

ETIQUETTE FOR ALTAR SERVERS

- 1) Arrive at least 15 minutes before the Mass.
- 2) When the priest enters the Sacristy, servers stand and greet him: “Good Morning Father.” Before you leave, say good bye to the priest and those who are present.
- 3) Your smile is contagious so please make sure you put on a smile and make someone’s day a little bit brighter.
- 4) The way you dress reflects your reverence for God and others at Mass (see dress code guidelines for more information).
- 5) When you shake hands with the priest or someone else before or at the sign of peace, look into their eyes, smile, and shake their hands firmly.
- 6) Altar servers should participate fully in the Mass reciting responses and prayers and singing hymns.
- 7) When preparing for Mass, always genuflect if passing in front of the tabernacle.
- 8) If you are carrying something, instead of genuflecting, bow.
- 9) Always be reverent and respectful. This will add to the prayerful experience of the congregation.
- 10) If an altar server is not carrying anything, hands should be folded in a prayerful manner. NEVER place your hands behind your back or to the sides.
- 11) DO NOT play with your hair or blow air at your face during Mass.
- 12) DO NOT stare at the people in the congregation while serving on the altar.
- 13) NEVER cross your legs while sitting on the altar.
- 14) DO NOT talk in the sanctuary area unless there is an urgency or emergency.
- 15) DO NOT smile or laugh unless you do it with everyone else in response to the priest’s comment during the homily or an announcement.
- 16) Slightly bow to the priest when you bring up the water and wine and after you wash his hands.
- 17) When serving a wedding or funeral, NEVER expect someone to “pay” you. If they give you money in an envelope or by hand, simply take the gift, say “Thank you” and quickly put it into your pocket or purse.
- 18) Have a sense of humor! When a priest or someone teases you, play along! Don’t become irritated or uptight! Life is too short!
- 19) If you are unable to serve a Mass, make sure you find a substitute in advance. Don’t wait until the last minute to call someone.
- 20) When you receive your schedule, highlight or place a circle around your name. Place it on your bedroom mirror. Also, add your schedule to your family calendar – These are ways to help you remembering when it is your turn.

GOALS FOR ALTAR SERVERS

- 1) Prayer for servers laminated and hung in their dressing area.
- 2) Make more cinctures/ropes.
- 3) Purchase bigger robes.
- 4) Check List for servers – setting up, cleaning up
- 5) Practice with servers before Sunday Mass
- 6) Sign up for servers in 4th Grade at the end of the year.

- 7) Commissioning Mass for new servers.
- 8) Periodic outings – cookout, etc...
- 9) Disciplinary Procedures and General Rules to be established.
- 10) Mandatory Meeting with servers and their parents.
- 11) Dress codes for servers.
- 12) Encourage High School students to serve.
- 13) Training of older servers (8th grade and above) for funerals and weddings.
- 14) Obtain a list of terminology for servers.
- 15) Guidelines for servers and Signature Page for Parents and Servers.

DRESS CODE GUIDELINES

- 1) Wear shirt or dress with solid color – no logos, large prints, or brightly colored.
- 2) No flip flops, high heels, sneakers on the altar – bring extra shoes to change if necessary.
- 3) No jeans, shorts, or short skirts.
- 4) No heavy make up.
- 5) Hair should be neatly combed and cut. Hair should not be covering your eyes. Hair should not be dyed in colorful fashion. We do not want to see a purple dinosaur on the altar!
- 6) Wear your Sunday's best to serve. Remember, we do have an air-conditioning and heating system!

DISCIPLINARY

- 1) Arrive 15 minutes before Mass.
- 2) Please do not serve if you arrive 5 minutes before.
- 3) If you have to miss a Mass for legitimate reasons, you **MUST** find a substitute. Failure to do so will earn you one strike.
- 4) If you receive three strikes during the year, you will no longer have your name on the server's list until you and your parents sit down with the Director of Servers for a serious conversation.
- 5) If you miss a wedding or funeral Mass, you must write a letter of apology to the priest stating the reason why you missed.
- 6) If you do not follow the Dress Code prescribed to you above, you will no longer be scheduled to serve.
- 7) If you have an attitude with the priests, Director of Servers, Sacristan, other adults, or with your peers, you could be removed from the Server's List.
- 8) In case you are removed, it is not the end of the world – move on! Learn your lesson and reapply the year after. After all, Father Khoa was “kicked out” when he was a server – he did not complain or became nasty about it. And look at him now.
- 9) The Director of Servers may reinstitute servers after improvements and restitutions had been made on parts of the servers and parents.
- 10) Bad languages or unchristian behaviors may result in immediate dismissal from altar serving.

GLOSSARY

- Ablution Bowl:** Small bowl located next to the tabernacle where the priest dips and cleans his fingers after giving out Communion.
- Acolyte:** Candle bearer. This term is also referred to the two servers who assist the priest during Mass. They help receiving the bread and wine and wash the priest's hands.
- Alb:** Latin word "alba" meaning white. It is a long white linen vestment with straight sleeves worn by the priest and Eucharistic ministers.
- Bells:** Used in the old days to wake up those who fell asleep. They are still being used today to remind us of that sacred moment of Consecration.
- Boat:** A small container with a spoon used for incense – the boat always accompany the thurible.
- Chalice:** The cup used by the priest and by Eucharistic ministers.
- Chasuble:** The vestment worn by the priest.
- Ciborium:** A covered cup to hold consecrated hosts.
- Cincture:** A rope tie at the waist used as a belt.
- Consecration:** The prayers spoken by the priest changing bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ.
- Corporal:** Corporal clothe, symbolizing one of the linen cloths wrapped around our Lord's body in the tomb. It is a sacred linen placed on the altar.
- Credence:** A table on the left of the Altar where the elements of the Sacraments are made ready.
- Cruet:** Two glass receptacles for wine and water.
- Eucharistic Minister:** Those who minister the Body and Blood of Christ to the people.
- Host:** The consecrated bread used at Holy Communion.
- Incense:** Grains of incense used to create smoke. Symbolism: Our prayers are like smoke rising to the throne of God in Heaven.
- Lector:** Those who perform first and second readings and prayers of intercession.

Narthex: The entrance of a Church.

Pall: The square linen cover for the chalice.

Paten: The plate that sits on top of the priest chalice holding the Bread for consecration.

Pulpit: The stand where the readings and Gospel take place

Purificator: A cloth used to cleanse the sacred vessels.

Sacrarium: A basin with a drain leading directly to the ground. After cleaning the chalices, the water is poured into the sacrarium.

Sacristan: A person in charge of the Sacristy and its treasures.

Sacristy: Room where the priest gets vested and where vestments and vessels are kept.

Sanctuary Lamp: A red lamp that is hung near the tabernacle & kept burning to mark the presence of the Reserved Sacrament.

Stole: A narrow band of silk worn by the priest.

Tabernacle: A small box placed in the center of the church where the Host or the Body of Christ is kept.

Thurible: The charcoal container connected to a chain used for incensation.

Thurifer: The server who carry the thurible and the boat.