

**SACRED HEART PARISH:
GUIDELINES FOR ALTAR SERVERS
OCTOBER 2018**

New Altar Servers: Prior to being added to the Ministry Schedule, all new Altar Servers must be trained at Sacred Heart and cleared by the person in charge of Altar Servers. Please contact the Parish Office for any questions.

Per the Pastor: All Ministers are expected to be familiar with the written Guidelines for their Ministry and to follow them as written unless asked to do differently by another Presider.

DEFINITION OF ALTAR SERVER

It is a great privilege to serve at the Altar of our God. Servers have a solemn responsibility to do their assigned duties with dignity and reverence.

Sacred Heart Catholic Church has Altar Servers, who may start after their First Communion and continue for as long as they would like to serve.

DRESS CODE FOR ALTAR SERVERS

Attire: Be a shining example of “appropriate” dress and behavior – not too much or too little.

Jewelry: Do not wear anything that will make noise and/or will be distracting, or that will cause you to have problems serving. Girls may wear “appropriate” earrings to serve.

Vestments: Alb, Cincture and Cross with appropriate colored lanyard for cross.

ALTAR SERVER RULES

- 1) Attend Altar Server Training Classes.
- 2) Altar Servers should not leave the Sanctuary after the start of Holy Mass for any reason except bathroom emergencies, illness, or when directed to do so by the Priest.
- 3) Serve at every Holy Mass that you are scheduled for, or make arrangements to have someone cover the Holy Mass.
- 4) Arrive at least 15 minutes before the Holy Mass starts to get dressed and to check your name off on the Ministry Schedule in the Sacristy. ***Please be aware if any scheduled altar servers are missing and check the congregation for possible replacements of them.***
- 5) Make sure all four candles are lit in the Sanctuary and ask the Priest if the Baptismal Candle needs to be lit.
- 6) If there are three altar servers, one is to carry the cross and two are to carry the candles from either side of the Tabernacle in the Meditation Chapel.
- 7) Perform the duties assigned during the Holy Mass in the prescribed orderly manner.

- 8) Maintain a prayerful posture during all times when in the Sanctuary (if you are not doing something your hands should be folded in your lap).
- 9) Be quiet and respectful when on the Altar, you are role models.
- 10) Be attentive and respond immediately when the Priest asks for help.
- 11) Make sure that your alb, cincture and cross are returned the way you found them.

ALTAR SERVERS STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

BEFORE MASS:

- Arrive and be dressed 15 minutes before the Holy Mass begins
- Make sure the alb is the RIGHT SIZE, the bottom should be right above the tops of the shoes
- Make sure the cloth cross holder (lanyard) is the right color
- Make sure all four candles are lit in the Sanctuary and ask the Priest if the Baptismal Candle needs to be lit.
- Make sure you talk to the other altar servers to determine who will carry the candles from the Meditation Chapel on either side of the Tabernacle and who will be the cross-bearer. ***Remember, the Tabernacle candles are only used if there are at least 3 altar servers.***
- Make sure that the large Missal is on the Gold Missal Holder on the Altar and that there is a Corporal set up with the cross at the bottom and centered near the front of the altar. ***Please check with the Presider prior to Holy Mass regarding the use of the small Missal, the large Missal, and the gold Missal stand.***
- ***If the Priest requests them,*** get the 2 bells (they are kept in 2 red bags) from the Music Room (located to the right side of the Tabernacle) and place them on the Credence Table.

Please Note: If you are involved with unlocking the Choir Loft to turn on the sound system, please be sure to close and lock the choir loft door as soon as you have finished.

ENTRANCE PROCESSION:

- The altar servers will line up in the following order:
 - 1) Altar Server #1 Cross-Bearer - stand in front of the Baptismal Font.
 - 2) Altar Servers #2 and #3 Candle Bearers - stand on either side of the Baptismal Font.
 - If there is only one altar server, that person will carry the cross.
 - If there are only two altar servers, then no candles will be used and the second altar server will line up behind the cross-bearer.
- Once the choir has begun to sing, the altar servers will begin to process in:

- 1) The Cross Bearer will keep walking, (*it is **NOT** necessary to bow before the altar when you are carrying the cross*) go up the steps, and go to the left of the Altar, and put the cross in the stand (in the corner of the ramp).
- 2) The Candle Bearers will keep walking, go up the steps with one server going to the right and the other server going to the left back to the Meditation Chapel to put the candles back on either side of the Tabernacle (they stay lit the whole mass).
- 3) The altar servers go to their chairs on the left of the altar and stay standing.

