

# St. Francis Cathedral

## Weekend Altar Server Manual



### You Have Been Called to Serve

Loving Father, creator of the universe,  
you call your people to worship,  
to be with you and with one another at Mass.

I thank you for having called me  
to assist others in their prayer to you.

May I be worthy of the trust placed in me and through my example and  
service bring others closer to you.

I ask this in the name of Jesus Christ,  
who is Lord for ever and ever. Amen.

## Some things to remember....

- ❖ Even though you are serving, remember that you are attending Mass, so pray, pay attention and give the responses.
- ❖ When Mass is going on, remain in the Sanctuary unless you have a duty to perform elsewhere, you are instructed by a Priest or Deacon or if it is an emergency.
- ❖ Remember to be careful when lighting or carrying candles.
- ❖ Remember to genuflect when you pass in front of the Altar & Tabernacle
- ❖ Remember that people in Church see the way you walk, kneel, bow, sit etc.
  - Don't slouch
  - Do sit up straight
  - Don't chat with other servers.
- ❖ Remember that by serving well, you are helping people to pray
- ❖ Remember to ask God to help you serve well.

## At Home

- ❖ Check your clothes and shoes.
- ❖ Leave home so that you arrive at Church **15 minutes** before Mass

## Dress Policy

Even though you will be wearing an alb over your street clothes, appropriate clothing should still be worn.

### For Girls

Dresses, skirts, khaki/dress pants  
Plain top  
Shoes (not sneakers)

### For Boys

Khakis, dress pants  
Plain shirt  
Shoes (not sneakers)

No sandals, flip flops, high heels or platform shoes.  
No shorts

Clothes worn under an alb should be such that they do not have patterns, pictures, stripes, checks, lettering or any other design which will show through the alb.

## A Note on Albs

The altar server's clothing is very special. It recalls the garment that each of us puts on when we are welcomed in Jesus Christ in the community of faith at our baptism, The baptismal gown, whose profound meaning St. Paul clarifies: "For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ" (Galatians 3:27).

## At Church... Getting Ready

- ❖ Enter the Altar Server Sacristy by the side door
- ❖ Sign In. Be Neat
- ❖ Make sure your hands are clean
- ❖ If you are thirsty or need to use the restroom – do it now!
- ❖ Put on your alb. The alb should be at least 3 inches from the floor.
- ❖ Put on a cross and come around to the priest's sacristy

## Lighting the Candles (10 minutes before Mass)

- ❖ Get the candle snuffer
- ❖ Check to see the wick is long enough, ~ 2 inches). Put in a new wick if needed. Ask if you need help
- ❖ Light the Altar candles first. Remember to stop and pause for a moment when you pass in front of the Altar & Tabernacle.
  - You do not bow because you are carrying the candle lighter.
- ❖ Light the candles on the side Altars.
- ❖ Extinguish the flame by pulling down the wick. Once the flame is out, push the wick out again. (this prevents the wick from getting stuck)
- ❖ Put the candle snuffer back in the stand.

## Procession to the Rear of the Church

- ❖ A brief prayer will be said before the start of Mass with the Priest and other Liturgical Ministers.

Light the Processional Candles (5 minutes before Mass) and proceed with the Cross to the rear of the Church. The Cross should ALWAYS be carried upright even on the side aisle except when going through doors.

## Entrance Procession

- ❖ The order of procession will consist of the following: (1) Cross Bearer, (2) Candle Bearers (3) the other Altar Servers, (4) the Deacon, and (5) the Priest.
- ❖ Begin the procession as soon as singing begins. Please do not walk too quickly; **it is not a race.**

## At the Altar

- ❖ Once at the Altar, the Cross Bearer should lead the Altar Servers to the left side of the Sanctuary in formation and stand
- ❖ The Deacon will place the Book of the Gospels on the Altar
- ❖ The Priest genuflects
  - When the Priest genuflects before the Altar, any Server who is NOT carrying anything should genuflect.
- ❖ The Priest and Deacon will reverence (kiss) the Altar
- ❖ At this point, the Cross Bearer and Candle Bearers go into the Priests Sacristy to place the Cross and Candles in their stands in the Priests Sacristy.
- ❖ The other servers will go to the bench to the left of the Altar and remain standing.

## **Introductory Rite**

- ❖ Remain standing
- ❖ Towards the end of the Gloria, the Book Bearer should bring the red Roman Missal to the Deacon who will open the book to the right page and place it in your hands. The Deacon will signal when to go over to the Priest.
- ❖ After the Priest is done with the prayer, the Server will close the book return to their seat and place it on the bench.

## **Liturgy of the Word**

- ❖ Sit for the First Reading, the Responsorial Psalm and Second Reading
- ❖ Stand for the Alleluia and Gospel Reading
- ❖ Sit for the Homily
- ❖ Stand for the Profession of Faith (We believe in one God...)
- ❖ At the part of the Profession of Faith when the Deacon goes over to the Ambo, the Book Bearer brings the binder over to the Priest.
- ❖ Stand for the Prayer of the Faithful

## **Offertory Procession**

- ❖ During the Prayer of the Faithful, the Cross Bearer and Candle Bearers will go to the Sacristy and light the Candles and get the Cross. The Servers should process to the back of the Church to lead the Procession of the Gifts at the beginning of the music.
- ❖ When the Priest stands up and moves to the stairs, the Cross and Candle Bearers lead the people bringing up the gifts back to the front of the Church.
  - One of the remaining servers will follow the Priest and Deacon.
- ❖ At the front of the Church, the Cross and 1 Candle Bearer will go to one side and the other Candle Bearer will go to the other side, allowing the bread and wine to be given to the priest.
- ❖ The Priest and Deacon will receive the gifts of bread and wine
- ❖ This Server standing with the Priest & Deacon will be given the wine cruet which they will bring over to the Credence Table
- ❖ After the Priest or Deacon returns to the Altar, the Cross Bearer and Candle Bearers return the Cross and candles to their stands.

