

ALTAR SERVER MINISTRY - CTK PARISH GUIDELINES (Oct 2025)

NOTE: If only one Server is present, that Server will complete all Server tasks

Please come 15 minutes before Mass starts, check-in by highlighting your name on ministry list and put on your alb, using one at ankle length if possible. Take a white rope that will fit around your waist (there are different lengths). Not mandated to wear the rope.

Specifics for Servers:

- 1. You are a Server for the Mass and need to say all the prayers and responses during the Mass. Mass cards are available to help with this.***
- 2. Be attentive to the Mass, always turn toward and look at the person who is reading, praying, or singing in the Sanctuary. When holding Father's binder, look at Father or the binder – not out to the pews. Be careful not to stand in front of Fr. when holding binder – always stand to the side of the Priest.***
- 3. While sitting in your chair, don't swing your legs or play with the rope. Again, be attentive to the readings and other parts of the Mass.***

Go to the Sacristy for any final instructions from the Priest, tallest Server take Processional Cross and other Server(s) check to see that the candles are lit with the long metal candle lighter with wax wick (not with the BBQ lighter) and the bells are in the proper place. Then, join the other Ministers in the Narthex in preparation of the prayer with the Priest and Deacon.

Entrance Procession:

Servers lead the procession with the Processional Cross when the Priest Indicates (generally after the processional song has begun).

Walk down the aisle, Processional Cross first and other Servers behind, walk a little slower than usual. When you reach the steps to the Altar, Processional Cross does not bow, but goes straight up and to hallway to put Cross in holder. All other Servers stop at the steps of the sanctuary on the left or right side of the Altar and bow to the Altar with the Priest and Deacon. Then step up to the sanctuary and stand next to their seat following the Server on the left side.

Mass Begins:

After the Gloria, a Server immediately walks to the credence table, picks up the Roman Missal (Red Book), and then walks to the Priest, stands at his right (ambo side), presents the Roman Missal to the Priest and holds it for him, being careful not to block him from the assembly – not standing in front of him. Adult servers should be especially careful to stand to the side and face him – not blocking his view of assembly.

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When the Assembly says, “Amen,” to the opening prayer, return the Roman Missal to the credence table and return to your seat.

Liturgy of the Word:

Be seated for the Readings; listen to them.

After the Second Reading, a Server moves the *Lectionary (the Book of Readings)* that’s on the *ambo (the reading stand)* to the second shelf underneath, if the Reader forgets to do so (only if the Deacon is at Mass).

After the Gospel, the Deacon will turn toward the same Server with the *Book of Gospels*; take the Book and set it in the stand next to the tabernacle (*the gold case on the stand that holds communion*) and return to your seat. If the Deacon is not at Mass, you will not do this step.

Immediately after the Prayers of the Faithful go to the credence table to prepare the Altar.

Liturgy of the Eucharist:

Altar Server/s bring items from the credence table to the Deacon at the Altar (*It is very important the Server(s) hand the Deacon the items and not place them directly on the Altar*). When the priest and/or deacon is at the altar: **this is the time to pay close attention to what is taking place at the altar, this is when you are needed the most, this is the time during the Mass where your service is most important.**

- One Server takes the **corporal** (*the big square cloth*) along with **3 purificators** (*the smaller white cloths*) and hands them to the Deacon at the Altar; the other Server carries the **Roman Missal** (*the big red book*) and hands it to the Deacon at the Altar. Return to the credence table. [NOTE: the Roman Missal is likely already on the altar on its book stand]
- Server(s) take all chalices (one in each hand) to the Deacon. Return to the credence table. **[Please hold the vessels upright and don’t swing your arms when bringing them to the altar. Hold them like the sacred vessels they are].**
- If there are pyx’s (small containers holding hosts) – please bring them to the altar as well. Right after Mass our homebound ministers take them to parishioners who are unable to come to Mass.
- A Server takes the small water cruet (*pitcher*) to the Deacon at the Altar. Then return to your seat. Double-check the table to make sure everything is off of it except for the handwashing bowl with metal water pitcher and towel inside (plus the 1 extra purificator).

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- After the Deacon receives the gifts from the gift bearers and returns to the Altar, He will prepare the chalice. He will hand the empty wine cruet and water cruet to one Server who will then take them to the table and wait there.
- **While** Fr. says prayers over the gifts – one Server will take the handwashing water pitcher and towel and the other Server will hold the large bowl. Both Servers go to the Altar, waiting on the side for the Priest. When the Priest turns to you, Server with water pitcher pours water on the Priest's hands (pour lots of water) while the other Server holds the bowl underneath the Priest's hands. **Be careful to be close enough so that water doesn't drip on floor.** Server with towel hands the towel to Father who will return it when he's done. Both Servers then return these items to the table.

At the end of the Holy, Holy hymn - Server/s go down to the first step on the ambo side of the church (by the railing) and stand there until the Assembly kneels. Kneel there until Communion time. (Be sure the bells are on the step). If not able to kneel at the steps, you may stay at your seat.

When the Priest extends his hands over the bread and wine, a Server rings the bells one short ring. **(Try to ring when the Priest says the word "spirit" or "spiritual"). Allow the bells to end ringing naturally rather than stopping them abruptly with hands or placing on carpet.**

When the Priest lifts up the host, Server **rings the bells 3 medium rings.**

When the Priest lifts up the chalice, Server **rings the bells 3 medium rings.**

Receive Communion by starting the Communion line at the first pew and receive from the bottom of the stairs.

Once you have received Communion, Servers return to their seats in the sanctuary.

Concluding Rites:

After the Communion line is finished, follow the Deacon to the Altar and wait for him to hand you the vessels and place them on the credence table. Return to the Deacon at the Altar to receive the remaining vessels **(only take the vessels from the Deacon, do not remove anything from the Altar yourself).**

When the Deacon finishes purifying the Communion cups and leaves the table, he sits.

When all stand, a Server will pick up the Roman Missal and then walk to the Priest, stands

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at his right (ambo side), presents the Roman Missal to the Priest and holds it for him. If there's a special blessing before the final blessing, be prepared to hold the binder.

Remain by the Priest until the Priest says that it's okay, then return the Roman Missal and go to your chair and stand.

At the beginning of the final blessing, a Server retrieves the Processional Cross from the hallway and waits at the entrance to the sanctuary until the Priest begins to reverence the Altar, then go down the Ambo steps and go to center aisle and prepare for the recessional procession.

Dismissal:

When the Priest and Deacon go to the Altar, Servers follow the Cross bearer down the steps to the center aisle by the first pew and face the Altar. Priest and Deacon will go down the steps and turn around. Bow when they bow. Turn around and exit down the aisle, followed by the Priest and Deacon.

Important: At the end of the aisle, wait until the recessional song has finished, then return to the sanctuary, place the Processional Cross in the holder, **put out the Altar candles with the candle snuffer**. Then go to the cabinet area and hang up your alb.

Thank you for serving! You make the Mass flow smoother and are a big help to the Priest and Deacon.