

## Altar ServersøPrayer

Loving Father, creator of the universe, you call your people to worship, to be with you and 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 forever and ever. Amen.

## Altar Server Reference Guide

### Holy Family Catholic Church



(revised June 2013)



**Usher**ô person who welcomes people into the church , directs seating into the assembly area, takes up the collection and distributes the bulletins.

## V

**Votive Candles**ô these candles, usually on a stand, are lit as individuals want to offer their prayers.

*Thank you for answering the call  
to become an Altar Server.*

Please refer to this guide to help remind you of  
our expectations and procedures.

**What is an Altar Server?** ô Here at Holy Family this is a person ages 8 and older who feels called to serve their church by assisting the priest at Mass. *It is a ministry* and should be something that you truly feel called to do. It is not just volunteer service, as there are many other ways to serve your church and community.

A minister is something more. The dictionary defines ministers as a person ordained or commissioned for service in a Christian church. Altar servers are commissioned (given authority to carry out certain tasks) to help serve the priest and the parish.

**Appearance**ô As a minister, you are a visible presence of Christ's love to his people here on earth as you serve His church. Try to imagine what the church would think if the priest came to mass in sandals and a t-shirt, with his hair uncombed and looking òfrumpyö. The focus would shift from the message he is trying to share to being distracted by how he looks. We encourage you to view your appearance in a similar way.

- No flip flops, sandals or sneakers. Boys should wear dress shoes and girls should wear low-heeled dress shoes that cover the entire foot (no open toed shoes).
- Earrings are permitted, but they should be post or stud style (no hoops)
- Hairstyles should be neat. Makeup, if worn, should be minimal.

**Timeliness**ô is important. All servers should plan to arrive 15 minutes prior to their scheduled Mass. This allows you time to vest and help to prepare the sanctuary. It also allows the priest/deacon to find a replacement should a server not show. Remember this is your commitment. If you cannot make your assigned time, it is your responsibility to find a replacement.

**The Schedule** Server schedules are planned three months in advance. If you know of dates that you are unable to serve, please contact the Youth Liturgical Ministry Schedule Coordinator (contact info given separately). If you lose your schedule, you may find a copy posted on the website [www.holyfamilywoodmore.org](http://www.holyfamilywoodmore.org)

### *Altar Server Responsibilities*

Servers will have distinct roles while serving the mass. Training for each position will occur quarterly. Servers will be advanced in their position at the discretion of the pastor, this is based on proficiency in their role. **All servers should respond audibly during the mass at all proper times (i.e, the prayers, creed, responsorial psalms, etc)**

IF YOU ARENÖT SURE OF SOMETHING IT IS BETTER TO ASK BEFORE MASS BEGINS!!!!

BEFORE MASS:

***ANY TIME YOU CROSS BEFORE THE ALTAR  
MAKE A SMALL REVERENCE, USUALLY A SIMPLE BOW***

**Dress for Mass;** Please dress in the choir loft not in the sacristy. Girls will wear the alb, cincture, and yoke (color of the season). The yoke is not to be taken home, it is to be returned neatly to the draw from which it was borrowed. Boys wear a cassock (red or black) with surplice.

Please sign in the white book, located in the sacristy. This lets us know that you served at your assigned Mass or õsubbedö for someone else.

Check water and wine cruets - - fill if needed. Bring wine cruet to back of church for offertory procession, and place water cruet on the credence table. .

Light candles on Altar. Brings Crucifix to Sacristy for processional.

**Paten** small plate shaped vessel used by the priest to hold the Eucharistic Bread that will become the body of Christ.

**Pri-deu** a kneeler with a screen used in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

**Priest** ordained clergy to help with the Bishop's mission in the church. 2nd level of Holy Orders.

**Purificator** linen towel with a cross symbol, used in Mass to õcatchö any loose fragments of the Host or drops of the Precious Blood.

**Pyx** small vessel used to carry the Body of Christ on Communion calls to the sick or shut in.

### **R**

**Ritual** a symbolic action that expresses our deepest beliefs or concerns.

### **S**

**Sacrament** a visible and effective sign, given to us by Christ, through which we share in God's grace.

**Sacrarium** special drain leading directly to the ground.

**Sacrifice** a gift offered to God by a priest and destroyed in some way to show that it belongs to God alone.

**Sacramentary** Book of prayers and blessings used at Mass.

**Sacristy** area of the church where the priest vests for Mass. Sometimes the Holy Vessels are also stored here if there isn't a separate vessel room.

