

St. Edward Catholic Church
Newark, California

ALTAR SERVER TRAINING MANUAL

2011

This manual is intended for the instruction of the altar servers in the Ordinary Form of the Roman Rite at St. Edward Catholic Church in Newark, California.

INTRODUCTION

The primary role of the altar server is to assist the priest during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Altar servers carry the cross, the processional candles (some Masses), hold the book for the priest celebrant when he is not at the altar, assist the priest at the preparation of the altar during the offertory, wash the hands of the priest, and assist the priest celebrant and deacon in other functions.

Altar servers are chosen from among the faithful who display a desire to participate in an intimate way during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. It is an extreme privilege to kneel so close to the altar as our loving Savior, Jesus Christ, becomes truly present, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity upon the altar.

ELIGIBILITY

Boys and girls who have made their First Holy Communion are eligible and encouraged to become altar servers. Each candidate must complete a period of training before serving.

REQUIREMENTS

An altar server must be willing and interested to participate in this ministry on their own accord and not by parental or peer pressure. A reluctant or disinterested server is a distraction to the celebrant, other servers, and the entire community. Similarly, parents must undertake an active role in supporting their child in this ministry by ensuring that their altar server arrives to their assigned Mass on time.

An altar server performs all assigned duties with **attention, dignity and reverence** because they are serving in the presence of Our Lord. The Sanctuary is holy, and access to it is restricted to a very few people. Do not abuse the privilege you have been given to enter the sanctuary by being disrespectful or irreverent. Remember we are in God's house.

An altar server knows the entire Order of the Mass, all the responses (Amen, Thanks be to God, and also with you, etc) and all the principal prayers of the Mass (Gloria, Nicene Creed, May the Lord accept..., Sanctus, Our Father, Lamb of God, Lord, I am not worthy...). Therefore, each server must take the time to memorize these prayers if they do not already know them.

Each candidate must identify, know the purpose of, and properly use each liturgical item used at Mass.

By ministering at the Lord's altar, each altar server will also be actively discerning the possibility of serving the church in the future as a priest, deacon, or religious sister.

Prayer before Serving at Mass

Heavenly Father, as I prepare to assist You at Your altar, I declare my faith in You. At this Mass, keep me from distractions. Let me remember that in assisting the priest I am assisting Jesus in offering You the merits of His passion and death. I thank You for allowing me the opportunity to give my service to You. At this Mass, I join with your Priest in offering You the sacred Body and Blood of my Savior Jesus Christ, Your Son. May my sharing the Divine Food in Holy Communion bring me eternal salvation.

Amen.

Prayer for After Serving Mass.

Lord Jesus,
thank you for the opportunity
to serve You during the Holy Mass.
In your Sacred Presence,
my heart is filled with joy and peace.
May your Spirit always guide me
so I may grow in your love
by the grace of the Heavenly Father.
Amen.

UNDERSTANDING THE PURPOSE OF SERVING AT THE ALTAR

- By serving at Mass, the altar server is given the ability to serve God in the liturgy.
- By the altar server's example of reverence, loyalty, and dedication, the altar servers help his parish worship God.
- By serving, the altar server is answering God's call to serve.
- By serving, the altar server grows in his/her own faith and devotion.
- An altar server is a prayer leader, to the extent that his/her actions during the Mass assist the people in knowing what to do.
- An altar server assists the priest preparing for Mass and at the altar.
- An altar server is responsible for taking care of any problems that may occur during Mass. For example, if the priest does not have enough purificators, the server will discreetly retrieve the purificators from the sacristy.
- An altar server is not a distraction to the faithful's listening/prayer to God.

GENERAL RULES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- The priest depends on you.
- You need to be prompt. Arrive 20-30 minutes before Mass to vest, help the sacristan set up, and to prepare oneself for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.
- Servers should also remain after Mass to help clean up and say a Prayer of Thanksgiving to God for the grace of being able to serve at Mass.
- Servers should not handle any consecrated hosts or the Precious Blood unless specifically directed by the priest or deacon in rare, emergency situations.
- Servers must remain in the sanctuary during the entire Mass and are not to leave the sanctuary unless they need to enter the sacristy to retrieve something, they are ill or they are directed to do so by the priest or deacon.
- Every altar server must attend every Mass they are scheduled for. When a server cannot be present, that server and his/her parents must arrange a replacement.
- You help the priest make sure that things go smoothly.
- The parishioners depend on you too.
- A good server keeps things going smoothly, never sloppy.
- Stay calm when things go wrong.
- Be responsible and calm
- Be reverent in Church.

