

## St. Joseph Parish: Altar Server Instructions

### Terms to learn:

Sacramentary – The book that contains the Mass prayers.

Lectionary – The book that contains the readings.

Ciborium (plural is ciboria) – The gold dishes that hold the hosts/ Body of Christ.

The large gold or silver bowl is also called a ciborium.

Chalice – The cups that hold the wine/Blood of Christ.

Cruets – The small pitchers that hold the water and wine.

Offertory Table – Table located in the near the first column or in the back of church.

Credence Table – Table located to the side of the sanctuary.

Sacristy – The rooms behind the altar containing the vestments and vessels for Mass.

Sanctuary – The area surrounding the altar.

Ambo – The stand used for the readings, the Gospel and the homily.

### Before Mass:

1. Be in the sacristy at least 15 minutes before Mass.
2. Choose a suitable length robe – dress quickly and neatly.
3. Light the candles around the altar. (At Easter also light the Paschal Candle). Light processional candles for SERVER 2 and SERVER 3.
4. Place prepared ciborium and wine pitcher on the offertory table. (At Sunday Masses the table will be in the back of the church).
5. Place the covered chalice on the credence table.
6. Place water cruet, with towel and glass dish, on the credence table.
7. Decide who will be SERVER 1, SERVER 2, SERVER 3.
8. SERVER 1 checks with Father that the sacramentary is ready, place it and the stand on the chair on far side of sanctuary. Bring processional cross to sacristy..
9. Go to the back of the church.

### Procession:

1. SERVER 1 leads the procession when the people begin to sing the entrance song.
2. SERVER 2 and SERVER 3 walk side-by-side with candles.
3. Reaching the front, SERVER 1 moves to the right, SERVERS 2&3 to the left.
4. Leave room for the lector on the left and the deacon on the right.
5. Wait for the priest to bow or genuflect.
6. Servers wait for the priest, and deacon to approach the altar – then put cross and candles in their places and return to kneelers.

### During Mass:

Join in the prayers and answer appropriately. Sit, stand, and kneel with the congregation.

Maintain good posture at all times. Be attentive to the priest.

1. After the Gloria on Sunday the priest will say, “Let us pray”. SERVER 1 brings him the book, handling it with hands on the bottom. When the prayer is finished, close the book and return it to the chair.
2. After the prayers of the faithful (during the offertory hymn), SERVER 1 places the sacramentary on the left side of the altar.
3. SERVER 2 places the chalice on the right side of the altar. SERVER 3 places tray with communion cups on the altar.
4. SERVERS 2&3 go with the priest to receive the gifts in the center aisle. Place the ciborium and the wine in the center of the altar.
5. Server carries the water to the altar and **waits**. Priest pours some water into the chalice and returns water to server. Priest returns empty wine container to server.

6. SERVER 2 takes the water and the glass dish; SERVER 3 carries the unfolded towel and both go to the side of the altar. SERVER 2 pours the water over the priest's hands. When he is finished, return items to the credence table, and go to the kneelers.

At Communion:

1. Line up with the Communion Ministers for the Our Father and Sign of Peace.
2. SERVERS 2&3 move all ciboria from the credence table to the left side of the altar
3. SERVER 1 be prepared to take the book and stand from the priest.
4. During communion stand at your kneeler, join in the singing of the hymn.
5. After communion, SERVER 2 brings the water cruet to the altar for the washing of the vessels.
6. When the priest is finished, SERVERS 2&3 remove all vessels from the altar to the credence table.
7. When the priest stands and says, "Let us pray", SERVER 1 takes him the book.
8. After the blessing, SERVER 1 gets the cross; SERVERS 2&3 get their candles and wait for the priest to kiss the altar and leave. Exit in the same order you entered.

After Mass:

1. Servers clear the credence table.
2. Extinguish all candles (remember the Easter candle).
3. Pour any unused wine back into the bottle.
4. Rinse cruets and dry dish.
5. Carefully hang your robe on a hanger, lock the far door, and switch off the lights.

Parents:

Please help your server review these instructions. New servers will begin to serve Mass with more veteran ones before they will be scheduled on the weekends. It may take some time to give everyone that experience, please be patient. If your family attends any weekday Mass and there are less than three servers, your server may step forward as a volunteer.

Anytime your son/daughter is uncertain about serving duties or has any questions please call me and I will arrange to meet him/her and we will review all procedures.

We serve only for the glory of God,  
Sincerely,

Charlotte Voisin    Dan Synder  
224-7904                224-7675

