

Orientation for Altar Servers - Our Lady of Lourdes 2018

“Loving Father, Creator of the universe, you call your people to worship, to be with you and each other at Mass. Help me to be prayerful and alert. Help me to help others in prayer. Thank you for the trust you’ve placed in me. Keep me true to that trust. I make my prayer in Jesus’ name, who is with us in the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Preface: Serving at the Altar of the Lord is a special ministry not unlike that of the deacon. Like all ministries it is a Call that cultivates a desire for a more intimate union with our Lord, Jesus Christ. Our loving Savior becomes present on the Altar, just as He was at the Last Supper and Calvary. Serving brings a solemn duty and responsibility to attend to with dignity and reverence.

The unique call of the altar server is to focus the attention of the community on the Eucharistic Celebration, uniting their actions of service with that of the priest and deacon.

All actions including posture, facial expressions, words, dress, and movements should be prayerfully in sync with the movement of the Mass.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

BEFORE MASS:

1. Arrive and be dressed 15 minutes before the Mass begins.
(Make sure the Alb is the RIGHT SIZE, the bottom should be right above the tops of the shoes)
2. Gather in the sacristy with the priest, deacon, lectors and anyone else who will be in the entrance procession.

ENTRANCE PROCESSION:

1. After prayer, the group will move to the entrance of the church by the baptismal font. Altar servers will line up in the following order:
Thurifor, Cross-Bearer, ALTAR SERVERS, Gospel Book (lector or deacon), priest.
2. Once the choir has begun to sing, the altar servers will begin to process in
WALK AT A NORMAL SPEED, Do not run.
3. ALTAR SERVERS will separate right and left at the bottom of the steps **making room** for those who follow them then the group will do a full bow and go up the steps to the left and right of the Altar to the chairs and stay standing

GREETING:

1. The priest begins the mass with the Sign of the Cross and welcomes people to the mass
2. Penitential Rite-the priest or deacon or choir asks us to recall our sins and ask God for forgiveness, we then respond with the “Lord Have Mercy, Christ Have Mercy, Lord Have Mercy.”
3. The Gloria will then be recited or sung.

4. After the Gloria, the priest will say, “**Let us pray...**” which is the cue for the server with the Sacramentary to bring the book over for the priest to read the opening prayer. Stand on the left side of the priest so that the priest can look out at the whole congregation)
5. After the priest is done with the prayer, the server will close the book and place it back on the table. Everyone will be seated to listen to the first reading, the psalm, and the second reading.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

1. First Reading-The Lector will come forward to read the First Reading (No action is required by the altar servers)
2. The psalm will be recited or sung (No action is required by the altar servers)
3. Second Reading-The Lector will come forward to read the Second Reading (No action is required by the altar servers)
4. Gospel Acclamation (Alleluia)
5. The priest/deacon will read the Gospel and then end with “The Gospel of the Lord,” and everyone responds with “Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.” Once everyone has responded they will sit down.
6. The priest/deacon will then preach the Homily
7. After the Homily, the priest/deacon will go back to their seat, then the priest will stand for the Profession of Faith. Everyone stands to recite the Nicene Creed.
8. The priest will start the Prayers of the Faithful, and then lector or deacon will read the petitions of the church (Everyone responds “Lord, hear our prayer”). After the lector or deacon has finished the petitions, the priest will say a prayer. All will respond with “Amen,” and the congregation will sit down.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

1. PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS -After everyone has been seated, the server will bring the Sacramentary and place it on the altar.
 - a. The servers will bring THE CHALICE and place it on the altar. Then THE TWO COMMUNION CUPS TO THE ALTAR ON THE SIDE where the extra altar cloth is located (right). Also bring the two cloths (purificators) and water cruet of Water to the altar.
 - b. Receiving the GIFTS. Once the altar is set the Altar SERVERS will go with the priest or deacon to the bottom of the steps to receive the GIFT (wine and plate of hosts. The priest or deacon will usually give the wine cruet to a server to bring to the altar take the wine. Once at the altar the priest/deacon will pour the wine in the cups then take the priest or deacon to take the water, mix it with the wine, and then it will be handed back to the server. When the cruet is returned to the server, they will bow to the priest or deacon and take it back to the Credence Table.

