

The Catholic Church of St. Ann Marietta, Georgia



Altar Server Training Manual

Spring, 2015

Altar Server Training Agenda

Prayer, Welcome and Introduction

History of the Ministry

Importance of Altar Servers to the Liturgy

Attire and Posture

Need to blend in and not be a distraction

Teamwork (standing and sitting)

Attention of the Priest / Deacon / Acolyte

Functions of the Server & Overview

Candle Bearers

Cross Bearer

Book Bearer

Thurifer & Boat (Incense... later training)

Vesting and pre-Mass responsibilities

Procession

Holding the Roman Missal

Receiving the Gifts and Preparing the Altar

Post Communion Responsibilities – Altar and Roman Missal

Recessional

After Mass – extinguish candles – neatly put away alb and cross

Station Breakout and Practice

Procession / Recession / Gifts

Roman Missal / Preparing the Altar / After Communion

Parent / Altar Server Wrap Up

Importance of Ministry / Scheduling, Substitutes, Communication / Review of Attire / Arrival Time / Attention on the Clergy-Sacristan / Shadowing / Turning in Data Form

Thank you for your willingness to serve our parish community. Your role is very important to the Mass. The following are qualifications and guidelines to provide consistency and help you feel comfortable as you serve.

Altar Server Qualifications before Training

(Additional Information included later in this manual...)

- Altar Servers should be baptized Catholics, who have received their first Holy Communion.
- Minimum age 4th grade, male or female. Altar Servers should be individuals who strive to live a moral and faithful life.
- Altar Servers should be mature enough to understand their responsibilities, and carry them out with appropriate reverence.
- Altar Servers should receive Holy Communion in the masses they serve, so they should go to regular confession.
- Altar Servers should be well instructed in what they are called to do, including proper behavior and attire.
- Altar Servers should be able to respond appropriately to the parts of the mass, both recited prayers and various sung parts of the mass.

Altar Server Guidelines

Proper Clothing: Servers should come to Church dressed in pants, dresses, or skirts (no jeans please). Please make sure that shoes are securely on your feet (no high heels or open back shoes or sandals). Please do not wear sneakers, unless they are clean “church shoes”.

Vestments: Albs are located in the Altar Server Room in the Church. Please choose one that is the appropriate length (to the top of your shoes). Crosses are in the drawer.

Arrival time: Please arrive 15 to 20 minutes prior to the Mass. This allows you enough time to sign in with the Mass Coordinator in the Narthex, vest, and perform the pre-mass duties of a server.

Preparation Prayer Before Serving

Father in Heaven, your Son, Jesus Christ, showed his love for you by serving his need brothers and sisters. I now ask you to give me your help as I serve you and your people. Open my mouth to praise you in word and song. Open my ears to hear your word.

Open my hands to do your work well. Take from my heart all distracting thoughts. Help me to know what I should do, and do it well. Help me to serve reverently at your holy altar, and so give you praise and glory, now and forever. Amen.

Altar Server Procedures Before Mass

- Candles should be lit on the Altar 10 minutes before Mass begins.
- The procession candles should be lit right before you get into place for the opening procession. The candles and Cross are in the front near the Sanctuary.
- Please be aware of the time and be prepared to line up before the Lector welcomes everyone to the Liturgy.
- Check with the Mass Coordinator, Sacristan or Priest to see if your assistance is needed for any final preparations.
- If it is Easter Time or there is a baptism scheduled, please light the Paschal Candle 5 minutes before Mass. Please use the “lighter pole” to light and extinguish this candle. The candle is made of beeswax so it is important that we don't create drips or burn it unnecessarily.

Altar Server Duties

If there are 4 servers, this is how duties are divided

Cross Bearer

- Lights the candles 5 minutes before Mass begins
- Carries the cross at the beginning of Mass
- Assists in setting the Altar (if there is no 5th Server)
- Receives the gifts with the Priest
- Clears the Altar during communion
- Carries the cross at the end of Mass

Candle Bearers (2)

- Carry the candles at the beginning of Mass
- During the Offertory, go to the back and escort the gifts (without candles)
- Bring pitcher of water to the Priest and wash the Priest's hands
- Remove empty wine cruet
- Carry candles at the end of Mass
- Extinguish candles before removing altar server alb

4th Server

- Takes care of the Book of the Chair (the small Roman Missal) and brings it to the Priest when he says, “Let Us Pray”, and then again after communion
- Sets the Altar
- Receives the gifts with the Priest
- Insures that the large Roman Missal is removed from the altar during the Sign of Peace

If there is a 5th Server...

