

## Introduction

To be a server means you are taking a very special role in the prayer of the Church. You are a leader of our liturgical prayer, along with the readers, communion distributors and all the other ministers at the table of the Lord. This is both an honor and a privilege and should not be taken on lightly. Our hope is that, as a server, you will enable our community to pray well. Your behavior, dedication and participation in our prayer will make it happen.

Being a server is not always easy. In fact, sometimes it will be difficult, especially when you have to make choices between serving and other activities. It will require you to have more knowledge and understanding about the liturgy than what you might currently have. This means you will need to study and be attentive to what happens during the various liturgies.

Each ministry is an opportunity to get closer to God. Your commitment to this ministry is a great blessing for you and for all of us at Sacred Heart Parish. Thank you for volunteering, and know that our community is better because of your participation.

This handbook has been developed as a training guide and a reference book. You will need to be familiar with everything in it. Use it as often as you need to and keep it so you can look at it during your years in this ministry. When your training period is completed, you will be expected to know the material in this handbook and demonstrate that knowledge.

## General Expectations

- When to be at church:** 1. Servers must be in the sacristy and vested 15 minutes before the service begins.
- Dress code:** 1. Appropriate dress is long pants/slacks, socks, and dress shoes. Skirts and shorts are permitted during the summer months.
2. Servers are to wear albs with appropriate colored cinctures for the liturgy. Albs should come to the shoe tops. After use, albs should always be hung back in the closet. Each alb is marked with a size so you can easily find one that fits.
- Behavior:** 1. Be helpful and courteous to all in the sacristy. "Fooling around," fighting, or loud talking in the sacristy or church is not appropriate behavior. Proper respect is to be given to everyone in the church. Your best behavior is expected at all times.
2. Do everything in the church with respect and reverence.

People in the assembly notice servers; servers can either help or hinder them in prayer.

3. Stand and sit up straight. Slouching or kicking feet out in front of you while sitting makes a person look too relaxed or sloppy. When sitting, servers keep both feet on the floor and hands in their laps.

4. **Participation during the liturgy is essential.** Servers sing and pray because we are all called to full, conscious, and active participation at liturgy. Servers are expected to sing and respond at the appropriate times.

5. Never hurry or rush during the liturgy. Perform everything at a dignified pace.

6. If a server cannot make an assignment, it is the server's responsibility to find a substitute.

## Dictionary

Each server is expected to be familiar with the items used in the liturgy. The following list of definitions is to be known by every server.

|                          |  |
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| <b>acolyte</b>           | Another name for a server; usually carries a candle  |
| <b>alb</b>               | The long white robe which is the basic garment for all liturgical ministers if they wear special clothing for the liturgy.                           |
| <b>altar</b>             | The table at which the sacrificial meal of the Mass is celebrated. The altar is the focal point of the church building and is a symbol of the cross. |
| <b>ambo</b>              | The reading stand from where the Scriptures are read and the homily is preached.   |
| <b>Blessed Sacrament</b> | A name used to refer to the Real Presence of Christ under the form of bread and wine after the consecration in the Eucharistic Prayer of Mass.       |

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| <b>boat</b>            | The dish for incense before it is burned. It has a small spoon used to put the incense in the thurible. (Its name comes from the Middle Ages when it was usually shaped like a boat.) |
| <b>Book of Gospels</b> | A special Lectionary that only contains the Gospel readings for Mass on Sundays and special Feasts. It is also called the Evangeliary.  |
| <b>censer</b>          | <i>See thurible.</i>  |
| <b>chalice</b>         | The cup used at Mass for the consecration of the wine into the Blood of Christ.   |
| <b>chasuble</b>        | The outer vestment worn by the priest for Mass. The different colors of chasubles signify the different liturgical seasons and feasts.  |
| <b>ciborium</b>        | The container used to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle. (The plural is <i>ciboria</i> .)   |
| <b>cincture</b>        | The rope-like belt worn with the alb to hold it at the waist.   |
| <b>cope</b>            | A cape worn by bishops, priests and deacons for some liturgies outside of Mass.   |
| <b>corporal</b>        | The white cloth placed on the altar on top of the altar cloth. On it is placed the bread and wine to be consecrated at Mass.  |
| <b>credence table</b>  | A small table near the altar where the items for Mass are kept until they are needed.   |
| <b>crozier</b>         | The staff used by a bishop.   |
| <b>crucifer</b>        | The server who carries the processional cross.  |
| <b>cruet</b>           | A vessel to hold the water or wine for the celebration of Mass.   |
| <b>dalmatic</b>        | The outer vestment worn by the deacon over the alb and stole. It is square cut with sleeves and is made in all the liturgical colors.   |
| <b>hand towel</b>      | The towel used by the priest when he washes his hands at Mass.  |

