



CATHEDRAL OF SAINT JOSEPH



ALTAR SERVER MANUAL

Jesus said, "I came to serve, not to be served."

Updated version September, 2013

Getting Started

Serving at Mass and other liturgies is an important role because the server is assisting, not just the priest, but the **whole** worshipping community. Hence, altar servers are called to be aware of their role and their responsibility in performing it well.

According to the dictionary, the term “minister” means one who is “a servant, an attendant, or one who waits on others.” All ministers are at the service of the People of God. Altar servers have their own particular function in attending to the People of God and are “integral to the normal celebration of the Mass” (*Bishops’ Committee on the Liturgy*, 1994).

Attire –How Should I Dress For Serving Mass?

People dress for every occasion and event; some professions call for a specific uniform (for example, firefighters and police officers). Altar servers also have a robe that is a sign of their role during the celebration of the Church’s liturgies. The **alb** (from the Latin *albus* for “white”) is a long white garment that is worn to completely cover one’s clothes. It is a reminder of the Sacrament of Baptism which we have all received and it is the garment proper to all of the baptized: bishops, priests, deacons, and all laity. The white color of the alb reminds us that the Sacrament of Baptism washes away sin and gives new life. In some places, altar servers wear the **cincture**, or a special length of cloth rope, tied around the waist when wearing the alb.

Although the alb will cover the street clothes that you are wearing, it is our expectation here at the Cathedral that you wear clean, and if possible, **dress shoes**, with **long pants** when you are serving. **No shorts, or flip-flops, please.** Practically speaking, it is very difficult to walk in flip-flops and sandals anyway, let alone with a long alb on. It is out of respect that one should make an effort to dress nicely for Mass and practice good personal grooming, especially when a person is serving at the altar.

A good way to tell if the alb is of correct length when it just touches the tops of your shoes.



Alb



Candle lighter/snuffer

Important words you need to know

Liturgy: the official public worship of the Church.

Liturgy of the Word: the first main part of the Mass. God is present in the proclamation of the Scriptures, He speaks through the prophets, the Apostles, and the life and teachings of Jesus. The people respond to the proclaimed Word with prayers of praise and petition (the responsorial psalm) and a profession of faith (the Creed).

Liturgy of the Eucharist: the second main part of the Mass, following after the Liturgy of the Word. Christ is made present in the bread and wine through the calling down of the Holy Spirit by the priest in the words of Institution.

Altar: the table used for the Celebration of the Eucharist. It is the place where Christ is made present when the priest calls down the Holy Spirit to transform the gifts of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, therefore we are asked to give it due reverence (a profound bow). Because it is so important, the altar is the central focus of every church building.

Ambo or Pulpit: the stand from which the readings and the Gospel are proclaimed.

Sanctuary: the area around the altar, usually separated and elevated from the rest of the church structure by steps. Sanctuary comes from the Latin word *sanctus* meaning “holy”.

Sacristy: the room where vestments, sacred vessels, and other things used during the Liturgy are stored and prepared. The major sacristy is located just inside the main doors of the Cathedral church and is the place where servers should meet **at least** 15 minutes before Mass begins. The minor sacristy is left of the sanctuary in the Cathedral church. In the minor sacristy can be found the sacred vessels and altar linens for the Liturgy, the needed supplies to light the candles and prepare the incense.

Bowing: a sign of honor and respect. Any time before we enter the sanctuary, we should make a sign of reverence to the altar: a profound bow at the waist.

Genuflection: a brief kneeling on the right knee as a sign of reverence shown to the presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. Anytime that a person passes by the tabernacle, the place where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved, or when the Blessed Sacrament is exposed, a genuflection is the proper sign of respect.

Book of Gospels: sometimes the Gospel readings are in a separate book from the Lectionary. During Sunday Liturgies, the Book of Gospels is placed on the altar by the deacon at the beginning of Mass symbolizing the integral connection between the Word and the altar on which Jesus becomes present. During the Gospel Procession (with the singing of the Alleluia/Gospel Acclamation), it is solemnly carried to the ambo.