- Assists in setting the Altar
- Receives the gifts with the Priest

If there are only 3 servers, the Cross takes care of the Book of the Chair and the Candle Bearers take care of the Altar. The Altar is set before the offertory procession.

Altar Server Procedures During Mass

Procession: Cross bearer (1) leads followed by Servers 2 & 3 (torches) and Book 4 (if present). The Lector or Acolyte or Deacon follows. The Priest is the last to process.

Note: If other Parishioners are included in the procession (ex: Baptism), they follow the Servers. When the words to the song appear on the screen, slowly process up the aisle. Servers should be reverent and should not sing as they process. Hands should be in the prayer position if you are not carrying something. Continue up just past the first row of seats. Pause briefly before the Altar waiting for all servers to arrive. The torches should flank the Cross and any additional servers should be on the outside of the torches. Everyone bows (except the cross bearer and the torches). Proceed to your seat and remain standing, or place the torches and Cross in the stands (if you are carrying one) and then stand in front of your chair. While you are doing this, the Priest will bow before the Altar, kiss the Altar and go to his seat. Please sit when he sits.

Opening Prayer: Toward the end of the Gloria, or after the Penitential Rite during Advent and Lent, the Book (4) picks up the Roman Missal and waits for the Priest or Deacon to signal to enter the Sanctuary. He/she enters the sanctuary. (If the Priest has said "Let us pray"...you are late and need to go up with the book). The server stands in front of the Priest with his/her back to the congregation, holding the Roman Missal high so it is comfortable for the Priest to read. Do not move while the Priest is reading. You may want to steady the book against your upper chest. When the Priest is finished, close the Roman Missal and sit down in your chair, taking the Roman Missal with you.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First and Second Readings: Remain seated.

Gospel Acclamation: Remain standing until the homily.

Prayer of the Faithful (stand): After the Creed, if asked by the Priest, hold the Mass Binder for the Priest while he reads the prayer. (This is not normally necessary.)

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Preparation of the Altar during the Offertory:

- Server 4 takes the Roman Missal to the Altar with the book stand (or pillow) and places the Roman Missal on it. This should be Server 1's job if there is not a 4th server.
- If there is a Deacon, he may bring the chalice, purificator and corporal to the Altar from the credence table. If he does not bring it, you should.
- The corporal is placed on the altar and unfolded.
- The chalice is placed on top of the corporal.
- The purificators are placed next to the chalice.
- If there is not a Deacon, Server 4 (or the Cross) should bring the corporal, the chalice and the purificator to the altar, placing the chalice on the corporal after you have unfolded it (see diagram).

Processing with the Gift Bearers and Receiving the Gifts:

- As the collection is being taken, Servers 2 & 3 should walk to the back center of the church and wait for the family bringing up the gifts.
- The Priest or Deacon comes to the center with server 1 (or servers 1 & 4)
- Do not walk in front of the Priest or Deacon just meet him at the foot of the altar one on either side.
- Servers 2 & 3 should slowly lead the procession up the aisle.
- Upon reaching the Priest/Deacon they should each take a side and wait to be given either the books or the bread and wine.
- If they are given the books they should place them in the stands in front of the ambo and then turn back to the Priest/Deacon to receive a vessel.
- Please do not walk in front of the Priest. If there is a need to be in a different location, walk behind him.

Preparation of the Gifts:

- After the Priest gives the servers the gifts, they all turn and face the Altar.
- Wait for the Priest to go first, then together Servers 1 and 2 go to the left of the Altar.
- Put the gifts on the Altar unless a Priest, Deacon or Acolyte is already behind the Altar (then you would hand the gifts to them).
- Go to the Credence table and Servers 2 & 3 get the water cruet (small pitcher) bowl and towel.
- Note: the tray of filled communion cups will be moved to the Altar by the Deacon, Acolyte or Sacristan.
- The servers offer the Priest/Deacon the water and step back after he returns it and prays.
- The two servers step forward so the Priest can wash his hands.
- The server holding the water should pour it over the Priests hands into the bowl.
- After the Priest has washed his hands, the servers should bow their heads, take the wine pitcher and leave, passing behind the Presider's chair.