**Sanctuary** the area surrounding the altar but not including the area where the assembly is seated.

**Sanctuary Lamp** light that is lit to show that Christ is present in the Tabernacle. Lamp is usually near or next to the Tabernacle.

**Surplice** Short white tunic worn over a cassock, especially by Acolytes and Altar Servers.

**Stole** The priest wears the stole around his neck hanging down in front. The deacon wears it over his left shoulder and across the right side where it is fastened. Colors reflect the liturgical season.

### **T**

**Tabernacle** the ornamental receptacle in the church where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved; from the Latin word for tent.

### **U**

**Flagon**ô large flask used when consecrating large quantities of sacramental wine.

**Follower**— (candle) used at the top of a candle to direct flame.

## H

**Humeral Veil**ô worn to cover back and shoulders and its to ends hang down in front and is fastened by clasp. Used in solemn ceremonies, processions of the Blessed Sacrament and Holy Thursday.

## I

**Intentions Book** – a book containing prayer requests from the people that would not easily be included in the prayer of the faithful.

**Intinction Bowl**ô contains water to cleanse fingertips after distributing communion.

## L

**Lavabo Dish**ô used when the priest washes his hands

**Lectern/Ambo**ô a reading stand from which the Word of God is proclaimed.

**Lectioary**ô the official liturgical book that contains the scripture readings.

**Lector**ô person who reads the Word of God, excluding the Gospel. The Gospel is to be ready only by the Deacon or Priest.

**Liturgy**ô the official public prayer of the church in which we proclaim and celebrate the mystery of Christ.

## M

**Modesty**ô the virtue by which we express respect for ourselves by the way we dress, act or speak.

**Monstrance**ô vessel on a stand used for holding the Body of Christ for adoration or exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

## P

**Pall** - (1) small square covering used over the chalice to protect its contents  
(2) covering used over a casket at a funeral

**Paschal Candle/Easter Candle/Vigil Candle**ô represents the light of Christ. Used during all Sundays of Easter, Baptisms and Funerals. A new candle is blessed each year at the Easter Vigil.

## ALTAR SERVER ROLES -

**Crucifer/Book Bearer**ô carries the crucifix in procession/recessional, at the presentation of the gifts and holds the book for the celebrant at the opening and closing prayers as well as during the profession of faith and prayer of the faithful.

**Candle Bearers**ô carries the processional candles during the processional And recessional. Also will hold candles while the Gospel is being proclaimed.

**Servers of the Mass**ô will assist the celebrant in setting up the altar, washing of the hands, and clearing the vessels from the altar. Servers of the Mass will also ring the server bells during the elevation of the host and chalice.

## PROCESSION:

**Crucifer** will carry the Crucifix and walk in the front of the procession.

**Candle Bearers** walk behind the Crucifer.

**Servers of the Mass** will walk behind the crucifer and candle bearers.

**(Crucifer/Book Bearer)** moves to the right and waits for the priest to reverence the tabernacle. All remaining servers divide based on the side they walked in procession. Servers will bow towards tabernacle then the **Crucifer** places the Crufix in its stand, then returns to his/her seat (near the celebrant) but remains standing, retrieve the Book of the Chair (Binder) and wait. The Book of the Chair should be held until needed by the priest. If this book is not being used the larger Sacramentary should be placed on the altar. All Servers should be facing the Altar.

**Candle Bearers (if present)** places the candles to either side of the Altar and go to their seats on the left side of the sanctuary.

**Servers of the Mass**ô sit on the right side of the sanctuary.

**OPENING RITES:** The priest will come forward and reverence the altar with a kiss. He will then proceed to his chair. **Crucifer/Book Bearer** stands in readiness for the opening prayer. When the priest says, "Let us pray" turn towards him with the book held up in front of you. The priest will open the Book and proceed as mentioned below. \*

\* Taller servers may hold the book out to the side, those of medium height will hold the book at chin height. For those servers who are short, Father may rest the book on your head (so be prepared).

After the prayer, **Crucifer/Book Bearer** keeps the Book of the Chair with him/her at their seat.

#### LITURGY OF THE WORD:

**Candle Bearers** as the Gospel Acclamation is sung will go to their candles at each side of the altar and raise them up, while waiting for the celebrant or deacon to proceed to the lectern/ambo. They will stand on either side of the lectern/ambo and hold the candles during the proclamation of the Gospel. At the end of the Gospel, they will lower the candles to the floor on either side of the lectern and return to their seats.

