

THE ALTAR SERVERS

The Minister of the Altar has a sacred task and takes on an important role in our Eucharistic celebration. The main tasks are:

1. To light the candles at the altar.
2. To hold the Sacramentary for the priest so that he can lead the assembly in prayer.
3. To prepare the table of the Lord...the altar... before the gifts of bread and wine are placed on it. The table is bare until then so that the focus goes more easily to the Ambo (Lectern) where the Scriptures are read.
4. At the time of the Offertory place the gifts of food on the sanctuary steps-money goes to sacristy.

After Mass, return to the sanctuary to blow out the candles (prefer that they be blown out as the extinguisher blackens the candle top).

Your role as Minister of the Altar is important. It is a privilege to have such a responsible role in the Mass.

THURIFER (CENSOR) DIRECTIONS

1. Put a match to the charcoal 10-15 minutes before it is to be used. When sparks fly around, it is lit. This allows the charcoal to be white-hot so that it burns the incense well. Depending on use, a piece of charcoal may need to be added.
2. If you are to incense the Gospel book:
 - Bring censor and incense to the priest. He will put incense on the burning coals.
 - After the Priest (Deacon) incenses the Book of the Gospel, he will hand the censor back to you. Remain standing near the Ambo while the Gospel is read.
 - After the Gospel is read, return the censor to the censor stand.
 - If the smoke seems heavy, take the censor to the sacristy.
3. If the altar is to be incensed:
 - Bring the censor and incense to Father.
 - He will put the incense on the burning coals.
 - Return the censor to the censor stand after the priest incenses the altar.

PROCEDURES FOR MINISTER OF THE ALTAR

1. Dress with clothes appropriate for Sunday Mass
2. Arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the start of Mass. Please check the following:
 - A. Check your name off on the ministry schedule on the bulletin board in the sacristy.
 - B. On the credence table are placed the chalice, 6 communion cups (4 with wine / 2 cups without wine), ciborium, corporal (large white cloth) and purificator.
 - C. Light the 4 candles at the altar. If there is a Baptism light Easter Candle.
 - D. Ask if there are any additional ceremonies (e.g. Baptism, enrollment, etc.)
3. Wait near the Baptismal Font. Be sure to have a Missalette and Music Issue with you. Your position for the processional and recessional is to go side by side and immediately before the Priest (s). At the foot of the altar take your position, one on either side of the priest and Deacon, and then all genuflects together.
4. When seated sit with both feet on the floor, knees together, and your back straight.
When not assisting the Priest be sure that your hands are folded in an attitude of prayer. At the appropriate times, use the missalette or music issue.
5. For the opening Prayer step up on the first and step hold the Sacramentary against your chest.
6. When the collection begins, prepare the Altar:
 - **When Deacon is present hand him the Corporal and Sacramentary Book**
 - Bring the, corporal, chalice and one purificator to the Altar.
 - Open the corporal (the large white cloth).
 - **When Deacon is present hand him the chalice, purificators and 6 Communion Cups.**
 - Place Father's chalice at the lower right edge of the corporal.
 - Open the Sacramentary to the Prayer over the Gifts for the given Sunday/Feast Day.
 - Place the 4 Communion cups with wine on the Corporal at the upper right corner.
Place the two empty Communion cups below the full ones.
 - Assist the Priest in receiving the food basket items.
 - **When the Deacon is present hand him the water cruet.**
 - Hand the cruet of water to the priest with handle toward the priest.
 - When Deacon IS or IS NOT present always bring the cruet of water, dish for washing of
 - hands and purificator (white cloth) over your wrist.
 - When pouring the water on Father's fingers make sure to hold the cruet high enough allowing the water to flow over his fingers.
 - Return to your assigned chairs.
7. After the Sign of Peace remain at your place to receive Holy Communion.
8. After you have received Holy Communion:
 - Close the Sacramentary (Big red Book) and take it back to the Minister of the Altar chair.
 - Place the large plastic tray and 2 water cruets on the lower right side of altar. Return to your chair.
 - After Father or Deacon puts plastic tray on credence table you fold the Corporal, take it and 2 water cruets and place them on the credence table.
9. For the concluding rite go to the first step, hold the Sacramentary for the closing prayer and Blessing.
10. When the Celebrant goes to the foot of the altar for the closing hymn one Minister of the Altar is on either side of him and your place is in the front of the priest for the recessional.
11. **Return to the sanctuary to blow out the candles.**
God Bless You and Thank you for assuming the responsibility of Minister of the Altar.