Eucharistic Prayer:

- Stand as the Priest begins: "The Lord be with you... Lift up your hearts..."
- After the Holy, Holy, Holy, kneel at the foot of the Sanctuary.
- The Priest will pray... "Through him with him..."
- After this prayer, the servers stand and proceed to the Sanctuary for the "Our Father", holding hands with each other and the Priest and Deacon (if present). Please do this without delay, but do not run.

Sign of Peace:

- Exchange the sign of peace with the other servers and clergy and go to your seats and remain standing.
- The Roman Missal and stand should be returned to the credence table during the Sign of Peace.

Communion:

- Servers should kneel at their seats for the "Lamb of God".
- The Extraordinary Ministers will line up in the aisle next to you to receive Communion.
- The Priest will offer you Communion after the Extraordinary Ministers receive.
- After receiving from the Priest, you should approach to receive the Precious Blood (if you wish).

During Communion:

- If there are any trays or linens or empty vessels on the Altar or on the credence table, a server should remove them and place them on the side credence table (cart).
- If there is a filled vessel on the Altar, do not remove it. Please let the Sacristan or Deacon know when they become available.

Conclusion:

- Stand when the Priest says "Let us pray..." (book is brought to the Priest by server 4 (or the Cross)).
- After the final blessing, as the song begins, servers 1, 2 & 3 retrieve the Candles and Cross and move to the center aisle.
- The Cross is farthest down the aisle, then the torches. Any remaining servers should stand slightly behind the Priest and Deacon or Acolyte.
- They should bow to the Altar when the Priest does.
- Then turn and lead the Priest and Deacon or Acolyte down the aisle.
- The Priest normally waits for the second refrain to begin before departing.
- Once the group has reached the back of the church, the servers should return the Cross and candles to the front of the sanctuary (waiting for the song to be over).
- Server 4 should extinguish the candles on the altar using the "snuffer".
- Once this is done, the servers should return their albs and crosses to the vesting area.
- Please hang them back on hangers under the correct size and make sure that the sleeves are pulled out and the zipper on the neck is pulled up.

Prayers Recited at Mass

Every Altar Server must be able to recite the prayers of the Mass.

The Greeting:

Priest: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Servers: Amen.

The Penitential Rite:

I confess to Almighty God, and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done, and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore, I ask Blessed Mary, ever virgin, all the angles and saints, and you my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

The Glory to God:

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The Profession of Faith:

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through Him all things were made. For us men and our salvation He came down from heaven,

Server(s) bow here as you say

and by the Power of the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Presentation:

Priest: Blessed are you Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this bread to offer, which earth has given and human hands have made. It will become for us the bread of life.

Server: Blessed be God forever.

Priest: Blessed are you Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this wine to offer, fruit of the vine and work of human hands. It will become our spiritual drink.

Server: Blessed be God forever.

The Prayer over Gifts:

Priest: Pray, brethren, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

Server: May the Lord accept this sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of His Name, for our good, and the good of all his holy church.

The Holy, Holy, Holy:

Server: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

The Lord's Prayer:

Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

The Lamb of God:

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: grant us peace.

The Communion Prayer:

Priest: Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those who are called to the supper of the Lamb.

Server: Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Altar Server Scheduling

At the Catholic Church of St. Ann, Altar Server Scheduling is done through software called Ministry Scheduler Pro. Please make sure we have your current email address and notify us of any changes.

Because of the number of Altar Servers we have, everyone cannot be assigned to serve at a mass every week nor can we guarantee that you will be assigned to the same mass each time.

You do have the option with this software of specifying your preferences and the software will schedule accordingly.

Finally, while emergencies happen, your schedule is available early enough to prevent last minute requests for substitutions. We depend on you. We depend on your parents as well to insure you fulfill your commitment.

While you will automatically get an email notification when you are scheduled, the link for scheduling can also be accessed at:

http://www.rotundasoftware.com/ministry/st_ann_marietta

Special Occasions

Holy Days

Typically on Holy Days there is a 7:30pm Vigil Mass (Night before) and a 9:00am and 5:30pm Mass the actual Holy Day. These Masses are exceptionally difficult to schedule. If you can make the 7:30pm or the 5:30pm Masses, please indicate such on your profile. It would be a great help to us.

Christmas and Easter

These two Feast Days always require multiple Masses not only in the church but also Nolan Hall and Carroll Center. Often we get requests to schedule an altar server at the more popular Masses, e.g. 4:00pm Christmas Eve. In fairness to everyone, we will try and rotate these Masses to accommodate everyone. If you are unavailable, please indicate such when the schedules are announced.

