearer need not bow. All servers are to turn and begin slowly walking down the center aisle to the back toward the vestibule.

### **AFTER MASS RESPONSIBILITIES**

Candle servers extinguish the candles.

All servers then neatly hang their albs back on the hanger. Please make sure that the neck is buttoned so that the alb does not slip off.

Finally, please don't forget to say a prayer of gratitude to the Lord whom you received and served at Mass.

## GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Pay attention, especially to the Priest or Deacon; you never know when they may call you over.

Try not to let your mind wander. When it does, just bring it back to focusing on worshipping the Lord and your responsibilities as an altar server.

It is **your responsibility** to check the Altar Server schedule and serve your assigned Masses (or find a replacement). Please contact Mrs. Klampfer if you cannot locate your schedule.

It is **your responsibility** to find a substitute if you cannot serve your assigned Mass. The names and numbers of all servers are sent out with each new schedule. You may use the Altar Server e-mail distribution list as well, to request a replacement.

Be sure to eat breakfast before Mass. Serving on an empty stomach may cause you to feel dizzy or even faint. However, please remember to fast one hour before receiving Holy Communion.

If you feel ill while serving Mass, go to the back sacristy behind the Altar. Please do not try to continue to serve Mass. Get a drink and some fresh air. If you feel better, you are most welcome to return to the Sanctuary.

**NOTE:** Please remember when an Altar Server is standing, kneeling or processing throughout Mass and has nothing in his/her hands, s/he should have hands folded in a prayerful position.

**Remember: when passing in front of the altar at all times to bow. When processing in/out of Mass hands are to be folded in a prayerful position.**

**REQUESTED ATTIRE: Guys:** Dress pants or slacks, dress shirt, dress shoes

**Girls:** Dress top or skirt or dress or sweater or blouse, slacks,

Please ensure a reverent and respectful demeanor while serving Mass. When standing or kneeling without anything in your hands, please keep your hands folded and pointed upward. When seated, please sit up straight, and keep your hands on your lap. Please remember that you are in the presence of the Lord.

If you are attending Mass for which you are not serving, it is a great help to the Priest/Deacon if you stop by the vesting room before Mass to see if additional altar servers are needed.

## ALTAR SERVER VOCABULARY

Following is a typical altar server vocabulary or glossary. Ordinarily, only some of these apply for a typical Sunday Mass. However, most, if not all of these will apply on special occasions such as the Easter Vigil Mass and Mass with a Bishop, such as Confirmation.

**Alb:** White robe worn by an altar server over his/her ordinary clothing during Mass.

**Ambo:** The pulpit or reading stand where the lector reads the readings during Mass. It is also where the Deacon or Priest reads the Gospel and delivers the homily.

**Aspergillum:** Holy water bucket

**Boat:** The small container for incense. A small spoon goes with the boat.

**Candle Lighter and Snuffer:** A brass rod with a wooden handle used to light and extinguish altar candles. It has a bell shaped snuffer at one side and an extending wick on the other.

**Chalice:** The large cup used to hold the wine that the Priest consecrates.

**Ciborium:** Container used to hold the hosts. Plural: ciboria

**Cincture:** A small rope worn by an Altar Server over the Alb and tied around the waist.

**Cope:** Large ornamental cloak the Priest/Deacon wears to carry the Blessed Sacrament or give a blessing.

**Corporal:** Large, square white linen cloth placed on the altar. The chalice, ciborium or paten is placed on it.

**Credence Table or Stand:** A table or stand covered by a white cloth used to hold the chalices, wine, water and water bowl. The credence stand is located on the left side, in the back of the altar.

**Cruet:** A glass bottle used to hold water or wine.

**Finger Towel:** A small white towel (without a red cross) used by the Priest to dry his hands.

**Hand Washing Bowl:** A glass bowl used by the Priest to wash his hands.

**Humeral Veil:** Worn over the cope when the Priest /Deacon carries the Blessed Sacrament or gives a blessing.

### **Liturgical Books:**

**Sacramentary (Roman Missal)** – The Altar Book containing the prayers used at Mass

**Lectionary** – The Book of the Word of God, used for Mass readings. These readings come from the Holy Bible.

**The Book of the Gospels** – The book containing the Gospels, which the Deacon carries in procession.

**Missal** – Actually called the **Roman Missal**. A large red book that contains the prayers said by the Priest at Mass. It is usually kept on a small table by where the altar servers sit.

**Monstrance** – The large, golden ornate vessel used to hold the Blessed Sacrament

**Pall** – The white linen square used to cover the chalice during Mass. Also, a white covering for a casket.

**Paten** – A small circular plate used to hold the large host.

**Processional Candles** – Large candles on metal candlesticks carried by servers during Mass.

**Processional Cross** – Large crucifix carried by a Server during Mass. It is usually placed in a stand behind to the right of the Sanctuary during Mass.

**Purificator** – A medium-sized towel with a red Cross on the middle used by the Priest or Deacon to dry the chalice.

**Pyx** – A small round container (one or two inches across) with a lid. It is used to hold consecrated hosts which will be taken to the sick after Mass.

**Sanctuary** – The sacred part of Church that is elevated by steps. It is the location of the Altar, Tabernacle, and Ambo.

**Tabernacle** – The large repository with locked doors that stands in the center of the Sanctuary behind the altar. It holds the Holy Eucharist.

**Thurible** – The vessel that holds the burning charcoal on which incense is placed