

MINISTRY OF ADULT ALTAR SERVERS AT ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST CATHOLIC CHURCH

Welcome, and thank you for answering God's call to the ministry of Altar Server. You will become one of a very few who have the privilege of serving in the sanctuary at the table of the Lord. You will have the special task of aiding the priest during the celebration of the Eucharist. I will do my best to see that you are properly prepared for this wonderful experience. If, during your ministry, you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me. At this time, you are being trained to serve at the Saturday, 4:30 liturgy, the Sunday 7:00 liturgy, the 8:00 or 10:00 weekday liturgy, or a funeral liturgy. Most of the current servers do not regularly attend the Saturday liturgy, but they have found it very rewarding to occasionally forego their regular Mass time in order to be a part of this ministry. If you are a Reader or a Eucharistic Minister – no problem. I create the server's schedule as soon as those schedules are e-mailed and posted, making sure you are not signed up for double duty during a weekend. Currently with a roster of approximately 14 servers for 4:30, you would be scheduled to serve once every 6 weeks. There have been times when several have not been available for a period of time (extended illness, family matters, snow birds etc.). In these cases, the rotation might be as often as every 4 weeks. A six to 10 week schedule will be e-mailed to you approximately a week to 10 days before it begins. Again, the Altar Server schedule cannot be finalized until the Reader/Eucharistic Minister schedule is posted. I ask that you please keep me up-to-date with e-mail and/or phone number changes. Your contact information will be put on the master roster of Altar Servers. A copy will be given to each server for scheduling a substitute when needed. I ask that all servers keep this information private. I will also send out e-mails when adult servers are needed for additional liturgies (e.g. Mass of the Anointing of the Sick, Senior Appreciation Mass, Holidays and Holydays). In addition, adult servers are also used to assist at funeral liturgies here at the St John campus. Please let me know if you feel called to this ministry as well. Some additional training will be offered to you. Some of you are volunteering to serve at the 7:00 Sunday liturgy in the absence of scheduled youth servers. If you are an adult server attending 7:00 mass and the candles aren't lit 10 minutes before the start of mass, feel free to light the candles, make sure the Roman Missal is on the servers' chair, take the cross to the back of church and prepare yourself to serve.

It is a good idea to quiet yourself for a few moments when you are scheduled to serve, and offer a prayer. Below are examples of an Altar Servers Prayer Before Mass as well as an Altar Servers Prayer After Mass.

God our Father, I thank you for the privilege of serving at your Altar. Help me to be reverent and attentive in your house. Help me to listen carefully to your word and so be an example to others. Amen.

I ask you Lord to remain with me throughout the rest of my day. Bless me and guide me always in your ways. Keep me close to you always, and thank you Lord for the opportunity to serve at your Altar today. Amen.

Be at ease in speaking to God. Use your own words. Offer praise that He allows you to serve in this ministry.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

1. Arrive 20 minutes before the start of Mass.
2. First and foremost, you are in God's house.
3. Always be respectful and move quietly around the sanctuary.
4. Dress appropriately.
5. Stand straight, walk reverently, and sit with feet flat on the floor.
6. Always remain standing until Father is seated (even if he addresses the congregation to be seated).
7. Always face what is going on. Face the ambo as the gospel is being proclaimed or the prayers of the faithful are being offered.
8. Never walk across the Sanctuary in front of Father. Use the ramp to walk around.
9. Keep your hands folded (as if in prayer) when you are sitting, standing etc.
10. Participate in the responses, songs etc.
11. Always check ahead of time to make sure there is a wick in at least one of the candle lighters located in the sacristy. All too often, a server has found them all empty and at the last minute has to load one.

PLEASE DON'T LEAVE YOUR PARTNER STRANDED!!! CALL AND CONFIRM A SUB AHEAD OF TIME WHEN YOU ARE NOT ABLE TO SERVE ON YOUR SCHEDULED DATE. REMEMBER, MOST OF OUR SERVERS ARE ALSO READERS AND EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS AT OTHER MASSES. A SUB CANNOT ALWAYS BE FOUND IN THE CONGREGATION JUST BEFORE 4:30 MASS BEGINS.