Confirmation and First Communion

Typically, requests from brothers and sisters to serve for a sibling's First Holy Communion or Confirmation would be taken by the person responsible for those two events--EDGE Director or PSR Director. The names are accumulated and sent to Liturgy who does the actual scheduling for those two events. If you are interested, get your name to the appropriate person as soon as practical.

Liturgical Terms and Definitions

Absolution - In the sacrament of penance, the act by which a priest, having the necessary jurisdiction, remits the guilt and penalty due to sin.

Advent - A period of prayer in preparation for Christmas, including four Sundays, the first nearest the feast of St. Andrew, November 30. It is the beginning of the Church's liturgical year.



Alb - A full length white vestment worn over the clothes by priests, deacons and altar servers.

Altar - In Catholic churches the table on which the Sacrifice of the Mass is offered.

Ambo - Elevated pulpit or lectern from which the 1st and 2nd Readings and the Gospel are read. Referred to as the Liturgy of the Word.

Archbishop - A bishop who presides over one or more dioceses.



Aspersory and Aspergillum - The Aspersory is a container for holding Holy Water. The Aspergillum is a stick-shaped implement with holes in it to dip into the Aspersory and catch the Holy Water for sprinkling the people and things.

Baptismal Font - A stone, metal, or wooden receptacle for holding baptismal water used in the solemn administration of the sacrament of Baptism.



Boat - the container which holds incense.

Book of the Gospels - The book from which the Priest or Deacon reads the Gospel.

Bowl/Pitcher - used for washing the priest's hands during the Preparation of the Gifts (The Offertory)



Chalice - The cup-shaped vessel or goblet used at Mass to contain the Precious Blood of Christ. For centuries it was made of precious material; if it was not of gold, the interior of the cup was gold-plated.



Chasuble - the outer garment the priest wears whose color corresponds to the liturgical season.



Corporal - A square white linen cloth on which the Host and Chalice are placed during Mass. It is also used under the monstrance at Benediction or under the Blessed Sacrament at any time. (See “How to Fold” later in this manual)



Ciborium (Ciboria) - A covered container used to hold the consecrated small Hosts.



Communion Cups - small gold chalice-looking cups containing the Precious Blood of Jesus used at communion.



Credence Table - Small table located near the altar that holds sacred vessels and books.

Cruet - small pitcher-like container used to hold water or unconsecrated wine at Mass.

Deacon - A man specially ordained to the service of the Church's ministry. The role of deacons is to assist priests in preaching, the conferral of baptism, performance of marriage, the administration of parishes, and similar duties.



Finger Towel - small white towel used for drying the priest's hands.



Funeral Pall - a large cloth used to cover the casket at funerals.

Holy Water - Sacramental water blessed by a priest, invoking God's blessing on all who use it.

Host - A victim of sacrifice, and therefore the consecrated Bread of the Eucharist considered as the sacrifice of the Body of Christ. The word is also used of the round wafers used for consecration.



Incense - Aromatic gum or resin in the form of powder or grains that give off a fragrant smoke when they are burned. It is used on solemn occasions



Lectionary - The book of Scripture Readings usually from which the Old and New Testament readings are read.



Lector - Person appointed to read the word of God in the liturgical assembly. Accordingly they read the lesson from Sacred Scripture, except the Gospel, in the Mass and in other sacred celebrations.

Liturgical Seasons - the various seasons of the church's year which begins the First Sunday of Advent each year. (See following pages)



Monstrance - The sacred vessel which contains the consecrated Host when exposed or carried in procession.

Narthex - The gathering area between the exterior doors of the church and the doors to the Nave (worship area).

Nave - the main body of the church reserved for worshippers, including the central and side aisles



Paschal Candle - A large candle in which five grains of incense have been incased as a symbol of Christ's wounds. It is blessed on Holy Saturday in a special service and is symbolic of the Risen Savior, Light of the World. It is then used in the blessing of baptismal water and remains during the Paschal season in the sanctuary, where it is lighted during liturgical services.

Presider's Chair - The chair in which the priest or celebrant sits.

Procession during Gathering Song - Normally the procession goes in this order:

- Processional Cross (1 server)
- Processional Candles (2 servers)
- Additional servers
- Lector
- Deacon
- Priest



Processional Cross - A crucifix mounted on a staff, carried in solemn services at the head of a procession of the clergy. Processional candles are torch-like candles which flank the processional cross.



Purificator - A small piece of white linen, marked with a cross, used by the priest in the celebration of Mass. It is folded in three layers and used by the priest to purify his fingers and the chalice after Holy Communion.