DRESS AND APPEARANCE

LITURGICAL DRESS:

Servers will vest in a white alb. Albs should be clean and pressed. Dirty albs must be set aside and brought to the attention of the sacristan. The length of the alb should be at the ankle and should not be shorter than four inches above the ankle. Likewise, albs should not drag on the floor.

DRESS CLOTHES:

Clothes worn under an alb should be such that they do not have patterns, pictures, stripes, or any other design which will show through the white alb. Solid colored shirts and black pants are highly recommended.

We would probably dress our best if we met the president, but God is much greater and more important than the president. Since we are in God's house, we ought to make every effort to dress our very best. However, we want to attract as little attention to ourselves as possible.

Boys: Black, dark blue, or dark brown pants should be worn. Blue jeans, shorts, dungarees, or frayed pants are not permitted. Pant legs should not gather at the bottom of the feet and drag on the ground.

Girls: Dresses or skirts of appropriate length may be worn, but black or brown shoes must still be worn.

SHOES

Only black or dark brown shoes with a dark sole should be worn. Sneakers or running shoes (unless they are solid black), house slippers, flip-flops, cowboy boots, sandals or any other sports footwear are not permitted.

GROOMING

Strangely dyed hair or "wild" haircuts are not allowed. Boys' hair should be no longer than to the bottom of the shirt collar. Girls' hair should be tied back and out of their face.

Boys: Earrings, studs, nail polish, makeup, or exposed jewelry (other than one watch and one ring) are not allowed.

Girls: Hoop earrings, nose rings, flashy hair pieces, long nails, and heavy makeup are not allowed.

PROPER POSTURE

Standing- Stand tall with both feet flat on the floor. Never lock your knees, but don't slouch. Face the person who is speaking. The hands should be held together on the breast, palm to palm, with the fingers extended and close together pointing upwards, the thumbs being crossed right over left.

Kneeling- Kneel upright, not slouching or sitting on your heels. The hands should be held as in the standing position or folded on placed on the kneeler. The head may be bowed down or facing the person who is speaking.

Sitting- Sit up straight and do not slouch. Both feet should be flat on the floor. The hands should be placed palms down on the knees. Face the person who is speaking. Never play with your hair, pick your nose or otherwise cause a public reason to take notice of you.

Walking/Turning- All movements in the sanctuary should be noiseless and graceful. Never run or skip in the Church. Never walk backwards for more than two steps. When two or more servers are together, they should move as one body (shoulder to shoulder).

Genuflecting- A genuflection is made by dropping the right knee to touch the ground near the left heel. One genuflects only to the Tabernacle (or to the Crucifix on Good Friday) whenever one passes in front of it. One may or may not make the Sign of the Cross. Genuflecting is properly made when one stops walking and then genuflects. In other words, you cannot walk and genuflect at the same time.

Bowing- A simple bow is made by bowing the head. A simple bow is made to the priest after presenting the cruets to him and after washing his hands. A simple bow is also made when one arrives at the altar, but is carrying something. A profound bow is made by bowing the head and shoulders. A profound bow is made to the altar and during the Creed at the sentence: By the power of the Holy Spirit....

PROCESSIONS

A procession is a public expression of demonstration by the clergy and laity of their Christian belief. Processions may serve a purely practical purpose or a symbolic purpose. In the celebration of the mass a number of processions may take place involving clergy and laity. The clergy and ministers may enter in procession, the gifts of bread and wine may be brought forth in procession, the laity come in procession for communion, and the clergy and ministers may leave in procession.

In procession, one walks uprightly, with hands folded palm to palm, with thumbs being crossed right over left. There should be a space of two (2) pews between you and there person in front of and behind you. The cross bearer (or thurifer in solemn Masses) set the pace of the procession at a slow but steady pace.

VESTMENTS



AMICE

Symbol of the Helmet of Salvation

The amice is a rectangular piece of white linen with two strings at the upper corners which a priest uses underneath his alb to cover his neck so that the Roman collar is hidden. The amice recalls the humiliation which was put upon Christ during his Passion.



ALB

Symbol of Purity

The alb is the long white, robe-like vestment worn by all clerics at liturgical celebrations. The alb (from Latin word *alba*, meaning "white") can be traced to the ancient Roman alb worn under a cloak or tunic; It symbolizes the innocence and purity that should adorn the soul of the priest who ascends the altar.



CINCTURE

Symbol of Chastity

The cincture ties the alb at the waist. It symbolizes the virtues of chastity and continence (the exercise of self-constraint against temptation).