Please Note: WALK AT A NORMAL SPEED. Do not run down the aisle.

GREETING:

- The Priest begins the Holy Mass with the Sign of the Cross.
- The Priest begins with an introduction explaining the readings, or welcoming people to the Holy Mass.
- Penitential Rite - the Priest 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”.
- The Gloria will then be recited or sung.
- *After the Gloria*, the Priest will say, “Let us pray...”. ***Instead of the altar server bringing over the Missal, the Priest will use the Folder at his chair.***
- ***Again, please check with the Presider prior to Holy Mass regarding the use of the small Missal, the large Missal, and the gold Missal stand.***
- The altar servers will leave the Missal along with the Gold Missal Holder and Corporal on the altar for the entire Holy Mass.
- Everyone will be seated to listen to the 1st Reading, the Psalm, and the 2nd Reading.

LITURGY OF THE WORD:

- 1st Reading - The Minister of the Word will come forward to read the 1st Reading (*No action is required by the altar servers*).
- The Psalm will be recited or sung (*No action is required by the altar servers*).
- 2nd Reading - The Minister of the Word will come forward to read the 2nd Reading (*No action is required by the altar servers*).
- Gospel Acclamation (Alleluia) - 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.” (*The altar servers are to stand during the reading of the Gospel*).
- The Priest / Deacon will then perform his Homily (*The altar servers are to sit during the Homily and stay awake*).

- After the Homily, the Priest / Deacon will go back to their seats, then the Priest will stand for the Profession of Faith. (*Everyone stands to recite the Nicene Creed or the Apostles Creed - the Priest will indicate which Creed is being used*).
- The priest will start the Prayers of the Faithful, and then the Minister of the Word or Deacon will read the petitions of the church (*Everyone responds "Lord, hear our prayer"*). After the Minister of the Word 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:

COLLECTION -

- After everyone has been seated, the Hospitality Ministers will walk forward with the baskets to collect money.

PREPARATION OF THE ALTAR -

- One of the altar servers will bring the Priest's Chalice already set up with the Purificator, Paten, Large Altar Bread, Pall, Corporal, and 2 additional Purificators on top and put it on the altar.
- Set up the altar by gently moving the Gold Missal Holder with the Missal to the left on the altar *if it is being used by the Presider*. Unfold the Corporal and place it on the altar cloth with the Cross at the bottom and then place the Presider Chalice in the center of the Corporal. Place the two additional Purificators side by side on the right side of the Corporal.
- Another altar server will bring over the two small silver chalices and place them on the right side of the altar near the two Purificators.
- The altar servers will then sit down and wait for the Priest to accept the gifts.

RECEPTION OF THE GIFTS -

- When the Priest or Deacon sees that the Gift Bearers are ready to come forward with the gifts, the Priest or Deacon will get up and go to the bottom of the steps to receive the Gifts.
- Two altar servers will go to the bottom of the steps and stand on either side of the Priest or Deacon.
- The altar servers standing on either side of the Priest or Deacon will take the Gifts given to them by the Priest or Deacon, who accepts them from the Gift Bearers.
- ***Two Ministers of Hospitality will take the basket of money and proceed to the safe in the Sacristy.***
- One altar server will take the decanter of altar wine and proceed with the other altar server back to their chairs and stand there until the Priest is ready for the altar wine.
- The Priest or Deacon will take the covered Ciborium with the altar bread to the altar.

PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS:

- When the Priest or Deacon is ready, two altar servers will approach the altar - one with the decanter of altar wine and one with the water pitcher.
- Wait for the Priest or Deacon to first take the decanter of altar wine and fill the three Chalices, then uses the water pitcher to add water to the altar wine - each will be handed back to the altar servers. When both items have been returned to the altar servers, they will bow to the Priest or Deacon, return to the Credence Table, and put the decanter of altar wine back on the Credence Table.
- The three altar servers will then bring forward the small pitcher of water, the hand washing bowl, and the towel. (*Line up with water pitcher, bowl, and then the towel bearer closest to the Congregation*)
- The altar server will pour a small amount of water onto the hands of the Priest while one altar server holds the bowl under his hands and another altar server holds the towel (*Carry the towel on your right arm with the cross or design on the towel facing out.*)
- The altar servers will then bow, return the items to the Credence Table (*make sure they are neatly arranged on the table with the towel refolded*), and remain standing in front of their seats. The Priest will then invite the congregation to stand as well to enter into the Eucharistic Prayer.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER:

- The Priest begins with the Preface and then will lead the congregation into the HOLY HOLY HOLY, which will be sung or recited.
- The congregation will kneel, however the altar servers will do one of two things:
 - 1) ***If the bells are to be used***, the altar servers ***will kneel in front of their seats using the kneelers from under their chairs***. The altar server closest to the Bells will carefully pick them up and wait for the Priest to say “Do this in remembrance of me” as he holds the large Host. At that point, the altar server will do 3 quick 2 second rings of the Bells. When the Priest genuflects, the altar servers will make a profound bow. The Priest will then repeat these words with the Presider’s Chalice and the altar server will repeat the ringing of the Bells.
 - 2) ***If the bells are Not to be used***, the altar servers ***will still kneel in front of their seats using the kneelers from under their chairs***.
- The Priest will continue with the Eucharist Prayer by recalling the Last Supper.
- After the Great Amen is sung or recited, all members will rise to recite the Our Father.
- The altar servers will also rise and stand by their chairs ***after putting their kneelers back under their chairs***.
- After the priest asks the congregation to share with each other a Sign of Peace, the altar servers will proceed to the back of the altar in front of the Presider’s Chair and share the Sign of Peace with the Priest.

COMMUNION:

- The Lamb of God will either be sung by the choir or recited by the Priest, and the congregation will join in.
- The congregation will kneel, while the altar servers and Ministers of Holy Communion will be lined up behind the altar to receive communion.
- The Priest will distribute the Precious Body and Blood of Christ to the altar servers and ministers.
- Once the altar servers and ministers have received Communion, the Priest and / or Deacon and the Ministers of Holy Communion leave the altar to distribute the Precious Body and Blood of Christ. *The altar servers will return to their chairs where they will wait.*
- After the Priest finishes distributing communion, the Priest will return to the altar to purify the Sacred Vessels on the altar. ***Two altar servers approach the altar:*** one altar server will bring the water over to the Priest when he returns to the altar and a second altar server accompanies the first altar server and waits until after the priest is finished purifying the Sacred Vessels and replaces the purificator, paten, pall, and corporal on the Chalice. *The altar servers then bring the Ciborium and the water back to the Credence Table and one returns to the altar to bring the Sacred Vessels back to the Credence Table. ***Please Note: The Presider's Chalice (with the purificator, paten, pall, and corporal) is always carried separately with one hand on top of the pall and corporal, the other hand holding the stem.****
- After the Priest and / or Deacon return to the altar after Communion is distributed, they will remain standing or seated until the Ministers of Holy Communion return to their seats.

CONCLUDING RITE:

- The Priest will ask everyone to stand and pray (the closing prayer).
- The Priest will say, "Let us pray..." *The altar servers then stand, but do not need to get the Cross or Candles yet.*
- The Priest will then read the announcements.
- The Priest will then conclude the Holy Mass with the Sign of the Cross. *At this point, the altar servers will then need to go and get the Cross and the Candles.*
- The choir will then start the final song.
- When the final song begins, the cross bearer will leave the altar and stand in the aisle.
- The candle bearers will also leave the altar and stand next to each other in front of the cross bearer.
- The Priest and Deacon will then go to the altar and come to the bottom of the steps.

- The Priest and Deacon will then bow and turn (*the servers will bow at the same time as the priest and turn around and process out*).
- The altar servers will walk out of the church and return to the Sanctuary.
- The altar servers can then put the cross back in the stand and put the candles on either side of the Tabernacle (*be sure to blow out the candles*), and then neatly hang up their albs, cinctures, and crosses.

****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 he may call you over.
- Once again, if you are assigned to serve, please dress appropriately.

Thank you for your service to the ministry and mission of Sacred Heart Catholic Church.