

The Ministry of Altar Server



St. Philip the Apostle Parish

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Carol Schubert
Director of Liturgy

Thank you for listening to the call to become part of the Liturgical Ministry of St. Philip the Apostle Parish. The intent of this handbook is to lay out specific guidelines for your ministry.

Just like Mary, the Mother of God, you are saying “Yes” at a very young age to accept and live your faith. You are setting an example to other children that it is okay to get involved at church and letting people know that your faith is important to you as you grow and mature. This is a great way to stay close to Jesus. He needs your help in serving the community of St. Philip the Apostle Parish.

Thank you,

Schubert

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PLEASE READ THROUGH THIS BOOKLET BEFORE YOU SERVE YOUR FIRST MASS. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT THE DIRECTOR OF LITURGY OR FATHER BEFORE YOU SERVE.

Expectations for All Altar Servers

- Are expected to be at the Church at least 10 to 15 minutes before the Mass begins.
- Are expected to fulfill their obligation to serve at their assigned times. A schedule will be provided.
- Are expected to find their own replacement if they are not able to fulfill a date on the schedule.
- Are expected to wear proper clothing at the Masses.
- Are expected to hang up their vestments after Mass in the closet. There is a step stool available at the bottom of this closet.
- Are expected to pay attention to the presider at all times. The presider may require your assistance at any point during the Mass, and you need to be able to respond immediately.
- Are expected to participate in the Mass. You should know and say the appropriate responses throughout the Mass and also join in the singing.

General Comments

- We are in service to the community of St. Philip the Apostle Church and, most of all, to our Lord. Since the Eucharist is central to our lives as Catholic Christians, anything we do to enhance the experience of Liturgy for our community will help it to bond in Christ.
- We are living examples to the community. One of the biggest gifts that we can give to the parish is being totally present to the Mass and our responsibilities as Liturgical Ministers.

- The way you dress reflects your commitment to the ministry you have been called to and also reflects your love and respect for our Lord. Your attire and appearance should be modest as to not be distracting to those you are serving. (Business casual and no flip-flops, shorts, jeans or spandex.) This is not a fashion show!
- If you are not scheduled and there is a shortage of altar servers, you may be asked to help out on a day you are not assigned. You may want to stop by the Vesting Room to check and see if servers are needed. It happens every so often when someone gets ill and cannot find a replacement at the last minute.

Before Mass

- When you are scheduled, please arrive at least 15 minutes before Mass and sign in on the schedule in the Vesting Room. This is important for the following reasons:
 - To guarantee enough ministers are there
 - To allow enough time for you to spiritually prepare yourself for your ministry.
 - To allow enough time to find a volunteer if the need arise.
 - About five minutes before the beginning of Mass, the priest will lead all Liturgical Ministers in prayer in the Vesting Room. After this, please take your seats.
- Please find an alb that fits you and put it on. They are located in the closet in the Vesting Room. If you cannot reach the hangers, there is a blue stepstool available to help you reach.
- Make sure the candles are lit by the Altar at least ten minutes before the start of Mass. (This is every server's responsibility.) A lighter is located on the credence table.

Procession (Cross Bearer)

- Lead the procession carrying the crucifix, pause in front of the Altar, then walk around to the right and place the crucifix in the stand behind the wood screen. Move to the first pew by the baptismal font.
- The presider will signal you when he wants you to get the Roman Missal (the RED book) from the credence table. A good signal is when the presider says "Let us pray" after the Gloria; bring the Missal from the table to the presider. When done, take the Missal back to the credence table and return to your pew.
- After the announcements, bring the Roman Missal to the presider again when he says "Let us pray" for the prayer after Communion. Take the Missal back to the credence table and get the crucifix. Wait until the presider is done and starts to exit the sanctuary.
- Take the crucifix and walk to the center aisle, facing the Altar, allowing room for the other servers and the presider. Bow your head with the presider, turn and start walking out of the church. Place the crucifix back in the stand. Return your alb to the Vesting Room.
- Make sure the candles are extinguished.