STOLE

Symbol of the Priestly Office and Immortality

The stole, matching the liturgical color, is a long, scarf-like vestment worn over the alb and under the chasuble. The priest wears the stole around his neck so that it hangs equally down his chest in front. The deacon wears his stole over the left shoulder and tied at his right side.



Chasuble

Symbol of the Yoke of Christ

The chasuble, also matching the liturgical color, is the long, often ornate, sleeveless poncho-like garment worn by priests and bishops over the alb and stole during the sacrifice of the Mass. It symbolizes the virtue of charity, and the yoke of unselfish service for the Lord, which the priest assumes at ordination.

LITURGICAL ARTICLES VOCABULARY

Altar- The table on which bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Jesus.

Ambo - The place from which the Scriptures are proclaimed and the homily is given.

Boat- A small receptacle made of precious metal that holds incense.

Book of Gospels- A book with an ornate cover containing only the four Gospels. It is carried in the entrance procession by the deacon or lector and placed upon the altar until the Gospel Acclamation.

Book Stand- A wooden support that props up the Roman Missal for the priest at the altar during the Eucharistic Prayer.

Burse- An envelope type item made of cloth, matching the chalice veil used to hold the corporal cloth.

Chalice – A vessel of gold that holds the wine which becomes the Blood of Jesus after the consecration.

Chalice Veil—A large cloth in the liturgical color of the day, used to cover the chalice before and after the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Ciborium - A large container of precious metal with a cover of the same material which will hold the Body of Jesus after the consecration for distribution of Holy Communion to the faithful.

Consecration Bells- Four small bells attached to a single handle used during the elevation of the Body and Blood of Christ.

Corporal - A white linen cloth with a cross in the center used to protect any particles of the Host from being lost. The corporal is like the body winding sheet used to hold the crucified body or Our Lord in the tomb.

Credence Table - The table in the sanctuary which holds the cruets, chalices, and ciborium before and after the Consecration.

Cruets- Two small, matching glass pitchers used to hold the water and wine before Consecration.

Finger Towel- A small towel used to dry the priest's fingers.

Gifts Table- A small table located in the back of the church holding the bread and wine to be presented for consecration.

Lavabo- A small bowl, along with the cruet of water and finger towel used to wash the priest's fingers before the Consecration.

Lunette - A thin, circular receptacle with a glass face that holds the Consecrated Host used for Adoration. It slides into the monstrance on a little track.

Lectionary - The book containing Scripture used for the Liturgy of the Word. It usually contains all the readings used for the three year cycle of Sunday readings and the two year cycle of daily Mass readings.

Monstrance - A large, ornate vessel used to hold the Blessed Sacrament during Adoration.

Nave- The area of the church where the congregation sits.

Pall - A square piece of cardboard covered by linen and used to cover the chalice.

Paten - A small saucer shaped plate of precious metal that holds the Host.

Presider Chair- The chair that the priest sits in during the celebration of the Mass.

Processional Candles- Small candlesticks carried by two altar servers in processions.

Processional Cross- Tall crucifix carried by an altar server in processions.

Purificator - A linen cloth used by the priest or deacon to dry the chalice after purifying it.

Pyx - A case, about the size of a pocket watch, in which Communion is carried to the sick or those unable to come to church.

Roman Missal - The book containing the prayers said by the priest during the Mass. A small copy is used for the Opening Prayer and Prayer after Communion. A larger, ornate copy is placed on the book stand and used only at the altar.

Sacristy- The room behind the altar used to store the sacred vessels and other items used for Mass.

Sacrarium - A sink which drains directly into the ground. It is fitted with a cover and lock and is used for the disposal of the following: The sacred linen wash and rinse water, used holy water, used baptismal water and blessed ashes. The Blood of Christ is never poured down the Sacrarium.

Sanctuary- The part of the church in which the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist take place.

Sanctuary Lamp- The red candle mounted to the left of the sanctuary which signifies the presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

Tabernacle- The ornate receptacle or case made of precious metal located behind the altar in which the Blessed Sacrament is kept.

Taper- A metal stick-like object with wax inside used to light the altar candles.

Thurible- A small receptacle attached to a chain that is used to burn incense.

LITURGICAL COLORS

Green- Used during Ordinary Time symbolizing life, growth, and hope.

Violet- Used during the seasons of Lent and Advent. It may also substitute for white on All Souls' Day and in Masses for the Dead. It symbolizes penance.