Lectionary: the book with the biblical readings used at Mass. It is arranged so that the readings assigned to a particular Sunday or liturgical day can be easily found.

Missal: the large book of liturgical prayers used at Mass. In addition to the Eucharistic prayers, it also gives rubrics and directives used by the priest when leading the Celebration of the Eucharist.

Rubrics: directives or guidelines found in the Missal and Lectionary to help guide the celebrant and other ministers in the Eucharistic celebration, including movements, actions and gestures. The word rubric comes from the Latin word for “red” since most rubrics are printed in red ink.

Aspergillum or Holy Water sprinkler: a branch, brush or perforated metal globe with a handle used for the sprinkling of Holy Water during Mass & other liturgies.

Thurible or censer: a metal container swung from chains and in which incense is burned.

Boat: the small container, with a lid and spoon, in which incense is carried. It is always carried with the thurible.

Thurifer: the server who carries the thurible during the Mass.

Crucifer: the server who carries the cross during the Mass.

Monstrance: the ornately decorated, large metal object used to display the Blessed Sacrament during Eucharistic Adoration.



Thurible & Boat



Monstrance



Holy Water Bucket & Aspergillum

Credence table: the side table that holds the chalices, paten, cruets, and purificators when they are not being used at the altar.

Chalice: the cup that holds the wine which is consecrated and becomes the Blood of Christ during the Mass.

Ciborium: the gold or silver container with a lid which is used to hold the consecrated hosts (the Body of Christ) in the tabernacle. It comes from the Latin word for food *cibus*.



Chalice



Ciborium

Corporal: the square, folded cloth that is placed at the center of the altar. The gifts are placed on it by the priest. The way to unfold the corporal at the altar is to place it in near the middle and then unfold it to the **left**, then **right**, **up**, then **down**.

Pall: a stiffened square card covered with white linen used to cover the chalice.

Paten: the gold plate that holds the hosts that is consecrated during the Mass.

Purificator: the napkin-like cloth used to wipe the priest's fingers and the chalice that holds the Blood of Christ.

Cruet: the vessel that holds the water.

Carafe or Decanter: the large glass or crystal vessel that holds the wine before it is consecrated.

Host: bread made without yeast (unleavened) that is consecrated at Mass, becoming the Body of Christ.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SERVING SUNDAY EUCHARIST

What To Do To Prepare For Mass

Once you have vested in your **clean** and **properly** fitting alb, light all the candles near the altar and bring the unlit processional candles from the ambo back to the major sacristy. If incense is being used during the Mass, light one charcoal and place it in the thurible. Check to insure a sufficient amount of incense is in the boat. Five minutes before Mass is scheduled to begin, light the processional candles and prepare for the procession up the center aisle.

What To Do With Your Hands

Because the Mass is the most important Christian celebration that we take part in, reverence should be second nature to every altar server. In the standing position hands should be held in the praying position (together with palms facing each other, thumbs overlapped and finger tips facing upwards) as seen in most Christian artwork. If you are not holding something, your hands should be in this position when serving.

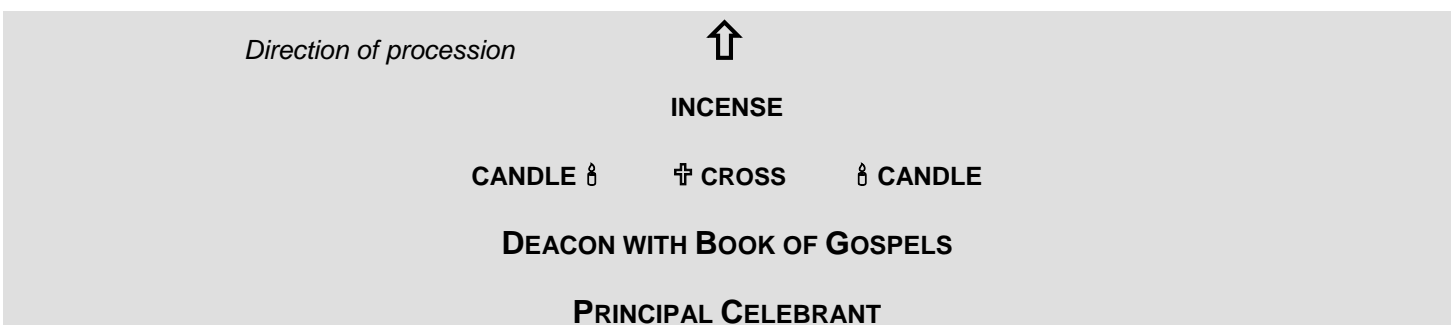
In the kneeling position hands should be held as in the standing position. You must kneel upright, not slouching or sitting on your heels.