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| <b>humeral veil</b>       | A liturgical veil that is worn over the shoulders by a cleric when he carries the Blessed Sacrament in procession or when he uses the Blessed Sacrament to bless the assembled people.   |
| <b>incense</b>            | A mixture of spices which produce a sweet smell and smoke when burned. It is used to show respect and honor to things (like the altar or Book of Gospels) and to people. It is used to symbolize our prayer to God. (Psalm 141 says "Let our prayer rise like incense, O God...")  |
| <b>Lectionary</b>         | The book of Scripture readings used for the liturgy.   |
| <b>Lector</b>             | A person who reads the first and second reading at Mass.   |
| <b>mitre</b>              | The liturgical head-dress proper to a Bishop.  |
| <b>monstrance</b>         | The large container used for displaying the Blessed Sacrament. Usually it is shaped like a cross or a sunburst. In the center is a glass-covered area into which the Host is placed in a smaller container called a luna.  |
| <b>nave</b>               | The interior of the church.  |
| <b>pall</b>               | 1.) The large cloth (usually white) used to cover the casket at funerals. It reminds us of the white robe used for everyone at baptism to signify the holiness God gives us in baptism. 2.) A small square linen cloth that is stiffened. It is used to cover the chalice so foreign objects don't get into the chalice when it is on the altar. |
| <b>Paschal Candle</b>     | The large candle blessed at the Easter Vigil to symbolize the Resurrection and Christ's presence in our midst. It is lit at all Masses in the Easter season, and at baptisms and funerals.   |
| <b>paten</b>              | Another name for a communion plate or bowl. Often it is smaller and only holds a few hosts.  |
| <b>presider's chair</b>   | The chair used by the priest or deacon who leads the prayer of the community.  |
| <b>processional cross</b> | The cross carried at the beginning of the procession.  |

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| <b>pulpit</b>       | The reading stand where the Scriptures are read and the homily is preached. It is also called the ambo.  |
| <b>purificator</b>  | The small white linen towel, usually folded into three parts, used by the priest, deacon, and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion to wipe the rim of the chalice after people have received the Blood of Christ.   |
| <b>pyx</b>          | A small metal container used for carrying communion to the sick or homebound.  |
| <b>Roman Missal</b> | The book of prayers used by the priest and deacon during the liturgy.  |
| <b>sacristan</b>    | The person who helps prepare all the items needed for Mass.  |
| <b>sacristy</b>     | The place where the ministers prepare for the liturgy by putting on their vestments, reviewing what is to happen during that particular liturgy, and by remembering the sacredness of what they are about to do.   |
| <b>sanctuary</b>    | The area in the church that encompasses the altar, ambo, and presider's chair.   |
| <b>staff</b>        | <i>See crozier.</i>  |
| <b>stole</b>        | The cloth strip hung around the neck of a priest or deacon. It symbolizes their ordination and role in the community. The priest wears the stole with both ends hanging straight down in front. The deacon's stole is worn diagonally over the left shoulder with one end hanging in front and one in back, being joined on the right side at his hip. Stoles are made in all the liturgical colors. |
| <b>tabernacle</b>   | The large container in which the Blessed Sacrament is reserved. The ciborium with the consecrated Hosts is placed inside it. A candle is kept burning near it to indicate that the Blessed Sacrament is present.   |
| <b>thurible</b>     | The container for burning incense with charcoal. It is also called a censer.   |
| <b>thurifer</b>     | The server who is in charge of the thurible with incense.  |

