

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

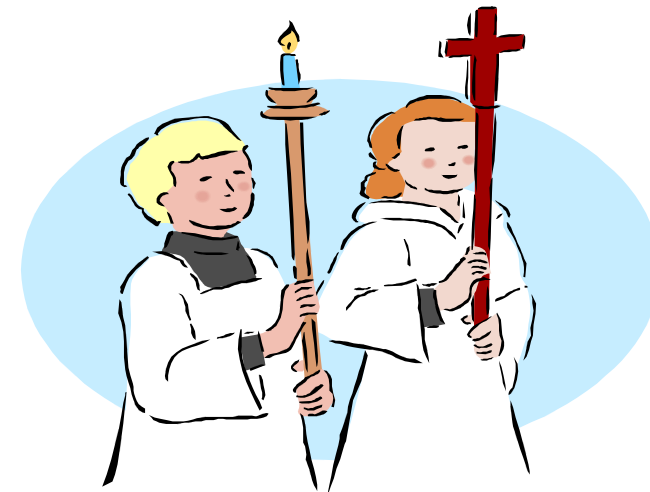
Usher—person who welcomes people into the church, directs seating into the assembly area, takes up the collection and distributes the bulletins.

V

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

Altar Server Reference Guide

Holy Family Catholic Church



(revised September 2008)

*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? — Here at Holy Family this is a young 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— 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 “frumpy”. 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— 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.

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

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

M

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

Monstrance—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—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.

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 “catch” 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.

Sacorium—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.

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

Flagon—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— 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—contains water to cleanse fingertips after distributing communion.

L

Lavabo Dish—used when the priest washes his hands

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

Lectionary—the official liturgical book that contains the scripture readings.

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.com

Altar Server Responsibilities

The following information is based on two servers; when only one is present, you will fill both roles. We refer to the servers as Server 1 and Server 2. Please work together to determine which role you will be serving. **All servers should respond audibly during the mass at all proper times (i.e, the prayers, creed, responsorial psalms, etc)**

IF YOU AREN’T 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***

(1 and 2) Dress for Mass; Please dress in the choir loft not in the sacristy. Teen servers are reminded to use the colored cincture that is appropriate for the season. If not sure, check with the priest/deacon. These colored cinctures are to be returned at the end of Mass.

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

(Server 1) 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. .

(Server 2) Lights candles on Altar. Brings Crucifix to Sacristy for processional.

PROCESSION:

(Server 2) Will serve as the Crucifer/Cross Bearer— carrying the Crucifix.

(Server 2) will walk in front, as Jesus is always in front of all we do. **(Server 1)** will walk behind the crucifer. If the celebration calls for more than two servers then those servers behind the Crucifer can walk side by side.

Server 2 (Crucifer) moves to the left and **Server 1** moves to the right and waits for the priest to reverence the tabernacle. Servers will bow towards tabernacle then **Server 2** places the Crucifix in its stand, then returns to his/her seat but remains standing. **Server 1** will follow the priest to the celebrant's chair, retrieve the Book of the Chair (smaller Sacramentary) 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.

OPENING RITES: The priest will come forward and reverence the altar with a kiss. He will then proceed to his chair. **Server 1** 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, **Server 1** places Book of the Chair on table between the Celebrant's chair and Deacon's chair. **Server 1** returns to seat.

LITURGY OF THE WORD:

BOTH 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,

B

Baptistry—a place in the church where baptism is celebrated.

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

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

Book of the Chair—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—stiff pocket that holds the Corporal.

C

Candle Lighter/Snuffer—used to light and extinguish the candles

Candles—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.

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

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.

Sprinkling with Holy Water—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—the table on which the sacrifice of the cross is made present in the Eucharist.

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

Altar Server—similar duties to the acolyte.

Ambry—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—container holding holy water

the priest will return to his seat. **Server 1** should go to the celebrant's chair and retrieve the Book of the Chair from the table. The priest will open the book and again, rest the book on chest, below your chin.

OFFERTORY:

When ushers start taking up collection **Server 2** takes crucifix from stand, goes down side aisle to back of church, to lead offertory procession. The usher will let you know when to start up the aisle.

Server 1 will set up the Altar. Server will carry the chalice w/veil to the Altar. **Server 1** will 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 Sacramentary from the Credence Table and place on the altar. **Server 1** then returns to chair 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 **Server 1** will stand behind and to the right of the priest.

Server 2 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 1** 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. **Server 2** should stand next to **Server 1** 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.

Server 1 will pick up hand towel and proceed with **Server 2** who brings pitcher and 1, lavabo bowl to the altar and waits. **Server 1** will hold the towel under both thumbs of prayer folded hands. **Server 2** 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. **Server 2** should have bells nearby. As the priest elevates the, *Body of Christ*, **Server 2** should ring the bells gently three times. Silence the bells until the priest elevates *the Precious Blood*. **Server 2** 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 EM’s (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 **Server 2** brings the water cruet to Altar for chalice to be cleansed. **Server 2** 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. **Server 2** returns to the Altar and removes all vessels in the reverse order of setting the Altar. (Chalice, purificator, ciboria, pall, corporal (burse) and veil)

Server 1 takes the Sacramentary to the Credence Table then walks to the Celebrant’s chair and waits. **Server 2** take the Chalice, Ciborium and cruets back to Credence Table.

CLOSING PRAYER:

Server 1 retrieves the Book of the Chair from the table next to the Celebrant’s chair. The priest will open the book, as in the Opening Rites. r. After the prayer, you may close the book and place it back on the table.

After prayer, **Server 2** 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.