At Offertory and the Presentation of the Gifts

- The Altar is set prior to the reception of the gifts.
- The presider's chalice, two (2) additional chalices, the purificators (the white cloth

- on the chalices) and the Roman Missal are placed on the altar.
- The four (4) ciboria (plates) for the Eucharist are placed on the small table next to the Altar.
 - When the gifts are brought to the Altar during Sunday Mass, there will be a pitcher of wine and a large ciboria of hosts. (Sunday only)
 - Only one (1) server is to join the presider to receive the gifts. The other server should get the water cruet from the credence table and stand by the Altar.
 - When handing the decanter of wine to the presider, please remove the cover. (To make it easy for you, you can hold the decanter by the handle).
 - IF A DEACON IS ASSISTING THE PRESIDER, THE SERVERS PREPARE THE ALTAR AND OFFER THE WATER TO THE DEACON AFTER THE GIFTS ARE PLACED ON THE ALTAR. ONE OF THE SERVERS TAKES THE PITCHER FROM THE DEACON AND RETURNS IT TO THE CREDENCE TABLE.
 - Bring the cruet of water from the credence table and hand it to the presider to be poured into the wine. (Face the handle toward the presider). Take the water to the credence table and return to the Altar with the wash bowl and towel.
 - After the presider washed his hands, take the bowl and towel back to the credence table.
 - Return to your pew.
 - At the Sign of the Peace when the Eucharistic Ministers approach the Altar, line up with them to receive Communion.
 - After you receive Communion and the presider and the Eucharistic Ministers have taken their place to serve the Church, remove all of the vessels (the chalice and the large ciboria) and the Roman Missal to the credence table.
 - At the end of Mass, follow the cross bearer to the foot of the Altar with hands in a prayerful position to the center aisle, facing the Altar, leave enough room for the presider. Bow with the presider and turn to walk out of the church.
 - Return to the Vesting Room and hang up your alb.
 - Blow out the candles.

**Remember to stay alert during Mass for signals from the presider.
Always sit and kneel with good posture and participate in the Mass.**

The Order of Mass

Introductory Rites

- Entrance: Process into the church (cross bearer first, altar server, lector, presider) Put the cross in the stand behind the wood screen and return to your seat.
- Greeting
- Penitential Act
- Glory to God: After this prayer, the presider will say "Let us pray." You will need to get the Roman Missal (Red Book) off of the credence table and bring it to the presider. When he is finished, return to the credence table and return to your seat.
- Collect

Liturgy of the Word

- First Reading
- Responsorial Psalm

- Second Reading (on Sundays and solemnities)
- Gospel Acclamation
- Gospel
- Homily
- Profession of Faith (on Sundays, solemnities, and special occasions)
- Universal Prayer

Liturgy of the Eucharist

- Presentation of the Gifts and Preparation of the Altar: At this point you will bring all of the vessels and Roman Missal to the Altar. One of you will go with the presider to get the gifts and one of you will stay at the Altar with the cruet of water.
- Then you will bring the bowl and towel for the presider to wash his hands in. Return to your seat.
- Prayer over the Offerings
- Eucharistic Prayer
 - Preface
 - Holy, Holy, Holy
 - First half of prayer, including Consecration
 - Mystery of Faith
 - Second half of prayer, ending with Doxology
- The Lord's Prayer
- Sign of Peace: When the EMC's go to stand behind the Altar, you will take your place with them to receive Communion. When they take their place to serve the community, you will clear the Altar and put everything on the credence table.
- Lamb of God
- Communion
- Prayer after Communion: Again the presider will say "Let us pray" and you will bring him the Roman Missal. When you return the Roman Missal to the credence table, stay there so you can get the cross for the final procession.

Concluding Rites

- Optional announcements
- Greeting and Blessing
- Dismissal: When the closing song starts, the cross bearer will come out from behind the screen and take your place down the center aisle. The other altar server will take your place in front of them and behind the presider. After the presider bows to the Altar, turn around and process out of the church.

Cardinal Newman Prayer

God has created me to do Him some definite service.
 He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another.
 I have a mission.
 I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next.
 I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons.
 He has not created me for naught; I shall do good.
 I shall do His work; I shall be an angel of peace, a minister for the Lord.