**Along with the previous items, servers should know the liturgical colors and what they signify in the Church.**

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| <b>Black</b>  | The color of sorrow. Black can be used for funerals and All Souls Day.  |
| <b>Gold</b>   | The color for special celebrations. Vestments of gold cloth can replace white for special events.   |
| <b>Green</b>  | The color of hope. It is used on all Sundays and weekdays that do not have a special feast outside the seasons of Easter, Christmas, Lent and Advent.   |
| <b>Purple</b> | The color of waiting and of penance. It is used in Advent (the waiting) and in Lent (the season of penance). Purple can also be used at funerals to show our sadness.   |
| <b>Red</b>    | The color associated with the Holy Spirit and the martyrs who shed their blood for the Lord. It is also the color used on Passion Sunday, Good Friday, Pentecost, and for Confirmation.   |
| <b>Rose</b>   | The color of joy during Advent and Lent. Half-way through Advent and Lent there is a Sunday (Advent is Gaudete and Lent is Laetare) when rose can be the liturgical color used. It shows that while we wait (Advent) or while we do penance (Lent) we are still joyful that God continues his gifts to us. It also reminds us that we are getting close to a great celebration. |
| <b>Silver</b> | Can be used in place of white or gold.  |
| <b>White</b>  | The color of purity. It is used for all major feasts of the Lord Jesus and the Blessed Mother. It is used for the feasts of the saints who are not martyrs. It is the color for baptisms, weddings, funerals and the Easter season.   |

## **The Structure of the Mass**

A server must know the structure of the Mass.

### **The Entrance Rite**

- The Procession
- The Sign of the Cross and Greeting
- Introductory Comments
- The Penitential Act or the Blessing of Water
- The "Glory to God" or Gloria
- The Collect or Opening Prayer

### **The Liturgy of the Word**

- The First Reading (Old Testament or New Testament)
- The Responsorial Psalm
- The Second Reading (New Testament)
- Gospel Acclamation
- Gospel Reading
- Homily
- Profession of Faith or Creed
- General Intercessions (Prayer of the Faithful)

### **The Liturgy of the Eucharist**

- The Preparation of the Altar and Gifts
- The Prayer over the Gifts
- The Eucharistic Prayer

#### **The Communion Rite**

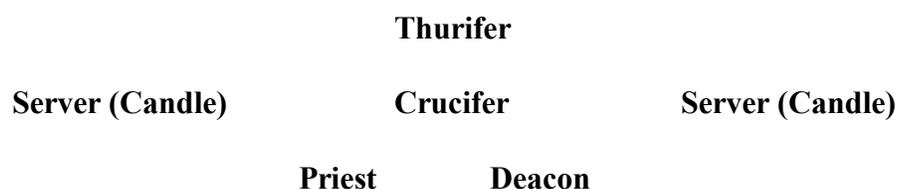
- The Lord's Prayer
- The Sign of Peace
- Lamb of God
- The Breaking of the Bread (also called the Fraction Rite)
- Reception of Holy Communion
- Prayer after Communion

### **The Concluding Rite**

- Announcements
- Final Blessing
- The Recession

## General Principles for Serving

Servers always lead a procession, whether there are a lot of people or a few in it. The following is a standard order and should be adjusted according to the celebration and the presence or absence of a deacon or thurifer:



### Entrance Procession and Introductory Rites

- At the direction of the celebrating priest or deacon, the procession forms at the back of church at the main aisle. The servers with candles flank the server with the cross. If there are only two servers present, then only the candles are used.
- At the direction of the priest or deacon, the procession starts at a dignified pace.
- The servers stop at the bottom step and spread out so the priest and deacon can genuflect. Servers do not genuflect or bow when they are carrying items.

### ALTAR

### STEPS

|               |              |               |               |                 |               |
|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <b>candle</b> | <b>cross</b> | <b>priest</b> | <b>deacon</b> | <b>thurifer</b> | <b>candle</b> |
|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|

- Next, they place the thurible, candles, and cross in their appropriate positions, and then take their place in the front pew close to the credence table.
- The server who is the Book Bearer brings the Roman Missal to the priest or deacon (if present) for the Penitential Rite.

