



ST. James the Apostle

and



Our Lady of the Lake/Mount Carmel

Altar Server's Guidebook

This guide can be found at

<http://www.stjamesapostle.org>

Click on the Apostolates tab and then the Altar Servers option
and scroll to the bottom of the page.

General Comments:

Arrival

Please arrive at least 15 minutes before Mass. Once the Mass has started, servers are **not** to come on the altar, even if you were scheduled to serve. If you are late to serve, then you may **NOT** serve.

Dress

Always dress neatly. Do **not** wear logo clothes that can be seen through your alb. Remember that only dress shoes are acceptable footwear.

Posture on the Altar

During the Mass, your hands should be properly folded whenever you are standing and not performing any tasks. When sitting, your hands and only your hands should be resting on your knees.

NO elbows. Be attentive and respond to the prayers, as does the congregation. You should not fidget or look around, especially at the choir or the ceiling.

Preparation

1. Dress for the service in the proper colors. Check yourself in the mirror and make certain that the hood of the alb is out and that the rope (cincture) is under the colored garment.
2. Check the altar and see that there is water, wine, a finger bowl and towel.
3. Check that there is a chalice and large bread on the paten (large plate). Underneath the paten should be a purificator (white cloth).
4. Check that the candles are lit.
5. Be ready to leave the sacristy with the celebrant.
6. While waiting for the Mass to start, refrain from loud talking. The sacristy is part of God's house also.

Closing

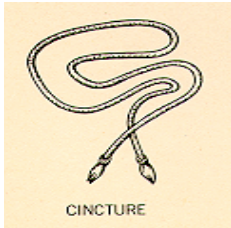
Bring whatever items; vessels, etc. back to the sacristy. If it is the last Mass of the day, carefully blow out the candles.

Glossary:

Altar Vestments



Server's Alb - This is a vestment used by the servers. It is similar to the priest's alb but sometimes has a hood. It is usually fastened around the waist with a cincture.

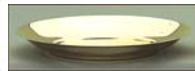


Cincture - This is a long cord used for fastening some albs at the waist. It holds the loose-fitting type of alb in place and is used to adjust it to the proper length. The cincture is usually white, although the liturgical color of the day may be used.



Scapular - This is a sleeveless garment, slipped over the head, covering the shoulders, and coming down below the hips.

Altar Vessels



Chalice and Paten - The large cup and dish used at Mass to hold the bread and wine which become the body and blood of Christ.



Ciborium - This is a cup-like vessel (usually large) with a lid. It contains the hosts that will be used for communion. It is also used to reserve the Blessed Sacrament for Benediction and Eucharistic processions.



These are stackable ciboria that are usually kept in the tabernacle.

Altar Vessels (continued)



Large Paten - Sometimes used in place of the Ciborium. On this are placed the breads that will be consecrated for communion. This paten is usually brought up

in procession at the presentation of the gifts.



Cruets - A small vessel used for containing the wine and water required for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Two are always employed. The wine cruet is filled before Mass and brought to the table that holds the gifts for the Offertory procession that will bring the gifts forward.



Lavabo Cruets - The first word of that portion of Psalm 25 said by the celebrant at Mass while he washes his hands after the Offertory, from which word the whole ceremony is named.



Purificator - This is the triple-folded, rectangular, white cloth used to cleanse the chalice and to dry the celebrant's fingers after the last ablution(washing). It has a small cross, usually red, in the middle. In setting up the chalice, the purificator is placed over the mouth, beneath the paten.



Finger Towel - A folded rectangular cloth, resembling a purificator, but much narrower. It is used by the priest to dry his fingers at the Lavabo. It has a small cross in one corner.



Thurible is the object used to carry live coals and into which incense is placed in order to release its smoke and aroma. The Thurible is used at Masses of greater solemnity, although it may be used at the principal Mass each Sunday.

Server Roles

Thurifer

If incense is used at the beginning of Mass, the thurifer will precede the processional cross; otherwise he/she will enter with the other servers. The thurifer is responsible for starting and maintaining the charcoals, and ministering thurible and boat to celebrant or Deacon. At the Offertory this occurs after the offering of bread and wine, and before the Lavabo (done by other servers). If there is no Deacon, the thurifer will incense the Celebrant, and then the people.

Crucifer

You lead the procession from the sacristy to the altar. You do not bow in front of the altar. Leave the cross in the base and go back to your seat. After the final blessing, you take the cross and lead the procession.

N.B. If there are only two people serving and one has to carry the cross, the other one walks behind the Cross bearer and not side by side.

Candle Bearer

One of the two servers who carry the candles. In the procession, you walk behind the Cross bearer. You bow to the altar, take your candle to its place (credence table at St. James; tabernacle at Our Lady of the Lake) and go to your seats.

After receiving the Offertory gifts, you assist the priest by serving the wine and water. Soon after serving the wine and water, you assist the priest in the washing of the hands. You bring the vessels back to the side table.

Of the two candle bearers, one will minister the book during the Mass; the other will ring the bell. Both will serve at the Offertory (presentation of gifts).

Book Bearer

You bring the book to the priest for the opening and post-communion prayers. Your cue is the celebrant saying "Let us pray."

Celebrant

The priest who is serving the Mass.

N.B. After the Mass you bring the vessels and linens back into the sacristy. Do not unvest before clearing the credence table. [i.e. undress]

N.B. If you are a book bearer, you always look in the direction of the celebrant during Mass.

N.B. You should know and say all the responses along with the people.

Basic Wedding Instructions

Normal Mass until the Homily	Introductory Address Statement of Intentions Exchange and Reception of Consents
Rite of Marriage (For a Mass or Ceremony)	<i>When you hear the Priest say, "What God has joined, men must not divide", servers should get the plate and holy water (aspergillum).</i> Blessing of the Rings General Intercessions
After the blessing of the rings, servers should return to their seats.	Servers should come down from the Altar. Server handling the rings should be on the side of the groom. Server with the Holy Water should be on the bride's side.

Nuptial Blessing Final Blessing Dismissal	Servers should ask a priest where they should kneel during the Eucharistic prayers. Remember that you are sitting up on the Altar.
Remember: There is NO procession for the priest and servers. You move from the sacristy to the Altar. Servers sit on the chairs next to the priest on the Altar, NOT on the sides where they usually sit for a Mass.	

Basic Funeral Instructions

A Funeral Mass is different from a regular Mass as outlined below:

At the beginning of Mass, we process in with the Cross and Holy Water bucket, bow before the Altar and process down the aisle and stop just before the casket. Prayers are recited, the Priest sprinkles the casket and we process to the Altar to continue Mass.

Mass continues: First Reading, Responsorial Psalm, Second Reading, Alleluia, Gospel Reading and Homily.

Next follows the Presentation of the gifts and preparation of the Altar. After offering the bread and wine, the Priest will incense them and the altar: a server brings him the boat and thurible, and then returns the boat to the stand. After incensing, the server will take the thurible and incense him, then the congregation, while Mass continues as usual. After Communion follows the Communion prayer. This is where the normal Mass activities end.

After this, the Cross-Bearer immediately goes with the Cross behind the casket. The other server(s) carrying the Book and Holy Water remain with the priest for the Final Commendation. Sometimes the Priest might use incense at this time. The Priest will direct you as to what to do next.

After the Final Commendation, altar servers and Priest go before the casket.

When the casket is turned around, we precede the casket to the rear of the Church, where the Priest may give a final blessing with prayer and Holy Water.