When sitting the hands should be held on the lap or at the sides. Never slouch. Never play with your alb, your hair etc. or otherwise cause a public reason to take notice of you. You are not on stage; you are serving at the altar of Our God.

There will normally be three servers assigned to each Sunday Liturgy. One will carry the cross, two will carry candles (one will then take care of holding the Roman Missal (large red book), and the other will be responsible for helping to prepare the altar before the offertory. Four servers may be assigned on occasion. When there's a fourth server assigned, he or she will be the thurifer (the one responsible for the incense).

Procession

Mass begins with the priest, deacon, servers and other ministers entering the Church in a procession, normally with music. We can think of the procession like a sacred parade in which all of the people in it walk in a dignified way. It is important the all those in the procession sing the opening song too. If incense is being carried in procession, incense first may have to be added *before* the procession begins (priest will decide), and then the thurifer leads the procession, followed by two candle bearers holding lighted candles, and in between them, the crucifer carrying the cross. The deacon carrying the Book of Gospels and the celebrant follow after the servers.



When the entrance procession reaches the first step of the sanctuary, if there is a thurifer, he or she bows and steps to the right. All servers carrying something will make a simple head bow.

The crucifer will bow and step left, waiting for the candle bearers and the principal celebrant to arrive before taking the cross into the side chapel. The cross should be hung on the wall in the side chapel (through the glass door and to the right). The crucifer should then proceed to one of the servers' seats on the left side of the sanctuary.

The candle bearers stop at the bottom step, bow, and wait for the priest celebrant to reach the step and make his profound bow. Then they walk up the sanctuary steps and place their candles on either side of the ambo. After that, they should proceed to their seats in the sanctuary.

If any servers are not carrying something in procession, they will make a profound bow to the altar with the priest and proceed to the seats in the sanctuary.

The proper places for the servers to sit are the long benches on either sides of the sanctuary. One candle bearer will sit next to the crucifer (near the credence table), and the other will sit on the opposite side of the Sanctuary, to the left of the priest, in order to perform the needed service with the Missal. Please do not sit on the right of the celebrant, which is the deacon's proper seat. Obviously, the bishop is the only person who sits on the bishop's throne.

The priest (and deacon) go to kiss the altar, another sign of reverence to the altar upon which Christ will become present during the Eucharistic prayer. The thurifer should come up on the right side of the deacon and then pull up the lid of the thurible so that incense may be placed in it. The thurifer then closes the lid and hands the thurible to the deacon, who gives it to the priest, so that the altar and cross can be incensed. Once the altar and cross have been incensed, the thurible is handed back to the thurifer, who places it on the thurible stand in the sacristy. The thurifer then goes to a seat next to the crucifer for the Introductory Rites of Mass.

The altar servers should participate in all the prayers, responses and songs. This sets a good example for the rest of the congregation to follow.

Introductory Rite and Liturgy of the Word

The Mass begins with the *Sign of the Cross*, to which all of the people respond *Amen*, which actually means "so be it". Then the priest greets the people and asks them to call to mind their sins and to pray for God's mercy. The **Sprinkling Rite** can be used instead of the **Penitential Rite**, in which case the altar server nearest the credence table will need to bring the holy water sprinkler and bucket to the celebrant and hold it during the Prayer of Blessing. The altar server who is responsible for the Missal will need to hold it for the Sprinkling Rite.

