

ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY PARISH  
ALTAR SERVERS

**BASIC PROCEDURES FOR SERVING AT HOLY MASS**

**Before Mass begins**

- ✓ Arrive 10 to 15 minutes before the start of Mass.
- ✓ Put on an alb of an appropriate length (2"-3" above shoe tops) and a cincture of the correct color.
  - The color of the cincture depends upon the Church season or the feast day being celebrated. Ask Father politely which color should be worn if you are not sure.
- ✓ First server to be ready should light the altar candles using a brass lighter (stored in the server closet).
  - The lighter wick is controlled by the tab on the side of the lighter. Push the tab up to extend the wick; push the tab down to retract the wick and extinguish the flame. Once the flame has been extinguished, immediately push the tab up to extend the wick again. This will keep wax from building up inside the lighter.
- ✓ Server who is to be crucifix bearer retrieves crucifix from holder in the Reconciliation Room and returns to the sacristy.
- ✓ If there are 3 servers, 2 will be candle bearers; one of the candle bearers is to retrieve the lit candles from the altar and return to the sacristy.
- ✓ Join Father and the ministers in saying the Servers' Prayer.

**As Mass begins**

- ✓ Line up for the Processional as follows:
  - **3 servers: crucifix bearer and (2) candle bearers set-up in center aisle at first pew from the back;**
  - **2 servers: crucifix bearer sets-up in center aisle at first pew from the back; 2<sup>nd</sup> server walks with hands folded directly behind crucifix bearer (no candles);**
  - **1 server: crucifix bearer sets-up in center aisle at first pew from the back.**
- ✓ Begin procession when congregation begins to sing the opening hymn; crucifix bearer can look back to get OK from Father.
- ✓ **Walk slowly and reverently.** This is not a race.
- ✓ As the crucifix bearer and candle bearers get to the Sanctuary steps, they **DO NOT STOP TO GENUFLECT OR BOW** – you are carrying sacred objects. Continue up the steps and into the Sanctuary. If there are only 2 servers, the 2<sup>nd</sup> server stops at the foot of the Sanctuary steps (off to the right a little), waits for Father, bows with Father, then proceeds up the steps and into the Sanctuary.
- ✓ Crucifix bearer places crucifix in alcove in back of and to the right of Father's chair and then goes to the chair next to the table with the book (Sacramentary).

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- ✓ Candle bearers place candles carefully in the candlesticks at the Altar, and then go to their chairs on the right side of the Sanctuary.
- ✓ Servers stand at their chairs as Father kisses the Altar then takes his place. **(Note: Remember the proper posture for standing, sitting and kneeling during Mass)**

### **Holy Mass**

- ✓ Sign of the Cross & Greeting
- ✓ Penitential Prayer: Confiteor (“I confess to Almighty God...”) and/or Lord Have Mercy
- ✓ Gloria (during most of the year)
- ✓ **Opening Prayer: After either the Lord Have Mercy or Gloria, Father will begin the prayer by saying “Let us pray”.**
  - **This is the cue for the crucifix bearer to bring the book (Sacramentary) to Father at his chair.**
  - **Make certain the book is turned so that Father can read from it.**
  - **Stand on the step just below Father and a little to his right.**
  - **When Father has finished the prayer, he will close the book – return it to the table, then go to your chair.**
- ✓ First reading
- ✓ Responsorial Psalm
- ✓ Second Reading
- ✓ Alleluia
- ✓ Gospel
- ✓ Homily
- ✓ Profession of Faith (Nicene Creed)
- ✓ General intercessions (intentions)
- ✓ **Offertory**
  - **After the intentions, the ushers will collect the offering from the congregation. When the collection is finished, Father will rise and go to the front of the Altar to receive the gifts. At this time, the servers also rise:**
    - ✓ **The crucifix bearer brings the Sacramentary to the Altar and places it on the right side.**
    - ✓ **The candle bearers retrieve the Chalice, cups & water cruet from the credence table, bring them to the Altar and carefully place them on the left side.**
    - ✓ **All servers then join Father to receive the gifts.**
  - **As Father receives the gifts, he will hand them to the servers:**
    - ✓ **The Ciborium is placed on the corporal at the center of the Altar.**
    - ✓ **The wine cruet is placed next to the Chalice, cups and water cruet on the left side of the Altar.**
    - ✓ **The collection basket is placed directly in front of the Altar.**

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- **Once the gifts are properly placed:**
  - ✓ **The crucifix bearer returns to his/her chair**
  - ✓ **The candle bearers go to the credence table and bring the water pitcher, bowl & towel to the Altar for the washing of Father's hands (Note: the server with the water pitcher & bowl stands closest to the Altar).**
  - ✓ **After Father's hands are washed, Father will place the towel on the arm of server that brought the towel, give the cruets to the server with the towel, then bow to you. Return his bow, take the pitcher, bowl, towel & cruets back to the credence table then go back to your chairs.**

**Please note: when the Deacon is assisting at Mass, the Offertory process changes slightly. Pay close attention to the Deacon's instructions.**

- ✓ Preface & Holy, Holy, Holy
- ✓ Eucharistic Prayer
  - **At the Consecration, when Father elevates the Host and the Precious Blood, the crucifix bearer rings the bells firmly 3 times at each elevation.**
- ✓ The Great Amen
- ✓ The Lord's Prayer
- ✓ Sign of Peace
  - **Meet Father about half way between your chairs and the Altar to exchange the sign of peace. If you are going to receive Holy Communion, remain standing at this spot, otherwise return to your chair. The Extraordinary Ministers will join the servers waiting for Communion.**
  - **As the Extraordinary Ministers are gathering in the sanctuary, one of the candle bearers is to retrieve the small Ciboria from the credence table and place them on the altar.**
- ✓ Lamb of God
- ✓ Communion
  - **The servers may receive both the Host & Precious Blood. Once you have received Communion, return to your chair and kneel.**
  - **Sometime while Communion is being distributed, the crucifix bearer retrieves the book from the Altar and places it back on the table.**
  - **After Communion, the candle bearers come to the Altar, take the Chalice and Ciboria to the credence table, then return to their chairs.**
- ✓ Announcements

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- ✓ **Prayer after Communion. When Father stands and says “Let us pray”:**
  - **This is the cue for the crucifix bearer to bring the book (Sacramentary) to Father at his chair.**
  - **Make certain the book is turned so that Father can read from it.**
  - **Stand on the step just below Father and a little to his right.**
  - **When Father has finished the prayer, he will close the book – return it to the table, then go to your chair.**
- ✓ Blessing
- ✓ Dismissal and Recessional Hymn
  - **When the music minister begins the hymn, the servers retrieve the crucifix and candles, reverently leave the Sanctuary and set-up for the Recessional.**
  - **Line up in the center aisle at the first pew, and then face the Altar. The crucifix bearer should be slightly behind the candle bearers.**
  - **Father will proceed to the Altar, kiss it, then join you at the steps to the Sanctuary. After he bows to the Altar, all turn towards the back of church and process slowly and reverently.**
  - **At the back of church, in front of the Baptismal Font, the servers stop, turn toward the Altar and wait for the hymn to end.**
  - **When the hymn is finished, the servers carefully return the crucifix & candles to their proper places.**

**After Mass**

- ✓ Carefully put the albs & cinctures back in the servers' closet.
- ✓ Say goodbye to Father.
- ✓ Enjoy the rest of your day – you have faithfully served Our Lord in a personal and sacred way!