A WALK THROUGH THE MASS

Upon arriving, sign in. The sign in sheet is in the Vesting Room on the back counter. If your serving partner doesn't show up by 4:20, search the congregation for a sub. Father or an usher may be able to help you spot one. Be aware that there could be that rare occasion when there is no second server, and adjust accordingly.

Bring the cross from the sanctuary to the stand behind the baptismal font.

Make sure the Roman Missal is in a server's chair ready for you to take to Father for the opening prayer.

If it is Christmastime or Easter time, make sure the bells are on the pillow in the Sanctuary and always on the pillow when Father D is offering Mass.

Ten minutes before mass starts, light the candles on either side of the altar and on either side of the ambo. Always carry the lit wick in an upwards position to prevent hot wax from dripping. When the candles are lit, immediately slide the wick back in to extinguish the flame, then extend the wick back out ½ inch so the hot wax does not stick to the inside of the lighter. **During Easter Season, make sure the Paschal Candle is lit.**

Decide between the two of you who will be Server 1 and who will be Server 2.

Server 1 (S1) will be the cross bearer.

Server 2 (S2) will be the book bearer. (Roman Missal)

PROCESSION

When the opening hymn begins, the cross bearer will be at the edge of the carpet and Server 2 will be just behind. You will begin processing slowly and reverently down the aisle as soon as the singing starts. When the cross bearer gets to the sanctuary steps, turn to the right several steps, and wait for Server 2, the Deacon (if present) and Father to reach the steps. Father and the Deacon will bow and/or genuflect, and Server 2 will bow at the same time. (Father has dispensed the adult servers from having to genuflect and kneel on the floor of the sanctuary.) The cross bearer will then ascend the side steps,

chapel side, place the cross in the stand, return down the side steps and take the ramp to the side server chairs. Server 2 will ascend the side steps behind the ambo to the server chairs.

OPENING PRAYER

Unless there is a rite or blessing before Father starts the Mass, the servers will stay in position until Father/Deacon signals for the Roman Missal for the Gloria/Opening Prayer. You will get a nod after the Lord Have Mercy. Stand straight and still and Father (or the deacon) will open the book and read the prayer. He will close the book when he finishes, and you will return to your chair.

BRINGING UP OF GIFTS

S1 - When the Offertory Procession returns (after Covid), take the ramp to the side steps to retrieve the cross and reverently process to the edge of the carpet in front of the Baptismal Font. When the gift bearers are ready, reverently lead them to Father. When you reach the steps of the Sanctuary, turn and continue on to place the cross in the stand. Then IMMEDIATELY go to the steps to help S2 receive the gifts from Father.

S2 – After the Prayers of the Faithful, Father will take a seat in his chair. At this time, you will first place the children’s gift basket on the top step in the middle of the Sanctuary if it’s not already there. Then place the Roman Missal on the left, lower corner of the Altar in the closed position, or for **Father D** the missal stand and missal are already on the corner of the altar. Proceed to the Credence Table and bring up the Chalice and place it to the immediate right of the corporal. In most cases, the Water, Wine and Altar Breads are in the back to be brought up as gifts with the exception of the 7 a.m. Mass. There is no offertory procession at the early Mass, so everything will be on the credence table. The tray of Gold Cups and Linen Cloths will be brought to the Altar later by the Deacon or Eucharistic Minister Captain. Step back to your chair until Father proceeds to the steps to receive the gifts. With Father at the steps of the Sanctuary, take the children’s gift basket and place it just under the Altar. Then, since the Cross Bearer is still in motion, you will have to receive the gifts from Father, quickly take the gifts to the Altar, and then return to Father for more. The Altar Breads may be placed on the center of the Corporal for **Father**. The Wine and Water should be placed next to the Chalice just to the right of the corporal with the handles facing Father.

OFFERTORY

Presuming there is no deacon, S2 will remain to the side of the Altar and hand Father (handles toward him) the Water and Wine cruets. He will then return each to you. Return them both to the Credence Table. Father will also return to you the large empty pitcher after pouring the wine into the gold cups. (Occasionally there will still be wine in the large pitcher and Father will either hand it to you or leave it on the Altar for consecration.) S1 will be ready with the Pitcher & Basin for the washing of the hands. S2 will take the towel, open it and hold it out for Father. Always approach Father. Do not make him walk back to you.