**All Servers** sit for readings, stand for Gospel, sit for Homily. Please respond after each reading and responsorial. When standing for the Gospel, make sure to face the ambo (lectern or pulpit where the readings are proclaimed). After the homily, the priest will return to his seat. **Crucifer/Book Bearer** should go to the celebrant's with the Book of the Chair. The priest will open the book and again, rest the book on chest, below your chin.

#### OFFERTORY:

When ushers start taking up collection the **Crucifer Book Bearer** takes crucifix from the stand, goes down the side aisle to back of church, to lead offertory procession. The usher will let you know when to start up the aisle.

**Cassock**— long ankle length vestment worn by clergy and other ministers.  
**Celebrant's Chair/Cathedra**—where the priest/celebrant sits during Mass.  
**Censor/Thurible**— metal vessel, with a long chain, that holds the light charcoal and incense.  
**Chalice**— vessel that holds the wine that will become the Blood of Christ.

**Chalice Veil**— Covering for chalice, paten and burse. Color is based on liturgical season.

**Charcoal**— used to light the incense used in ritual blessings.

**Chasuble**— poncho like vestment worn by the celebrant at Mass. Color is based on liturgical season.

**Ciborium**— vessel that holds the host bread that will become the Body of Christ.

**Cope**— is worn by the priest in processions and other services.

**Corporal**— square shaped white linen cloth

**Cincture**— the tie used with the alb. Sometimes the cincture used reflects the color of the liturgical season.

**Communion Paten**— small round plate with a handle used by Altar Servers to prevent the Blessed Sacrament from hitting the floor during distribution of Communion.

**Credence Table**— small table/counter to hold the vessels, books used at Mass.

**Cross**— used to remember Christ's sacrifice

Crucifix - a cross with a "corpus" (body representing Christ) on it.

**Cruet**— used to hold holy water and sacramental wine.

#### **D**

**Dalmatic**— worn over the alb and stole, a vestment proper to the deacon.

**Deacon**— a man ordained for service in the church under the authority of the Bishop. 3rd level of Holy Orders.

#### **E**

**Extra Ordinary Minister**— person who assists during communion by distributing the Body or Precious Blood.

**Ewer**— small pitcher used to dispense water

#### **F**

**Sprinkling with Holy Water**ô Server will hold the Aspersorium (Holy Water vessel/bucket) as the priest uses the Aspergilla (brush or wand) to dip into the Holy Water and sprinkle items or people to be blessed.

### *Glossary of Terms*

#### **A**

**Acolyte**— person who assists the clergy during the Mass and at other rites and celebrations.

**Alb**— white garment worn by priests, deacons, bishops, servers and acolytes.

**Altar**ô the table on which the sacrifice of the cross is made present in the Eucharist.

**Altar Cloth** ô placed on the altar out of reverence for the celebration.

**Altar Server**ô similar duties to the acolyte.

**Ambry**ô a niche or chest where the holy oils are kept.

**Amice**— garment worn around the neck to cover street clothing.

**Aspergillum**— wand like vessel used to sprinkle the holy water.

**Aspersorium**ô container holding holy water

#### **B**

**Baptistry**ô a place in the church where baptism is celebrated.

**Blessed Sacrament**ô another name for the Eucharist; the Eucharist reserved in the tabernacle.

**Bishop**ô Ordained clergy carrying out the apostolic mission of the Church. 1st level of Holy Orders.

**Book of the Chair**ô smaller sacramentary used in the opening/closing prayers.

**Book of the Gospel**—A special book containing only Gospel readings. This is either carried up during the processional or elevated by the deacon and carried to the ambo/lectern during the Gospel Acclamation.

**Burse**ô stiff pocket that holds the Corporal.

#### **C**

**Candle Lighter/Snuffer**ô used to light and extinguish the candles

**Candles**ô used at every liturgical service as a sign of reverence and festivity.

**Cantor**— person who leads the people singing the hymns and responsorial for Mass.

**Servers of the Mass** will set up the Altar. They will carry the chalice w/veil to the Altar. Then remove the corporal from the Burse and place the Corporal on the Altar. Place the priest's chalice beside the corporal. If Communion is being offered under both species, then the extra chalices and purificators are also brought to the altar. Then get the Missal from the Credence Table and place on the altar. **Servers** then return to chairs to wait for the gifts to be brought up. When the offertory procession comes forward, the priest/deacon will stand and move to the front of the Sanctuary **Servers** will stand behind and to the right of the priest.