After the **Penitential Act**, the hymn of praise and glory, the *Gloria*, is sung (but not during the seasons of Lent or Advent). The joyful words of the Gloria remind us of the joyful song the angels sang at Jesus' birth (Luke 2:14). After the Gloria, the priest gathers all the prayers of the people together as he prays the **Collect** (Opening Prayer), which sets the theme of the liturgy being celebrated.

At this point one of the servers will have to hold the Missal open and in front of the priest for the prayer. The whole congregation makes the prayer their own with the acclamation, *Amen*.

The server responsible for the Missal will need to bring it to the priest as the congregation finishes saying/singing the Gloria. At the very latest, the server should be standing with the Missal in front of the the priest when he says "Let us pray..." After the priest has finished praying the Opening Prayer, the book server should return to the bench and place the Missal on the bench, too.

Next there is the First Reading, proclaimed at the ambo, followed by the Responsorial Psalm, and then the Second Reading.



Roman Missal

Holding the Roman Missal

The **Roman Missal** is a large, red book from which the priest prays many of the prayers of the Mass. Because there are so many prayers used throughout the liturgical year, the Missal is often quite large and heavy. Special care should be taken so that you can hold the book where the priest can easily see it and that you don't hurt yourself, or drop it! There are *normally* just two times during the Mass when a server will have to hold the Missal in front of the priest: the Collect and the Prayer After Communion.

When you pick up the Missal, be sure that the ribbons are hanging from the bottom—this means the book is right side up. Cradle the Missal with both hands at the bottom—not along the spine of the book—this assures that you have a secure hold. If necessary, the top of the Missal can be rested against your chest.

Procession with the Book of the Gospels

(Ask the priest or deacon before Mass if there will be a Procession with the Book of the Gospels at the Mass you're serving.)

After the lector of the Second Reading completes the reading at the ambo, the candle bearers should retrieve their lighted candles from the ambo, and proceed to behind the altar when the **Gospel Acclamation** begins. They should stand at either end of the altar (at the edge of the carpet), facing toward each other, waiting for the deacon to pick up the Book of the Gospels from the altar. Once the deacon elevates the Book of the Gospels, the servers form a procession: (if there is incense) the thurifer leading, followed by the two candlebearers walking side by side, followed by the deacon. The procession moves slowly toward the ambo during the singing of the Alleluia/ Gospel Acclamation. Once at the ambo, the candlebearers stand on either side again, facing toward each other; the thurifer behind and to the right of the deacon.

The deacon will introduce the Gospel with the words, "The Lord be with you...A reading from the Holy Gospel according to" ...signing himself on the forehead, lips, and heart. He then takes the thurible to incense the Book of Gospels. After a bow, three swings of the thurible and another bow, the deacon will hand the thurible back to the thurifer, who waits for the whole Gospel reading to be proclaimed.

After the Gospel has concluded with the response "Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ," the servers should return the candles to the stands next to the ambo and return to their seats for the homily. At the same time, the thurifer should return to the minor sacristy to place another charcoal in the thurible so that it will be ready for the Preparation of the Altar and Gifts.

If there is no procession with candles, the deacon will process alone with the Book of Gospels and reads the Gospel. Then a homily given by the priest or deacon follows. During the homily, in Masses

in which incense is used, the thurifer should reverently proceed to the minor sacristy to place another charcoal in the thurible, making sure that it lights. Once the Creed (“I believe in One God...”) has been professed, the Universal Prayer (petitions) are prayed. The server who holds the Missal should stand in front of the celebrant with the binder in which the petitions are held. After the General Intercessions are completed, the celebrant will sit down as the ushers begin to take up the collection.

Here is a summary of Introductory Rites and Liturgy of the Word:

Entrance Procession

INTRODUCTORY RITES

Sign of Cross

Penitential Act / or Sprinkling Rite

Confiteor (“I Confess...”)

Kyrie (“Lord Have Mercy”)

Gloria (“Glory to God in the highest...”)

Collect

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading

Psalm Response

Second Reading

Alleluia (or Gospel Acclamation during the Season of Lent) & verse

Gospel

Homily

The Creed (“We believe in One God...”)

