

Altar Server General Instructions

GENERAL INFORMATION

The primary role of the altar server is to assist the priest in the celebration of the liturgy during Mass. This is done through specific actions and by setting an example to the congregation by active participation in the liturgy (hymns, responses, etc.), by looking alert and sitting or standing at the appropriate times.

SERVER TASKS

Book Server

- Holds the book for the priest for the opening and closing prayers (and when the priest asks)
- Holds one of the candles at the Gospel
- During the preparation of the gifts
 - Assists the priest with receiving the gifts
 - Presents the gifts to the priest at the altar
 - Assist the Bell Server in washing the priest's hands

Bell Server

- Holds one of the candles at the Gospel
- During the preparation of the gifts
 - Assists the priest with receiving the gifts
 - Presents the gifts to the priest at the altar
 - Assist the Book Server in washing the priest's hands
- Ring the bells at the elevations of the body & blood of Jesus during the Eucharistic Prayer

Cross Bearer

- Processes in and out with the cross
- Sets the altar during the offertory

POSTURE

The three primary positions during the mass are standing, sitting and kneeling. In any of these positions a server should maintain a straight formal posture. In the standing and kneeling positions hands should be folded in a praying position. When sitting, the hands should be folded or flat on the lap. When walking, unless carrying something, hands should be folded. Movement should be smooth.

DRESS

Although respectful attire should always be worn in church, as a minister serving at altar of the Lord respectful dress is even more essential. Respectful attire for boys includes a collared shirt and dress pants. For girls, a dress, skirt, dress pants and plain shirt with collar would be considered respectful. Dress shoes should be worn whenever possible. Flip flops and high heel shoes are not conducive to fluent movement and therefore should not be worn while serving. (The School uniform is sufficient for school Masses)

GENUFLECTION & BOWING

Servers should genuflect (the right knee touches the floor and head is bowed) whenever entering a church pew or the sanctuary. Our tradition at St. Alban Roe is to genuflect at the beginning and end of each Mass. Bowing is appropriate when crossing in front of the altar or the tabernacle. The exception is when carrying things like crosses, sacred vessels, books or candles. In those cases the gesture is not necessary.

Special attention to reverence should be given when Jesus is present on the altar. Avoid being in the sanctuary when Jesus is exposed for adoration. If it is necessary to be in the sanctuary during this time, always genuflect when entering the sanctuary and when crossing in front of the Monstrance.

DUTIES BEFORE MASS

Servers should arrive at least ten minutes prior to Mass. Otherwise, those responsible for setting up for Mass may assume that the scheduled servers will not be there and therefore, look for other servers.

Upon arrival the server should dress in the alb and cincture. The alb should be about ankle high in length.

Five minutes prior to Mass time a server should light all appropriate candles.

ORDER OF PROCESSION

Cross Bearer

Bell Server Book Server

Deacon/Lector (carrying Book of the Gospels)

Priest

DUTIES After MASS

Place the priest's hymnal on the counter in the sacristy

Extinguish Candles using the snuffer

Hang albs and cinctures neatly back on the racks and hooks