- c. One server will then bring forward the small pitcher of water, and the bowl, and the other server will bring forward the towel. The server will pour a small amount of water onto the hands
- d. The servers will then return their seats and remain standing, because the priest will then invite the congregation to stand as well to enter into the Eucharistic prayer

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

1. The priest then begins with the preface and then will enter the congregation into the HOLY HOLY, which will be sung or recited
2. The congregation, along with the altar servers, will kneel and the priest will continue with the Eucharist prayer by recalling the Last Supper
 - a. The priest will first pick up the host, to be consecrated, by saying “...take this, all of you and eat it; this is my body which will be given up for you.” The priest will raise the Body of Christ above his head, and the server will ring the bells for 3 seconds.
 - b. The priest will kneel and then pick up the chalice and say, “...take this and drink from it, this is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new and everlasting covenant. It will be shed for you and for all so that sins may be forgiven, do this in memory of me.” The priest will raise the chalice above his head.
3. The priest will proclaim the mystery of faith, which will be sung or recited
4. The priest will finish the prayer by remembering the saints, all those who have departed before us, and chant or recite, “Through Him, with Him, and in Him....”
5. The Great Amen will be sung or recited
6. All members will rise to recite the Our Father
7. After that the priest will then ask the congregation to share with each other a Sign of Peace
 - a. After the altar server has shared the Sign of Peace with the priest, they need to go over and get the plates and place them on the altar to the left of the priest.
 - b. Then the server may share the Sign of Peace with other ministers

COMMUNION

1. The Lamb of God will either be sung by the choir or recited by the priest, and the congregation will join in
2. The congregation will kneel, while the servers and Eucharistic ministers will be lined up to receive communion.
3. The priest will distribute the Body and Blood of Christ
 - a. Once the altar servers have received both, they will go back to their places.
4. Once the priest is done distributing communion, he will return to the altar to purify and clear the altar (The servers will line up to receive items. When a server takes something back to the table, the next server will slide over, and this will continue until the altar has been cleared.)

- a. The priest will then begin to hand things for the servers to place on the Credence Table. When the priest gives you something, bow your head and place it on the table. Then return to the altar to receive the next item
- b. When the altar is cleared the server will take the Sacramentary place it on the table next to the priest and then go back to their seats.

CONCLUDING RITE

1. The priest will return to his seat then present the announcements.
2. The priest will ask everyone to stand and pray (the closing prayer)
 - a. The priest will say, **“Let us pray...”** which is the cue for the server with the Sacramentary to bring the book over for the priest to read the opening prayer. Stand on the left side of the priest.
3. The priest will conclude the mass with the Sign of the Cross.
4. The choir will start the final song.
 - a. When the final song begins the cross bearer will get the cross and leave the altar.
5. The priest and deacon will go to the altar and come to the bottom of the steps
6. The priest will then bow or genuflect and turn (the servers will bow at the same time as the priest and turn around and process out).

****REMINDERS**

- When you are standing or sitting, and not doing anything, keep your hands folded. Do not play with your cincture or do anything else
- PAY ATTENTION, especially to the priest, you never know when they may call you over.
- Follow the Dress Code

DRESS CODE FOR ALTAR SERVERS

- SHOES – dress shoes should be worn.
- HAIR – Hair should be neat and trimmed. Not in your face.
- JEWELRY – Do not wear anything that will make noise and/or will be distracting, or that will cause you to have problems serving.
- VESTMENTS
 - ALTAR SERVER – Alb, Cincture and Cross
 - ACOLTYE – Cassock, Surplice, and Cross

ALTAR SERVER GUIDE LINES

- Serve at every mass that you scheduled for, or make arrangements to have someone cover the mass.
- Arrive at least 15 minutes before the Mass starts to get dressed and make sure that the Altar is prepared.
- Make sure the candles are lit, bread, wine, water, towels, bowl, Sacramentary, and any other Sacramentals are in their proper place.
- Be quiet and respectful when on the Altar, you are role models.
- Be attentive and respond immediately when the priest asks for help.