After Father has washed his hands, he will bow to you. At the same time, you will bow to him. Return the vessels and towel to the Credence Table and step to your chairs for the Mass to continue. (Do NOT

place the terry towel in the Basin to absorb the water.) Again, adult servers may remain standing during the consecration.

CONSECRATION

When Father genuflects or bows after elevating the Host (Body of Christ), you will bow at the same time. Repeat this action after Father elevates the Wine (Precious Blood).

During Christmastime (Christmas through the Baptism of the Lord) and Eastertime (Easter through the Feast of Pentecost), the bells will be rung up to four times. After each ring of the bells, place them on the pillow to quiet the sound and prevent accidental ringing.

- 1.) During the "Glory to God" portion of the Gloria when it is sung.
- 2.) When Father places his hands over the Altar Breads and Wine at the beginning of the Consecration.
- 3.) When Father elevates the Host.
- 4.) When Father elevates the Chalice.
- 5.) **Father D wishes the bells to be rung at all masses. No ringing during the Gloria unless it's Christmastime or Eastertime. When Father elevates the body and then the blood, ring the bells when he faces the left side of the congregation, then ring the bells when he faces the middle, then finally ring the bells when he faces the right side of the congregation.**
- 6.) Fr. D would like a short, tinkling of the bells when he genuflects after raising the bread and also after raising the cup.

COMMUNION

S1 - After the Greeting of Peace, the Deacon or the EM Captain will be bringing the cups to the right side of Father. Likewise, the empty Ciboria will be brought to the left side. You will remove the Roman Missal from the Altar (**for Father Andrew**) and take it to your chair so there is room on Father's left. Father Andrew will pray the "Lord I Am Not Worthy" without the use of the book. **For Father D**, leave the Missal on the Altar until he takes his station to distribute communion. The ciboria will have to be placed around the Missal. After all Ministers of the Eucharist have moved out of the Sanctuary to serve, you may take the Roman Missal (**for Father D**) over to the servers' chair. Make sure you bring the water cruet back to the Altar, placing it just off the Corporal with the handle facing Father. Leave the Chalice, Paten, Pall and Purificator on the Altar as he will purify the vessels when he returns to the Altar from distributing communion. Then, be prepared to accept the vessels (using 2 hands) from Father and either return to receive the water cruet from him, or nod to S2 to return it to the Credence Table. If there are consecrated hosts still on the Altar, the E M Captain will take them back to the Credence Table.

AFTER COMMUNION

S2 – Will take the Roman Missal to Father for the Closing Prayer. Again, Father or the Deacon will nod to you when he is ready. Walk back to your place and leave the Missal on a chair.

RECESSIONAL

After the Final Blessing, the Cross Bearer will go down the ramp and up the steps to take the Cross from the stand. Process to the second pew, turn and face the Altar. Meanwhile, S2 will go down the steps behind the Ambo, and proceed to the spot just in front of the Cross Bearer. Turn and face the Altar. Father and the Deacon will step down and turn just in front of S2. Watch for Father/Deacon to genuflect/bow. S2 will bow at the same time. When they make their turn to walk down the aisle, so will you. When the cross bearer gets to the side of the Baptismal Font, turn and wait for Father & the Deacon to reverence the cross. Then you may put it in the stand.

AFTER MASS

The Cross Bearer will return the Cross to the stand in the Sanctuary. S2 will get a Snuffer to extinguish the candles. Hold the Snuffer upright, turn down to extinguish a candle, and then turn it back upright while walking to the next candle. Extinguish candle 2, then repeat with candles 3 and 4. During Easter time, remember also to snuff the Paschal Candle. Have the other server or an usher help you if needed. Holding the Snuffer upright prevents any hot wax from dripping on the floor or on you.

Remember to offer a prayer of thanksgiving for the opportunity to have served the Lord this day.

Mary Jo Headrick, August 1, 2015

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