## **Preparing the Altar / Liturgy of the Eucharist**

These steps are going on at the same time as the Offertory Procession with the remaining servers.

- ❖ Help to prepare the Altar
- ❖ Bring up the red large Roman Missal and Stand
- ❖ Bring up the Chalice with the Corporal on top.
- ❖ Bring up the Ciboria, Communion Cups and Purificators.
- ❖ Two Servers stand near the Credence Table holding the water and wine cruets. The tops of the cruets should be off and the handles facing away from you.
- ❖ When the Priest or Deacon turns toward you, bring the water and wine to the Altar. (Stand on the top step)
- ❖ Hand the wine cruet to the Deacon or Priest; he will hand it back to you.
- ❖ Hand the water cruet to the Deacon or Priest; he will hand it back to you.
- ❖ Bow to the Deacon or Priest and bring the cruets back to the Credence Table and put the tops back on

## **Washing the Priest's Hands**

- ❖ One Server picks up the lavabo bowl and water pitcher. Another Server holds the towel with both hands.
  - If only one Server is available at this time, the Server should place the towel over his or her arm with the lavabo bowl. The Priest will take the towel from your arm.
- ❖ When the Priest turns toward you, go to the top step of the Altar.
- ❖ Pour the water over the Priests hands. Hand the Priest the towel. When he returns the towel, bow to the Priest and then return the bowl, pitcher and towel to the Credence Table.

## **Eucharistic Prayer**

- ❖ After the “Holy, Holy, Holy...” all Servers kneel in place facing the Altar
- ❖ When the Priest places his hands over the bread and wine - ring the bells one long time
- ❖ When the priest raises the Host, ring the bell three short times
- ❖ When the Priest raises the Precious Blood, ring the bells three short times

## **Communion Rite**

- ❖ Stand for the “Our Father”, and “Sign of Peace”
- ❖ At the Sign of Peace, give the sign of Peace to the Priest and Deacon first, then to each other.
- ❖ After the Sign of Peace, all of the servers should line up in front of the Bishops Cathedra leaving room for the Eucharistic Ministers to receive Communion.
- ❖ You may receive the Precious Blood if your parents allow

## **While Communion is being distributed**

- ❖ One Server should take the red Roman Missal and stand from the Altar and place it on the bench
- ❖ During the distribution of Communion, sit prayerfully on the benches. Focus on the Cross and Jesus whom you just received
- ❖ When any of the Priest, Deacons or Eucharistic Ministers returns to the Sanctuary, stand until the Tabernacle is closed.

## **Purifying the Chalice**

When the Deacon or Priest returns to the Altar, one Server should be ready with the water cruet. The top should be off and the handle facing away from the Server

- ❖ Proceed to the top step of the Altar when the Deacon motions for the water
- ❖ When the Deacon or Priest tilts the Chalice towards you, pour water into the Chalice until he signals you to stop.
- ❖ Return the water cruet to the Credence Table and put the top on the cruet
- ❖ The other servers should be ready to take the Ciborium and Chalice from the Altar when the Deacon or Priest hands it to you or places it on the corner of the Altar

## **Prayer after Communion**

- ❖ After the Priest comes back to his chair, he will pray silently and then stand for the “Prayer after Communion”
- ❖ The Book Bearer should bring the small red Roman Missal to the Priest and hold it for the prayer.
- ❖ The Cross and Candle Bearers should go to the Sacristy, relight the candles, bring the Cross and Candles and wait at the Sanctuary door.

## **Concluding Rite and Recessional**

- ❖ The Priest will give the Final Blessing
- ❖ Once the Final Blessing is given, the Cross Bearer, Candle Bearers and other servers will line up facing the Altar.
  - The order will be ‘opposite’ from when you processed in.
  - The Cross Bearer and Candle Bearers will be closest to the steps
  - The other Servers will be next
  - The Priest and Deacon will be nearest to the Altar
- ❖ When the Priest and Deacon genuflect before the Altar, any Server who is NOT carrying anything should genuflect
- ❖ When the Priest and Deacon turn, all servers turn and then start down the center aisle.

## After the Recessional

- ❖ After the Procession has reached the rear of the Church, the Candle Bearers should carefully blow out the candles.
- ❖ All Servers should return to the Sacristy by the side aisle. Walk single file and the Cross Bearer and candle Bearers should remember they are still carrying the Cross and Candles. Even though Mass is over, the Cross should still be carried upright.
- ❖ Return Cross and Candles to their stands.

## Conclusion

- ❖ Put out the candles using the candle snuffer. (Remember to pause when you reach the center of the altar.)
  - ❖ Return your Alb to the closet. Hang it up neatly.
  - ❖ If you did not sign in before Mass, please do so now.
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- ❖ Enjoy the rest of the day, knowing you have served Our Lord in a special way.

