

Altar Server Training – St. Joseph’s – Sunday Mass (Updated September 2018)

Reminders:

- Must be 4th grade or older; age 9 or older
- Nice Dress: no flip-flops.
- Albs should go down to your ankles.
- If cincture is long enough, fold in half, make a loop and pull the ends through making a knot. If the cincture is not long enough, just one simple knot is required; wear the cincture on the left side.
- During Mass, make sure your alb is on straight. When you sit down, straighten it out.
- All servers sit down together (e.g. wait for book bearer to get back from the opening prayer)
- When standing have hands together with thumbs crossed.
- When sitting have hands on your knees.
- When kneeling have hands together with thumbs crossed.
- Always go to the Priest when bringing or taking items. The Priest should not have to come to you.
- When bringing items to the Priest/Deacon at the altar, ALWAYS bow to them after giving them the item.
- When taking items from the Priest/Deacon at the altar, ALWAYS bow to them after taking the item from them.
- Always bow to the altar when pass by, or when entering/exiting sanctuary.

Come to the sacristy at least 15 minutes before Mass begins. If you are not in the sacristy by 10 minutes before Mass, we will look for another server. We always want to have three servers, so feel free to check in even if you aren't scheduled.

Sign in and then put on your alb and cincture.

-Positions

- Cross Bearer/Book Bearer/Bells
- Candle Bearer/Set up and take down altar (2) or if alone just set up and take down altar

Right before we go to the back of the church we will say a prayer together in the sacristy facing the crucifix. Please pray along if it is a memorized prayer. If we have three servers, one will carry the cross, and the other two will carry candles. If only two servers, then one carries the cross, and the other walks in with hands folded.

As soon as the first words are sung in the opening hymn, the procession begins. The cross bearer leads the procession followed by two candle bearers side by side or simply with a server following with hands folded. As you reach the bottom of the sanctuary, bow to altar, put cross and candles away and go to your spot. Do not wait for everyone to line up. Bow and go. *****Leave at least an arm's length between each server or servers, and walk slowly.**

Book bearer brings book to Father for the collect as the Gloria is coming to an end (“with the Holy Spirit”) or during Advent and Lent as the final “Lord have Mercy” is being sung. (Daily Mass priest says: “May almighty God have mercy on us...”) Father will open the book. Allow the book to rest on your chest so your arms don't get too tired. When Father starts closing his arms, you can close the book and go back to your chair.

If we have candle bearers, right after the second reading is finished (“the Word of the Lord, Thanks be to God”) you will stand up and grab your candles. Come to the altar and stand side by side as Candle Bearers at the edge of the altar between the ambo and altar, with your back to ambo. When the deacon or priest starts to turn towards the ambo with the Book of Gospels, you will walk over to the ambo flanking the priest/deacon on either side of the ambo facing each other. After the Gospel is finished, put your candles away and sit down.

Immediately after the intercessions when the congregation sits down, the priest or deacon will go to the altar. The book bearer will bring the book to the altar and give it to the priest/deacon. Then the other server(s) will bring things from the credence table. Start with the presider's chalice, then the other chalices, the purificators, and finally the glass cruet of water. The priest/deacon will take care of setting everything up. (Please take from

the altar the burse and veil from the main chalice when the priest/deacon gives it to you, (you will bring it back after communion)). *****Do not sit down from the moment you begin to the set the altar until the altar is finished being set. Stand attentively.**

When the collection (or second collection if there are two) gets half way done, the cross bearer brings the cross to the back of the church and leads the offertory procession. When you arrive at the bottom of the sanctuary, bow to the altar, then put the cross away and go back to your chair.

The other server(s) come forward with the priest (and deacon) to receive the gifts at the base of the sanctuary. Priest receives all the gifts and hands them to servers. One server takes the collection, one server takes the wine, and the deacon (or in his absence the priest) takes the bread. The collection basket goes on the stool by the ambo. The bread and wine get brought to the altar.

Please wait at the altar for the priest/deacon to give you the wine and water cruets. Then go back to the credence table and wait until the priest has said the prayer of offering for the wine. Come forward to the altar to wash the priest's hands. One server holding the water and bowl, while the other server holds the towel with folded hands. After the washing of hands put those things back at the credence table and go back to your chair. *****Do not go back to your chair until after priest's hands are washed. Stand attentively.**

During the Holy, Holy, Holy, go to front of the altar. When it is finished, kneel. The server who rings the bells will ring the bells (one ring – about one second long) for the epiclesis. This is when the Priest's hands are together and the palms of his hands are over the gifts. Then ring the bells at the elevation of the Body and Blood of Christ. For each of these, you should ring the bells with three rings for each elevation.

Stay kneeling in front of the altar until everyone stands for the "Our Father." Stand there until the sign of peace, and then bring the extra patens for the Eucharist to the altar. Then all servers will stand on the side of the altar closest to section 5 pews facing the choir (opposite of the Gospel procession). After you receive Holy Communion, and the priest/deacon/EMs go to distribute to the congregation, the book bearer will go to the altar take the book and go back to their seat. Meanwhile, one of the other servers will bring the water, (and the burse and veil to the altar), place them on the altar and go back to their seat.

After Communion when the priest and deacon come back to the altar, and all of the EM's have left the sanctuary, go to the side of the altar between the altar and the ambo and wait for the priest and deacon to hand you items. Wait until you have two items, and then bring them back to the credence table. The one exception is the presider's chalice. Take this one item with two hands. *****Do not sit down from the moment the priest returns to the altar until everything is put back on the credence table. Stand attentively.**

Everyone will be seated. As soon as the priest stands up, the book bearer brings him the book for the prayer after communion. Father will open the book. Allow the book to rest on your chest so your arms don't get too tired. When Father starts closing his arms, you can close the book and go back to your chair.

Right after the final blessing, as soon the opening hymn begins, grab the cross/candles and line up in center of the main aisle facing the altar. The cross bearer should be at first pew, and the candle bearers/server holding nothing should be directly in front of cross bearer. All face the altar. As soon as the priest and deacon bow toward the altar, you will bow, turn around, and process out. *****Leave at least an arm's length between each server or servers, and walk slowly.**

When you put the crucifix and candles in their holders at the back of the church, all face the crucifix. Priest will say "Praised be Jesus Christ," and everyone responds, "Now and Forever." Snuff out the candles. Go back to the sacristy. Put cincture and alb away neatly.

*****Note – If you cannot make it to serve, it is your responsibility to get a substitute.**