Universal Prayer (the Prayers of the Faithful)

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Preparation of the Altar and Gifts

The celebrant will sit down as the ushers begin to take up the collection. This time of the Mass is called the **Preparation of the Gifts** (Offertory). During this time, it is important that the servers be attentive!

The server who has been holding the Missal carries it to the altar and places it on the left side—not in the center—on the Missal stand if one is used. The other server should then go to the credence table to bring the large chalice, with the purificator and corporal, to the deacon at the right side of the altar. Servers seated by the credence table may also help carry the cups of wine to the altar. After that has been done, the servers return to their seats and can be seated until the celebrant stands. The deacon will unfold the corporal and prepare the Missal. If there isn't a deacon present, the server who brought the chalice to the altar should unfold the corporal on the altar. The chalice should not be placed on the corporal by the servers.

Unfolding the corporal: place the folded corporal at the center of the altar so that the first part unfolded is to the **left**, then to the **right**, then holding the two corners, **up**, and then the remaining two corners, **down**. If it was folded correctly in the first place, the cross should be at the bottom, center of the cloth. Remember the movement for unfolding the corporal: left, right, up, down.

When the priest stands up and walks down to receive the gifts at the first step of the sanctuary, the servers will also stand up and walk down to help him receive the gifts, each standing on opposite sides of the priest and deacon. One server will be handed the carafe of wine, the other may receive the paten filled with hosts or one of the collection baskets filled with the people's offerings.

If you have received **the carafe or cruet of wine** carry it behind the altar and wait for the priest (or deacon) to receive it from you.

If you have been handed the **basket of money**, place it near the credence table—not in front of the altar. (At 11:00 am Mass, the basket should be taken to the usher waiting by the tabernacle.)

If you have received the **paten filled with hosts** carry it around to left side of the altar and wait for the priest (or deacon) to receive it. Don't just set it on the altar! After the priest has taken the paten, walk to the credence table to get the small cruet of water. Take the stopper off the top and bring the water up to the right side of the altar and **stand next to the server with the carafe or cruet of wine**. The priest (or deacon) will need the wine and the cruet of water at the same time.

When you bring the water cruet, have the handle facing away from you so that the priest (or deacon) can easily hold it. He will pour a few drops into the wine, and then return the water cruet to you—so remain standing there until you receive the cruet back. The deacon will pour the wine into the chalice and then hand the carafe or cruet to one of the waiting servers.

- If incense is not being used, the next task will be to bring the ewer (pitcher) of water and the basin (lavabo) so that the priest's hands can be washed. The **server who received the cruet or flagon of wine** will carry the towel to dry the celebrant's hands. Please be generous when pouring the water!
- If incense is being used, immediately after the priest offers the chalice and has placed it on the corporal, the thurifer should come over to the priest with the thurible and boat. The thurifer should hand the boat to the priest and carefully open the thurible, holding it about waist-level, so that incense can be placed on the lit charcoals. Once the priest has spooned in an amount of incense **and blessed it**, carefully close the thurible. Hand it to the deacon and you will receive the boat back. Please step back to make room for the celebrant to incense the gifts, the altar and the cross. Then the deacon will take the thurible in order to incense the celebrant and then the whole congregation. Only after all this is done will the thurible be handed back to the thurifer, who then can return it to its stand at the left of the sanctuary.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

After the hands of the celebrant are washed and the water and basin placed back on the credence table, EVERY server should reverently walk to the left side of the ambo and stand on the bottom step near the tabernacle. Servers should remain standing with hands held in the prayer position until the "Holy, Holy, Holy" has been sung. After the "Holy, Holy, Holy," the servers will kneel on the kneeling pads just as the rest of the congregation does, until after the Great Amen has been sung and the congregation stands.

During the point of the Eucharistic Prayer called the **Consecration**, when the celebrant calls upon the Holy Spirit to transform the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ and repeats the words that Jesus spoke at the Last Supper, the servers need to be particularly attentive.

