

The ALTAR SERVER Responsibilities at Mass

The ALTAR SERVERS should arrive at Church 20 minutes before Mass, dress in your alb, and light the Altar candles 15 minutes before Mass begins.

The Mass begins with the entrance song.

Procession order:

If **Incense will be used**:

“INCENSE” ALTAR SERVER carrying the censer/thurible and boat

“CROSS” ALTAR SERVER carrying the cross

“MISSAL” ALTAR SERVER singing with hymnal

Remaining ALTAR SERVERS singing with hymnals

If **no incense will be used**:

“CROSS” ALTAR SERVER leads the procession

“MISSAL” ALTAR SERVER singing with hymnal

Remaining ALTAR SERVERS singing with hymnals

While waiting for Mass to begin, the “CROSS” ALTAR SERVER should rest the cross on your shoe. When the congregation begins to sing, the “CROSS” ALTAR SERVER carries the cross leading the procession to the altar. The “CROSS” ALTAR SERVER holds the cross near the stand until Father (and the Deacon) genuflect, bow and proceed to the altar. The “CROSS” ALTAR SERVER places the cross in the stand and proceeds to the pew.

The “MISSAL” ALTAR SERVER and the other ALTAR SERVERS follow the “CROSS” ALTAR SERVER, carry hymnals and sing with the congregation. The ALTAR SERVERS genuflect and bow with Father (and the Deacon) and then proceed to the pew (**unless incense is being used**).

If **incense is used**, at the foot of the altar, the “INCENSE” ALTAR SERVER hands the thurible/censer to Father to bless the altar. The “INCENSE” ALTAR SERVER holds Father’s hymnal while this is taking place and then switches back with Father at the end of the blessing.

The "INCENSE" ALTAR SERVER places the thurible/censer on the stand on the altar. The other ALTAR SERVERS stay in position until the blessing is complete and Father proceeds up to his chair.

Father will read the first prayer from the Missal which will be on his chair.

The "MISSAL" ALTAR SERVER approaches Father when he says "Let us pray" or nods. The ALTAR SERVER holds the Missal as Father reads. The ALTAR SERVER then carries the Missal to the pew.

The Liturgy of the Word is made up of readings from Scripture. There are two readings.

The Responsorial Psalm is sung between the readings.

If **Incense is used**, the "INCENSE" ALTAR SERVER proceeds to the incense stand, adds incense and presents it to Father or the Deacon just before the Gospel is read. The "INCENSE" ALTAR SERVER returns it to the stand after the blessing and waits behind Father or the Deacon until the Gospel reading is complete. The "INCENSE" ALTAR SERVER can then return to the pew.

After the Gospel is read, Father or the Deacon preaches the homily.

The Liturgy of the Word concludes with the Prayer of the Faithful or the General Intercessions.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist begins with the preparation of the gifts and the altar.

People bring forward the gifts (bread, wine and the offerings). They wait for the Cross Altar Server to lead them.

The "CROSS" ALTAR SERVER carries the cross to the back of the Church and leads the gift bearers to the Altar.

The "MISSAL" ALTAR SERVER places the Missal on the altar in the center and then assists with receiving the gifts (usually the cup or the bowl). The other ALTAR SERVERS can assist with receiving the gifts.

After the gifts and altar are prepared, the Eucharistic Prayer begins.

The "CROSS" ALTAR SERVER carries the water (The Deacon may already have the water.) bowl and towel to the Deacon first so he can add water to the Chalice if the Deacon is participating. Otherwise the "CROSS" ALTAR SERVER carries the items to Father so he can add water to the Chalice and then wash his hands. The "CROSS" ALTAR SERVER returns all items to the credence table, folds the towel and places it next to the bowl.

The "MISSAL" ALTAR SERVER places the kneelers (cushions) in position at the pew.

The Communion Rite follows the Eucharistic Prayer. The rite begins with the Lord's Prayer.

Communion takes place. All ALTAR SERVERS should be first in line to receive Communion.

The "CROSS" ALTAR SERVER ensures the kneelers are returned to the seat on the pew.

While Communion is being distributed, the "MISSAL" ALTAR SERVER ensures the altar is clear. Place the Missal on the arm of Father's chair.

After Communion, there is the Prayer after Communion. Then there a moment of silent prayer.

The "MISSAL" ALTAR SERVER will approach Father for the reading when Father says "Let us pray" or nods. The ALTAR SERVER holds the Missal as Father reads.

The Father then blesses the people assembled.

The Father (or the Deacon) dismisses the people.

The "MISSAL" ALTAR SERVER proceeds to where Father (and the Deacon) are standing in front of the altar and genuflects and bows with them. The ALTAR SERVERS carry the hymnals and sing with the congregation while exiting the Church.

The "CROSS" ALTAR SERVER stands next to the Cross stand and when Father (and the Deacon) turn to walk down the aisle, leads with the Cross ensuring to exit between the concrete columns in the back of the Church.

Remember to extinguish the altar candles **using the snuffer** after Mass and return the thurible/censer and boat to the Sacristy.

During Altar Server training, you will be able to visit each of these stations:

| Station | * |
|---|---|
| Finding your Alb | |
| Lighting candles | |
| Holding the Missal | |
| Carrying the Cross | |
| Holding the pitcher, bowl, towel | |
| Registering as an Altar Server (software) | |
| Using the thurible/censer and boat | |