- During the singing of the Gloria, the Book Bearer returns to his or her place.
- When the priest says, **Let us pray**, the Book bearer brings the Roman Missal to the priest. At the **Amen** of the Collect (Opening Prayer), the server places the Roman Missal on the credence table and then sits down.

### Liturgy of the Word

- The servers are expected to be attentive during the readings, sing the Responsorial Psalm and Gospel Acclamation, and be attentive during the homily.
- If incense is used, the thurifer retrieves the thurible and boat during the singing of the Gospel Acclamation and stands behind the ambo. The deacon or priest will incense the Book of the Gospels. While the Gospel is proclaimed, the thurifer stands behind the ambo and swings the thurible. After the Gospel is proclaimed, the thurifer hangs up the thurible and returns to the pew.
- At the end of the Creed, at the words, “**We believe in one holy, catholic, and Apostolic Church...**”, the Book Bearer brings the liturgical binder to the priest for the Prayers of the Faithful (General Intercessions) and stays there until the Amen. **If a deacon is present, he will proclaim the Intercessions and the Book Bearer will need to stand in between the priest and deacon so they both can see their appropriate parts.**
- All are seated after the Amen.

### Preparation of the Altar and Gifts

- Once the offertory hymn begins, the servers set the altar.
- One server retrieves the Roman Missal, another server gets the tray with cups, purificators, chalice and cruet of water and they place the items on the altar in their appropriate places.
- After placing the Roman Missal on the altar, the server returns to the credence table, picks up the bowl and hand towel, and returns to the side of the altar.
- Two servers accompany the priest or deacon for the presentation of the gifts, one on each side of the priest or deacon, and receive the gifts from the priest or deacon. They place the wine and bread on the altar at the spot from where the priest prays the Eucharistic Prayer.
- If incense is used, the thurifer brings the thurible and boat to the altar and stands next to the server with the hand towel and bowl.

- After the priest says the blessing prayers over the bread and wine, he will then need the boat and thurible to incense the altar and gifts. **The servers need to give the priest plenty of room to walk around the altar.**
- After the priest is finished, the deacon (if present, if not, then the thurifer) incenses the priest with three swings of the thurible. It is appropriate to first bow to the priest (who will also bow), then incense him. Then bow after the incensation.
- The thurible and boat are then returned to their place.
- The hand washing takes place next. One server should pour the water over the priest's hands and into the bowl that is held by another server. The third server holds the towel open for the priest to dry his hands.
- When this is completed, the servers take the items back to the credence table, and they take their place in the pew. **Once again, servers are expected to say the appropriate responses and to sing the Holy, Holy, Holy.**
- At the end of this, the servers kneel at the pew.

### **Eucharistic Prayer**

- Ring the bells when the priest has finished saying the words of consecration and shows the Body of Christ to the people.
- Ring the bells when the priest has finished saying the words of consecration and shows the Blood of Christ to the people.
- Servers are expected to sing and respond at the appropriate places.

### **Communion and Concluding Rites**

- Servers exchange the Sign of Peace with each other and those around them; then one server brings the bowls to the altar.
- After everyone has received communion and the Blessed Sacrament is returned to the tabernacle, the servers retrieve the Roman Missal from the altar and place it on the credence table. They also take the priest's chalice, the bowls, and any other remaining items back to the credence table.
- The priest will then say, **Let us pray**, and the Book Bearer holds the Roman Missal for the priest.
- At the **Amen**, the Book Bearer places the Roman Missal back on the credence table if the priest has not asked the Book Bearer to stay there for a Solemn Blessing from the Roman Missal.

- As soon as the music for the recessional hymn begins, the servers retrieve their items (thurible, cross, and candles) and line up at the bottom of the steps, facing the altar. They need to leave enough room for the priest and deacon in the center.

### **ALTAR**

### **STEPS**

**candle      cross                  deacon      priest                  thurifer      candle**

- After the priest and deacon genuflect, the servers lead the recession in the same order as the procession.
- The servers will then return their items (thurible, cross, candles) to the appropriate places and bring the other items on the credence table back to the sacristy. They also extinguish the candles by using the candle snuffer. Please do not blow out the candles as it gets wax on the altar cloth.