Bell Ringing - The bell should be rung at the specific times during the Mass as is the local custom in your parish. Bells are to be rung at the Cathedral:

- Once, when the priest places his open hands over the gifts and calls on the Holy Spirit to come upon them. This is called the **epiclesis** and occurs prior to the consecration of the bread and wine.

Three indications that the **epiclesis** is occurring. 1 The priest takes the *pall* (square covering) off of the chalice and places it on the altar. 2 The priest then holds both hands over the hosts and chalice indicating that he is calling down the Holy Spirit. 3. The deacons kneel. However, it

is important to pay close attention as the priest may not be using a pall and the deacons may be unable to kneel due to health reasons.

- Three times in quick succession, after the priest has repeated the words of Christ: “For this is my Body which will be given up for you” and holds up the Host, one of the servers will ring the bells that are located at the step. Wait until the Host is fully elevated.
- Likewise, the bells are rung three times in quick succession, after the priest repeats the words of Christ, “Do this in memory of me” and elevates the chalice.

After the Great Amen has been sung, all stand and pray the Lord’s Prayer together and then exchange the Sign of Peace. Servers should walk over to the altar to exchange the Sign of Peace with the priest and deacon. The servers should then go to the credence table and bring the extra patens to the altar, placing them next to the corporal. Then the servers return to their places beside the ambo and kneel when the rest of the congregation does after the Lamb of God.

Once the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion line up to receive Communion, the servers should come forward and stand next to the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. Before each person receives the Body of Christ and the Blood of Christ, a bow of the head should be made as a sign of reverence.

After you have received Holy Communion, and the priest and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion have taken their places to distribute Holy Communion, the Missal can be removed from the altar. Please remain standing until the celebrant returns to his place and is seated. Once Communion has been distributed and the Blessed Sacrament has been taken back to the tabernacle, the altar can be cleared. Sometimes the sacred vessels will be purified at the altar by the priest or deacon, so the cruet of water may be needed again at the altar. The priest or deacon will fold up the corporal, handing it to a server who takes it to the credence table. If the corporal is left on the altar, the chalice server should come and fold it (**Bottom-Top-Right-Left**). All the servers return to their seats and remain standing until the celebrant is seated.

Here is a summary of the Liturgy of the Eucharist:

Preparation of the Gifts (Offertory)

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Holy, Holy

Consecration

Memorial Acclamation

Great Amen

The Lord’s Prayer

Sign of Peace

COMMUNION RITE

Breaking of Bread

Lamb of God

Communion

CONCLUDING RITE

Blessing

Dismissal

Recessional Song

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Closing of Mass

After a period of silence, all will stand and the celebrant will say “Let us pray”. The server should bring the Missal in front of the priest for the Prayer After Communion.

After this Prayer, if a Solemn Blessing is not being given, the Missal can be returned to the bench. Once the final blessing and the dismissal has been given, the closing song will begin. The crucifer, candle bearers (and thurifer, if there is one) should retrieve their respective items and descend the steps to the entrance of the sanctuary. The crucifer should stand in the center of the aisle, two pews back and facing the altar. As the celebrant and deacon step from their places to reverence the altar, any servers who aren't carrying anything should descend the steps of the sanctuary, position themselves in front of the crucifer in the aisle and turn to face the altar. The procession will begin after the deacon and principal celebrant have made a profound bow to the altar. All then process out of the Church in the same order as the entrance procession.

Arriving in the main sacristy, the servers should extinguish their processional candles and those at the altar as well. The albs should be hung up neatly and the sacristy closet door closed.