Roman Missal - The book that sits on the altar containing the prayers the priest uses for Mass.



Sacramentary - often referred to as "The Book" contains the prayers used at Mass. The is the book taken up to the priest for him to read out of.

Sacristan - A person appointed for the care of the sacristy, sacred vessels, vestments, and other articles required by the priest/deacon for any liturgical function.

Sacristy - One or more rooms attached to a church, usually near the altar, where the clergy vest for Mass and where there is storage for sacred vessels, vestments, and other articles needed for liturgical use.

Sanctuary - The part of a church containing the altar.



Stole - A liturgical vestment composed of a strip of material, several inches wide, and worn around the neck by priests and bishops; at the left shoulder like a sash by deacons, for the celebration of Mass, administration of the sacraments, and ceremonies of the Blessed Sacrament.



Tabernacle - A cupboard or boxlike receptacle for the exclusive reservation of the Blessed Sacrament.



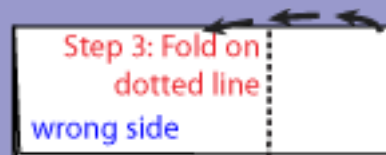
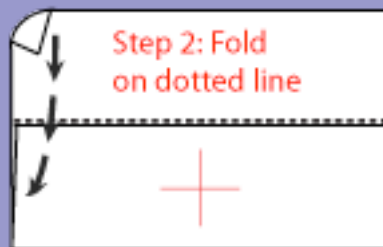
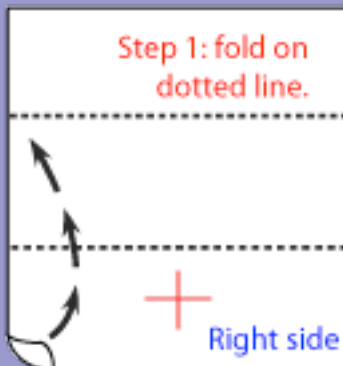
Thurible - The censer or vessel in which incense is burned at liturgical services. It consists of a cup-shaped metal body for holding charcoal and incense, with a separate lid for controlling the smoke and fire, and a chain, or chains, allowing the censer to swing safely without spilling its contents.

Vesting Room - The room where the clergy vest for Mass.

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How to fold a Corporal

Folding Instructions:



Liturgical Seasons

There are six (6) basic Liturgical Seasons:

- (1) Advent,
- (2) Christmas,
- (3) Lent,
- (4) Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday),
- (5) Easter, and
- (6) Ordinary Time.

Broken down a little further, the church calendar follows this schedule:

Advent

Christmas (birth of Christ)
Holy Family
Mary the Mother of God (New Year's Day)
Epiphany
Baptism of the Lord

Ordinary Time I

Lent
Ash Wednesday
Passion (Palm) Sunday

Easter Sacred Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday.)

Easter Vigil (The Resurrection)
Easter (Celebrate the Resurrection at Masses - The greatest Feast of the year.)
Second to Sixth Sundays of Easter
Ascension
Pentecost

Ordinary Time II

Trinity Sunday
Body and Blood of Christ
Ordinary Time II (continued...)
Solemnity of Christ the King

Liturgical Colors

WHITE - signifies light, innocence, purity, joy, triumph, glory

Season of Christmas

Season of Easter

Feasts of the Lord, other than of His passion

Feasts of Mary, the angels, and saints who were not martyrs

All Saints (1 November)

Feasts of the Apostles

Nuptial Masses

Masses for the dead (Requiem Masses) when the deceased is a baptized child who died before the age of reason

Note: White is the color of Popes' non-liturgical dress. White can be replaced by Silver.

RED - signifies the Passion, blood, fire, God's Love, martyrdom

Feasts of the Lord's passion, Blood, and Cross

Feasts of the martyrs

Palm Sunday

Pentecost

Note: Red is the color of Cardinals' non-liturgical dress

GREEN - signifies the Holy Ghost, life eternal, hope

Used for Ordinary Time

Time After Epiphany

Time After Pentecost

VIOLET - signifies penance, humility, melancholy

Season of Advent

Season of Lent

Good Friday

Note: Violet is the color of Bishops' and Archbishops' non-liturgical dress.

ROSE - signifies joy

Gaudete Sunday (Third Sunday of Advent)

Laetare Sunday (Fourth Sunday of Lent)

GOLD - signifies joy

Gold can replace white, red, or green (but not violet)

