

Saint Mary Roman Catholic Church
Altar Server Guidelines
Updated: May 2013 (CS)

Please familiarize yourself with Altar Server expectations.
Arrive 15 minutes before Mass.
Wash your hands with soap and water. Sanitizer is not the same!
Robe and be ready to pray.
Light candles 10 minutes before Mass.

Introductory Rite

Entrance Procession

- Cross bearer begins process as the choir begins to sing. Be sure that the corpus (Jesus' body) on the cross is straight.
- The other two servers follow four pews behind the cross bearer with hands folded.
- *Exception: When incense is used, the incense (thurifer) leads the procession.*
- When reaching the foot of the Altar
 - the **cross bearer** moves to the base of the steps at left, in front of the Ambo.
 - **Second Server** moves to the bottom of the steps to the left.
 - the **book bearer** moves to the bottom of the steps, two feet to the right of Father.
 - Father and Deacon are at the center.
- When Father genuflects, all genuflect except the cross bearer (and thurifer, if used.)
- Servers remain at the foot of the altar until the priest venerates the altar, then:
 - **Cross Bearer** places cross in holder to the left of the altar and proceeds to chair behind organ.
 - **Second Server** goes to chair behind organ.
 - **Book Bearer** goes to right of altar, around rail (closest to wall), picks up the binder and stands beside Father. When it is time turn and face Father. Stand with your back centered on the wooden rail, rail touching your back.

Opening Prayer

- **Book Bearer** holds binder open while Father reads the Collect.
- At the completion of the Collect the **book bearer** places the book on the stand and moves to chair next to Baptismal Font.

Liturgy of the Word.

- All servers remain seated and listen attentively to the readings. NO CHATTING OR LOOKING AROUND.
- Stand in place at the Gospel Acclamation.
- Sit after the Gospel for the homily.

Profession of Faith (Creed)

- **Book Bearer** immediately moves to pick up binder when Father stands in front of Presider's chair. Hold for Creed and Prayer of the Faithful.
- **Cross bearer** stands and remains standing.
- **Second Server** stands and remains standing.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

- At the completion of the Prayer of the Faithful:
 - **Cross bearer** puts the Roman Missal on the altar, on its stand. Immediately take the Crucifix to the back of the Church for the Procession with the Gifts.
 - **Second server** takes the chalice to the altar and places it in the center. Be sure that the Chalice veil faces the front. Always pull the edges of the chalice veil out.
 - **Second server** moves to the credence table and brings the tray with chalices, patens and purificators to the altar. Wait until Father or Deacon places all items on the altar, return the tray to the credence table and return to your seat.
 - **Book bearer** remains seated.
 - When the Priest stands and moves to the bottom of the steps to receive the gifts
 - **Second server** joins Priest on side of Ambo (Father is to your left).
 - **Book bearer** joins Priest on side of Baptismal Font (Father is to your right).
 - **Cross bearer** leads the gifts to the altar and proceeds to place the cross in its stand.
 - **Second server** take the wine pitcher, proceed to the altar and wait.
 - **Book bearer** takes the basket with the collection and places it under the window next to the credence table. (Stay on this side.)
 - **Cross bearer** join second server at the altar with the cruet with water. Take the top off, hold it with the handle towards the priest and hand it to the Deacon (if present.)
 - **Book Bearer** join servers at side of altar, stand next to wall.
 - **Second Server** return the wine pitcher to the credence table when Deacon or Father has finished with it. Return to altar with lavabo (bowl) and towel. Hand towel to Book Bearer.
 - **Book Bearer:** open the towel to full size and hold it up.
 - **Second Server:** hold the bowl down for Father's washing of his hands.
 - When the washing of hands is complete, return the water pitcher, bowl, finger towel to the credence table. Return to seats on the side of the organ and remain standing. Do not put the pitcher in the bowl when the bowl has water in it.

Eucharistic Prayer

- After the Holy, Holy, Holy **all servers** kneel on the steps on the outside of the rails (the side closest to the wall).
- At the Epiclesis (when Father brings his hands over the gifts) Server two rings the bells one (1) time. At the Consecration, **Server two** rings the bells three (3) times as the Body of Christ is elevated and three (3) times as the Sacred Blood is elevated.

The Communion Rite

- After the Our Father servers exchange the sign of peace with each other only.
- When the Eucharistic Ministers move to the altar, go up behind them and stand near the window.
- Receive Communion when approached. Remain at window.

- After the Eucharistic Ministers, Father and the Deacon begin distributing Holy Communion all servers go behind altar and bow to the altar.
 - **Cross bearer:** removes book and places it on the shelf beneath the credence table. Return to seat. Remain standing.
 - **Book Bearer** moves to seat by Baptismal Font. Remain standing until people sit, then be seated.
 - **Server two** removes book-stand and Roman Missal and places it on the shelf beneath the credence table. Remain standing.
- When Father places the ciborium into the Tabernacle:
 - **Server two** takes the cruet of water to the altar for Father to use in purifying his Chalice. Return the cruet when Father is finished with it.
 - **Cross bearer:** Take the Chalice veil and bursa to altar for Father to place on Chalice. When Father has covered the Chalice, remove it from the altar. Place it on the credence table. Pull the edges of the chalice veil out.
 - Return to seats and sit.

Concluding Rite.

- When Father stands for the conclusion of Mass:
 - **Book Bearer:** immediately go up and stand beside Father. Move to the front position when indicated and hold the binder through the closing prayer.
- After the final blessing and dismissal, the recessional hymn is begins. Father venerates the altar:
 - **all servers** proceed to the foot of the altar in your designated places.
 - When Father bows, **Server two** and **Book Bearer** genuflect.
 - When Father turns to leave, process as you did for entry with the Cross bearer leading.
- All servers process into the Sacristy.
 - **Cross bearer** process to brown doors (where robes are) and turn with your back facing the doors.
 - **All servers move into the sacristy.**
 - **Father** will pray and you respond, "Omnibus et singulis."
 - **At this time the celebration of Mass is finished for servers. Not before.**

Extinguish all candles after Mass.

Hang up your robe.

You are expected to know, say and sing all of the people's Mass parts. If you are at your seat during a hymn, use the book. You are part of the congregation.

At no time are you to carry on a conversation with another server during Mass.

If you are not actively doing a job, your hands are to be folded and still.

If you are feeling ill, you have permission to leave the altar area.