**Crucifer/Book Bearer** puts crucifix back in the stand and then goes to the credence table to get the cruet of water. Remove the stopper and wait near the Credence Table.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THE CRUETS ARE NEVER TO BE SET DOWN ON THE ALTAR. THEY ARE TO BE HELD UNTIL NEEDED WITH HANDLES FACING OUT.**

After the gifts are brought forward **Server of the Mass** is handed the wine cruet, or sometimes the host bread by Priest and then he/she carries cruet/bread to the altar; removes top of the wine cruet and waits for the priest to prepare the chalice. **The other Server of the Mass** should stand ready to assist with the water cruet. Remember if only one server is present, then remove the tops to the cruets at the credence table and hold a cruet in each hand with the handles facing out. When the chalice has been prepared, both servers will take the cruets back to the credence table and replace their stoppers.

**Servers of the Mass** will pick up hand towel and proceed with pitcher and lavabo bowl to the altar and wait. One of the **Servers of the Mass** will hold the towel under both thumbs of prayer folded hands. The other **Server of the Mass** will hold the lavabo dish in the left hand and the Ewer/Pitcher in the right hand. If there is only one server the towel is placed over the left arm.

After the priest washes his hands, both servers will bow to the priest, turn inwards towards each other and return the items to the credence table and stand in

front of server chairs facing the altar.

*(Special note: If incense is being used, the hand washing follows incensation. Refer to appendix about special celebrations)*

### EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER:

When the congregation kneels servers should kneel on the kneelers. **Servers of the Mass** should have bells nearby. As the priest elevates the, *Body of Christ*, **Server of the Mass** should ring the bells gently three times. Silence the bells until the priest elevates *the Precious Blood*. **Servers of the Mass** should again, ring the bells three times and then silence them. This allows moments of silent reverence while the Body and Blood are elevated.

SIGN OF PEACE: Deacon or Priest say "peace be with you" servers answer "and also with you". Offer each other the sign of peace.

### LAMB OF GOD

Kneel at the end of this prayer. Please remain kneeling, until the EMs (Extraordinary Ministers) enter the sanctuary. Then rise and stand beside them, facing the priest.

### COMMUNION:

Servers should retrieve the Communion Patens from the Credence Table. They should each stand beside the Priest and Deacon placing the Communion paten either below the hands of the person receiving by hand or under the chin of anyone receiving communion by mouth. If patens are not being used, then the servers return to their seats. When the priest and deacon return to the Altar **Servers of the Mass** bring the water cruet to Altar for chalice to be cleansed. **Servers of the Mass** will assist the priest/deacon in the cleansing by pouring the water into the vessels over the celebrant or deacons fingers. Then take the cruet back to the Credence table. **Servers of the Mass** return to the Altar and remove all vessels in the reverse order of setting the Altar. (Chalice, purificator, ciboria, pall, corporal (burse) and veil). The Chalice, Ciborium and cruets are returned Credence Table. The Missal is also returned to the Credence Table.

### CLOSING PRAYER:

**Crucifer/Book Bearer** retrieves the Book of the Chair and stands near the Celebrant's chair. The priest will open the book, as in the Opening Rites. After the prayer, you may close the book and place it back on the table.

After prayer, **Crucifer/Book Bearer** takes cross from stand and proceeds to the middle aisle, next to third pews, turns and faces altar. When all members of Recessional are ready, the priest will reverence the altar, and all will turn around and walk slowly to the back of church. Servers should exit, weather permitting, through ramp door and return to Sacristy. If the weather does not permit, you may walk up the side aisle.

### AFTER MASS:

Servers need to extinguish the candles on altar, using the snuffer (please don't blow them out this often spreads wax onto the Altar cloth which is difficult to remove). Return to choir loft to disrobe, and return colored cincture (if borrowed). Then check water, wine cruets and ciboria fill if needed.

### *Appendix:*

Please refer to this section for duties outside the Sunday Mass.

**Special Celebrations** may have changes to regular server duties. These celebrations include but are not limited to, masses in Advent, Lent, Holy Week and Sundays of Easter. If you are new to serving any of these celebrations, you should discuss your role with the priest/deacon *before the day that you serve*.

**Stations of the Cross** these are celebrated on Fridays during Lent. Three servers are scheduled. One will carry the crucifix the other servers carry the candles. Servers precede the celebrant to each station.

**Incensation** The censor stand will need to be brought from the sacristy and placed next to the Credence Table. Server will make sure that charcoal briquette is in the bottom of the censor, prior to mass. Place censor on stand.