

# **ALTAR SERVER PROCEDURES**

**REVISED SEPTEMBER 2009**

## **A. Before Mass**

- 1) Serve at your assigned Mass and time. If you are unable to serve, email or call another server to sub for you. If you cannot find a sub, make sure there are at least 2 servers on your serving team who will be present. Let your team leader know of any changes.
- 2) Dress appropriately (see "What Not To Wear").
- 3) Arrive 15 minutes before Mass begins.
- 4) Put on vestment, the Alb. Secure rope belt around waist. Secure ALL snaps (this is very important).
- 5) Check to make sure water for hand washing with towel, water for mixing in the wine, and the Missal (prayer book) are on the credence table (side table). Notify a Eucharistic Minister if the chalices, bowls, and purificators (napkins) aren't on the credence table.
- 6) Light candles.
- 7) Receive instructions from your team leader as to your duties for the Mass. They include cross, candles (2), Missal holder, table setters (2), offertory/water and wine (2), hand washing and towel (2).
- 8) Meet in Work Sacristy to pray with priest and other ministers if time permits.

## **B. Procession**

### **--Order of Procession:**

- 1) Cross bearer with two candle bearers (one on either side of the Cross) walking shoulder to shoulder
- 2) Deacon or reader carrying the Book of the Gospels
- 3) Other ministers
- 4) Priest

### **--Begin to walk SLOWLY when the words of the music are sung.**

### **--At front of Church, stop at first pew:**

- 1) Cross bearer – go up steps, pass the altar on the right, carry cross to the stand, and return slowly to pew by way of the ramp.
- 2) Candle bearers – when cross bearer passes the altar, move up together to the candle stands and place candles. Return slowly to pew.
- 3) Other servers – stop at foot of steps, bow head, then go to pew. Missal holder remove missal from the credence table and stand next to priest.
- 4) REMAIN STANDING and sing with congregation.

**C. Opening Prayer:**

--**The priest will welcome all to church.** He will motion for the missal holder to move into position in front of him. Hold the book out for him so he may recite the opening prayer. When he says "amen", return Missal to credence table and be seated with other servers.

**D. Preparation of the Altar and Gifts:** After the prayers of the faithful (or petitions), when music begins and collection is taken:

- 1) Table setters place chalices, purificators and missal on the altar as shown.
- 2) Offertory -- When priest walks to front of altar to receive gifts, servers in charge of offertory must join him (one on either side). Do not walk in front of priest! Two different scenarios may occur:
  - a. Priest will keep the host and hand wine to one server. Both servers walk together to credence table, get water and walk together to altar.
  - b. Priest hands one server the host and the other the wine. Server with host must present it to the priest at the altar, and then return to credence table while server with wine walks straight to credence table.  
--Together, both servers bring the priest the water and wine to the altar. Return to pew.  
--IMMEDIATELY after servers return, the next servers get hand washing bowl and towel and wait at steps. When priest gives cue, walk up to altar and begin hand washing. Make certain to allow enough room for the priest to place hands in bowl while pouring water. UNFOLD towel and hand to priest. The priest will then hand the wine carafe to the servers; return all items to credence table and sit in pew.

**E. Eucharistic Prayer and Communion:** Servers kneel during the Eucharist Prayer with the other members of the assembly. Receive communion and be seated. BE ALERT as Eucharistic ministers may need your assistance with removing vessels from altar.

**F. Prayer After Communion:** When priest is seated after communion, missal holder stands next to priest with the missal (unless priest is holding it). When priest motions server to move into position, stand in front of the priest with the missal so he may recite the closing prayer. After he closes the missal, return to pew.

**G. Leaving the Church:** When the priest says "Mass is ended, let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord", servers retrieve cross and candles and line up with other servers in center aisle at front pew facing the altar. Priest will join servers, then turn to walk out of church. All servers turn and walk slowly down aisle.

**H. After Mass:** Make sure congregation has left, then return cross to stand in the back of church and candles to altar. Hang up robes.