White- Used during Christmas, Easter, feasts of saints who are not martyrs, Holy Thursday, on feasts of Our Lord and Our Lady. It symbolizes holiness, joy, innocence and triumph

Red- Used during Pentecost, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, on feasts of martyrs, and on feasts of apostles and evangelists. It symbolizes the blood shed by the Martyrs and Our Lord. It also represents the tongues of fire which descended on the Apostles at Pentecost.

Rose- Informally called pink (but it's not pink). Used during Gaudete Sunday (3rd Sunday of Advent) and Laetare Sunday (4th Sunday of Lent). It expresses the joy that half of the penitential season is over.

Black- Used as an alternative to white or violet on All Souls' Day and in Masses for the Dead. It symbolizes mourning.

Gold- Used during special solemnities as an alternative to white or green.

LITURGICAL SEASONS

A year has 52 Sundays. The Church year is divided into:

Advent

Christmas

Lent

Paschal Triduum

Easter

Ordinary Time

SACRED VESSELS ACTIVITY



A _____ and _____, made of the finest metal, is used at Mass to hold the Body and Blood of Christ.



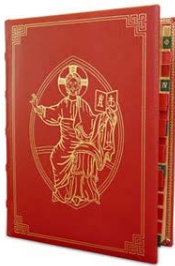
A _____ is large container of precious metal with a cover of the same material which will hold the Body of Jesus after the consecration for distribution of Holy Communion to the faithful.



A _____ is white linen with cross in the center used to protect any particles of the Host from being lost.



A _____ is a white cloth used to clean the chalice.



A _____ is the book that contains all the prayers the priest prays at Mass. 2 copies (1 large and 1 small) are used at St. Edward. Both are placed on a _____ table. The large _____ is placed on a wooden _____



2 matching _____ are used to hold the _____ and _____ before consecration.

THE ORDER OF THE MASS

I. Introductory Rites

- a. Entrance Procession
- b. Greeting
- c. Penitential Rite
- d. Kyrie
- e. Gloria (Feast Days, Solemnities, all Sundays except during Lent and Advent)
- f. Opening Prayer

II. Liturgy of the Word

- a. First Reading
- b. Responsorial Psalm
- c. Second Reading (except weekdays)
- d. Alleluia or Gospel Acclamation
- e. Gospel
- f. Homily
- g. Profession of Faith
- h. General Intercessions

III. Liturgy of the Eucharist

- a. Preparation of the Altar/Presentation of the Gifts
- b. Prayer over the Gifts
- c. Eucharistic Prayer
 - a. Preface Dialogue
 - b. Sanctus
 - c. Consecration
 - c. Memorial Acclamation
 - d. Great Amen

IV. Communion Rite

- a. Our Father
- b. Sign of Peace
- c. Breaking of the Bread
- d. Communion
- e. Period of Silence
- f. Prayer after Communion

V. Concluding Rite

- a. Greeting
- b. Blessing
- c. Dismissal
- d. Recessional w/ Hymn to the Blessed Mother

- Upon reaching the altar, the **cross bearer** will stop for a moment at the top step, bow his head, turn right and put the cross away in the sacristy and take his seat on the Gaspar side.
- Upon reaching the altar, the **candle 1** and **candle 2** will stop, bow their heads, and together place the candles on the credence table. Then, they proceed to their seats on the Edward side.
- The **book bearer** will genuflect and proceed to his seat on the Gaspar side.

Opening Prayer (Book bearer only)

- At the end of the Gloria, when you hear, “You alone are the Most High Jesus Christ,” the **book bearer** picks up the small Roman Missal and brings it to the priest celebrant.
- After the congregation says, “Amen,” the **book bearer** returns the Roman Missal to the table. Then, all Sit for the Readings.

Alleluia or Gospel Acclamation (Candle 1 and Candle 2)

- Once the Alleluia begins, **candle 1** and **candle 2** pick up their candles, walk to the front side of the altar, and face each other, leaving enough room for the deacon or priest to stand between them.
- Once the priest or deacon is ready, they will proceed in a single file line to the ambo.
- They will stand on either side of the ambo and remain there for the duration of the Gospel.
- Once the Gospel has ended, they return their candles to the credence table, and sit for the homily.

General Intercessions (Book bearer only)

- During the creed, when you hear, “We believe in the communion of saints,” the **book bearer** will pick up the blue binder and bring it to the celebrant.
- The celebrant will read the Invitation to prayer. After which the **book bearer** will return to his place, but while still holding the binder open, waiting for the lector/deacon to finish the intercessions.
- Once the intercessions are over, return to the celebrant, who will recite the prayer to close the intercessions.
- After, return to your place and pick up the large Roman Missal with book stand.