Particular Notes:

- If there are only two servers, then the cross is carried rather than the two processional candles.
- Remember that you need to arrive at the major sacristy **at least 15 minutes** before Mass starts. Go to the major sacristy (the room near the main entrance of the Cathedral) and sign or mark off your name in the server book and put on your alb. Decide with the other servers, who will be the cross bearer, the candle bearers and who will hold the Missal. Around ten minutes before Mass is scheduled to begin, the candles at the altar should be lit (and during Easter season, the Pascal candle as well) and the processional candles brought back to the major sacristy.
- Be attentive during Mass! Anytime you aren't involved in a specific duty, you should be participating as the congregation does (singing, praying). Remember that you are to be an example to the congregation. When standing, stand with your hands folded in front of you. When seated, your hands should be folded on your lap. Do not cross your legs or swing your feet back and forth. Whenever someone is speaking during the Mass (priest, deacon, lector), you should be paying attention to that person. Try to do your best not to yawn (or cough or sneeze) during Mass.
- Whenever you cross behind or in front of the altar and you aren't carrying anything, you should bow to the altar. If the Bishop is at Mass, you would also bow anytime you cross in front of him.
- Use common sense. If something falls, pick it up. If something spills, wipe it up (**if it's the Precious Blood, however, let the priest/deacon do it**). If you feel ill and need to use the restroom, quietly go to the Bishop Marling room behind the altar and use the restroom there.
- Above all else, remember that when you are an altar server at Mass, you are helping the Church carry out her mission as you minister to God's people by assisting the priest and deacon!

Special Notes for a Funeral

Prepare the boat and thurible (censer); the Holy Water bucket and aspergillum, and have candles lit before Mass. The thurible may be used at the Preparation of the Gifts and will be used at the Final Commendation at end of Mass. Light one charcoal about 10 minutes before the funeral Mass begins.

The Holy Water will be used at the very beginning of Mass when the body is greeted. The crucifer moves into the aisle, several feet up from the back pew allowing room for the priest and server with Holy Water. At indication of the priest, turn and process to the front of the church.

Funeral Mass will be much like a normal Sunday Mass, except for the closing.

After having received Communion, the thurifer should add another charcoal to the thurible so that it will be ready for the Final Commendation. After the Prayer After Communion, take the thurible and boat and move down to near the Paschal candle. At the same time, the crucifer needs to get the cross and move into the center aisle, in front of the casket, turning to face toward the altar.

After the casket has been incensed by the priest or deacon, the thurible and boat are again placed on the stand and the Holy Water bucket and aspergillum is retrieved. Following the prayer and the words, "In peace let us take our brother/sister to his/her place of rest," the servers and priest will process half way down the aisle, allowing time for the casket to be turned and the pall bearers to be in place.

Mass with the Bishop

Normally seven servers are needed: thurifer, crucifier, two candle bearers, boat (who will also handle the book), two for vimps behind Bishop (one holds **miter** (hat) the other **crozier** (staff)). (**Note:** If the thurifer carries the boat, one less server is needed.)

The thurifer will lead the procession followed by the crucifer and candles; the deacon with Book of Gospels; concelebrating priests; the bishop and other deacons and then the two vimps. As the procession moves to the front, the server with the censer and the one with the boat move up the sanctuary steps and stand near the bishop's cathedra; the bishop will use incense as soon as he reverences the altar. The vimps move to their seats on the ambo side; leaving room for the server who will hold the Missal. If necessary, the vimp server who holds the crozier will move to a chair next to the bench. The vimp with the miter should always be prepared to watch the Master of Ceremonies as the bishop will use the miter several times during the Mass.

Generally the Mass will be the same as on a Sunday. At the Preparation of the Altar and Gifts, after the gifts are brought to the altar, the server with the censer and the boat should be ready to come to the side of the altar because the bishop will incense the altar before he washes his hands. When the deacon takes the censer and incenses the bishop, the two servers with the basin and ewer should move forward so the bishop can wash his hands.

After the deacon incenses the congregation he will hand the censer to the server who will take it and return it to the stand. Generally, it will not be used again until the end of Mass (when it will be taken out in procession).

Following the final blessing at the end of Mass, the thurifer and crucifer will move, as normal, into the center aisle. The two candle bearers should also move into place next to the first pew. Vimps move down near the front pew and wait until the bishop has bowed to the altar, then fall in behind the deacons who are behind the bishop.

Thank you for the service that you give to the Celebration of the Eucharist!

--The Priests and Deacons of the Cathedral of Saint Joseph