Offertory (All Servers needed)

- Once the congregation has sat down, the **book bearer** immediately places the **large Roman Missal** with book stand on altar.
- Meanwhile, **Candle 1** will take the chalice veil off the chalices and together with **Candle 2**, they will bring all the chalices and ciboria to the altar. Leave the purificators at the credence table. (See diagram for set up)
- Once they have completed the movement of chalices, **Candle 1** and **Candle 2** will stand in front of the credence table and in between their kneelers.

- When the priest stands, **Candle 1, Candle 2,** and **Cross bearer** will go to the bottom step with him. **Candle 1 and 2** will stand to his right, while **Cross bearer** will stand to his left.
- The priest will give **Cross bearer** the collection. He places it on the floor in front of the sacristy door. Then he sits down.
- **Candle 1** will receive the ciborium of bread from the priest. He brings it to the altar via the Edward side and places it with the rest of the ciboria of bread. Then he returns to the credence table and picks up the **cruet of water** without is cap on and stands closer to the Edward statue with **Candle 2** who is holding the cruet of wine. The cruet is held in the right hand, with the left hand placed over the chest.
- **Candle 2** will receive the **cruet of wine** from the priest, takes it to the credence table, where he removes the cap. Then he stands with **Candle 1** who is holding the cruet of water. The cruet is held in the right hand, with the left hand placed over the chest.
- **Candle 1 and 2** will present the wine and water to the priest or deacon. After, they will return to the credence table.
- **Candle 1** will retrieve the bowl in his left hand, while retaining the cruet of water in his right. This time, he will stand closer to the congregation with **Candle 2**.
- **Candle 2** will put down the now-empty cruet of wine, and pick up and unfold the finger towel. This time, he will stand closer to the Edward statue with **Candle 1**.
- Once they have washed the priests hands, they will return to their places.

Eucharistic Prayer (Only for Masses with Father Keyes)

- When Father places his hands over the gifts to call down the Holy Spirit, the **cross bearer** will ring the bells once.
- Immediately after Father says, "This is my body which will be given up for you." The **cross bearer** rings the bells once.
- When the Consecrated host is elevated the, **the cross bearer** will ring the bells once for a second time.
- When Father genuflects in adoration, **the cross bearer** will ring the bells once again for a third time.
- Repeat for the Precious Blood.
- During the entire Eucharistic Prayer, there should be a total of 7 rings.

Sign of Peace

- **Candle 1** will bring the purificators to the altar, placing them next to the chalices. Then he will genuflect in adoration and return to his seat.

Communion

- All the servers will receive communion next to the EMHC's.
- The **book bearer** should immediately remove the **Roman Missal** while communion of the faithful is taking place.
- Then they will return to their places and pray in silence.

- ****At Masses with Father Keyes, Candle 1 will present the cruet of water to Father for the ablution. Also Candle 1 will remove Father's chalice from the altar****

Dismissal

- When the final blessing is given, the **cross bearer** retrieves the cross, while the candle bearers retrieve their candles.
- They will proceed to the front side of the altar, leaving enough room for the priest to be in the center.
- When the priest genuflects, the **book bearer** genuflects also, while the others make a head bow.
- The cross bearer leads the procession out as usual.

After Mass

- Assist the sacristan in cleaning up
- Take off alb and hang it nicely on the rack.
- Say Prayer after Serving Mass.

ST. EDWARD CATHOLIC CHURCH
ALTAR SERVER AND PARENT CONTRACT

Please read and discuss the following requirements. If you agree to all these statements, please sign below.

Altar servers:

- I freely choose to be a member of this ministry.
- I promise to carry out my duties with attention, dignity, and reverence, so that I can be an example for the entire community.
- I desire to grow in my understanding of the Mass and Our Catholic Faith.
- I promise to come to Mass prepared, having prayed before hand and got the necessary rest.
- I will review my responsibilities regularly, correcting any mistakes or sloppiness.
- I will be prompt, arriving 20-30 minutes before Mass.
- If I am absent, I will find a substitute.
- I will be open to suggestions by the pastor or other priests, in my effort to strive for perfection in this ministry.
- I will strive to demonstrate good behavior at all times.

Parents:

- I promise to assist my child in this ministry.
- I will speak with my child about the graces received in carrying out this ministry.
- I will review my child's responsibilities for this ministry, helping them to become familiar with the protocols.
- I will ensure that my child has properly prepared for Mass, by being properly prepared and recollected myself.
- I will ensure that my child arrives 20-30 minutes before Mass.
- I will assist my child in finding a substitute, when necessary.

Altar Server

Parent

Date