



Pope John Paul II said to Altar Servers (August 1, 2001):

"The altar server has a *privileged place in liturgical celebrations*. Those who serve at Mass present themselves to a community. They experience from close at hand that Jesus Christ is present and active in every liturgy.... Jesus is present above all in the Eucharist, under the appearances of bread and wine. He acts through the priest who celebrates Holy Mass and administers the sacraments *in persona Christi* [in the person of Christ].

Therefore in the liturgy you are far more than mere "helpers of the parish priest". Above all, you are servants of Jesus Christ, the eternal High Priest. Thus you altar servers especially are called to be young friends of Jesus. Strive to deepen and foster this friendship with him. You will discover that in Jesus you have found a true friend for life.

.... Your service cannot be restricted to the inside of a church. It must shine out in your everyday life: at school, in the family and in the different social contexts, for those who want to serve Jesus Christ in a church must be his witnesses everywhere."

Pope Benedict XVI said to Altar Servers (August 2, 2006):

"Dear Altar Servers,When you take part in the Liturgy by carrying out your altar service, you offer a witness to all. Your absorption, the devotion that wells up from your heart and is expressed in gestures, in song, in the responses: if you do it correctly and not absent-mindedly, then in a certain way your witness is one that moves people.... You are very close to Jesus in the Eucharist, and this is the most important sign of his friendship for each one of us. Do not forget it.

This is why I am asking you not to take this gift for granted so that it does not become a sort of habit, knowing how it works and doing it automatically.... if you put your innermost self into carrying out your service, then you will truly be his apostles and bear fruits of goodness and service in every context of your life: in the family, at school, in your free time.... May you always be friends and apostles of Jesus Christ!"

Important Words to Think About:

Reverence: Respect somebody or something deeply

Honor: A special privilege that is cherished.

Responsibility: Accountability. You can be counted on to do what you commit to do.



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Dear Altar Server,

You are an important member of the team of parishioners who serve Mass. Always remember that it is an honor and a privilege to serve at Mass. Thank you for deciding to be an Altar Server.

The primary role of an altar server is to assist the priest in the celebration of the liturgy. This is done by helping the priest and setting an example to the congregation by really participating in the Mass (singing, saying the responses, etc.).

This booklet will guide you with the things you need to know to serve Mass at St. Peter the Apostle Parish. Please read this information carefully, study it, and keep it as a handy reference. To do a good job, you must know the steps to serve Mass. So please learn these steps well. Be prepared to serve as a Book, a Bell or a Crucifer.

This booklet also includes some "vocabulary" words and some guidelines for how to serve Mass. Please learn the terms so that you know what the things are in the church. Read and familiarize yourself with the guidelines too.

Thank you again.

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Vocabulary:

SANCTUARY: The raised area where the Altar, the Ambo and the Priest Chair are located

ALTAR: The table on which the offerings (the sacrifice) of the Mass are consecrated

AMBO/PULPIT: The place from where the Scriptures are proclaimed and the homily is given

CRENCE TABLE: The table in the back of the Sanctuary on which the cups, plates, chalice and water bowl are placed before Mass begins

SACRISTY: The room next to the narthex where the priests, Altar servers and other ministers prepare for Mass

ALB: the white robe that the servers wear

CINCTURE: cord "belt" that is tied around the alb (the different colors are for the different "Seasons" of the Church's year)

STOLE: the thin "scarf-like" part of the priest's vestment

CHASUBLE: the large colored garment worn by the priest over his alb. (the different colors are for the different "Seasons" of the Church's year)

CORPORAL: the square "place mat" placed on the Altar by the priest when preparing the gifts

CHALICE: a cup used for the distribution of the consecrated wine ("the Blood of Christ")

CIBORIUM: a plate or a bowl with a top used for the distribution of the communion bread ("the Body of Christ")

PURIFICATOR: a small white cloth used to wipe off the chalices

CRUETS: small containers used for water and wine

SACRAMENTARY: the big, red book used by the priest for the various prayers

LECTIONARY: the large book carried by the Lector used for the Scripture readings. This book is on the pulpit/ambo.

PROCESSIONAL CROSS: a cross or crucifix carried by the server in the procession in and out

THURIBLE: used for incense (looks like a decorated bowl on a long chain)

Guidelines:

- **Boys:** Wear dress shoes (no flip-flops, crocs or tennis shoes). Wear long pants, semi-casual or dress pants (no jeans or shorts). Shirts should be semi-casual (no shirts with big logos or pictures.)
- **Girls:** Wear dress shoes (no high heels, flip-flops, crocs or tennis shoes). Pants should be semi-casual or dress pants (no jeans or shorts). Dresses and skirts are always welcome.
- **Schedule:** You are an important part of the Mass. Please serve when you are scheduled to do so - or find a substitute to serve in your place. The schedule will be posted on the parish website at www.saintpetertheapostle.com/church/altar_servers under "Schedules." You are showing great "Reverence" and "Responsibility" when you make sure your position is covered in case you cannot serve. When you find a substitute, please email us: altarservers@saintpetertheapostle.com.
- **Posture:** You are *very visible* at Mass. At one point or another, every person at Mass will be looking at you - so be a *great* example for them! Pay attention to walking, standing, sitting, bowing, genuflecting, kneeling. As you process with the priest in church, fold your hands in front of you at chest level in respect. **Be Prayerful!** All servers are expected to participate in the liturgy. When the priest leads a prayer, say the prayers. Say the appropriate responses throughout the Mass. When the choir sings, join in and sing joyfully! If you just *have* to yawn, be very discreet. Be attentive, sitting up straight and watching the priest the entire Mass. Don't look as if serving Mass is the worst punishment. During Mass, all Altar Servers stand up and sit down in unison. After Mass, process out reverently.

Before Mass:

1. **Arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of Mass.** At 10 minutes before the start of Mass, substitute servers may get dressed to serve. If you arrive late and someone has already dressed to take your place, that person will serve. Oldest server will assign duties.
2. Go to the Altar Server sacristy, and **sign in**. Substitutes sign-in and indicate if "called" or "not called."
3. **Alb:** Be sure that your alb is not too long or too short. The alb should come to the top of your shoes, not drag on the floor. Check the Liturgical Calendar to choose the appropriate color of **cincture** (cord). Tie the cincture on the left.
4. **Altar Server Prayer.**
5. Gather in the narthex. Ask the priest if there is anything special to do at the Mass. Smile and greet people.
6. **Crucifer/Candles:** Bring the processional cross and candles from the Sanctuary. When you enter the church, bless yourself with the Holy Water. Go down the side aisle and genuflect at the foot of the Sanctuary (facing the Tabernacle). Bring the cross and candles to the narthex using the side aisle again.

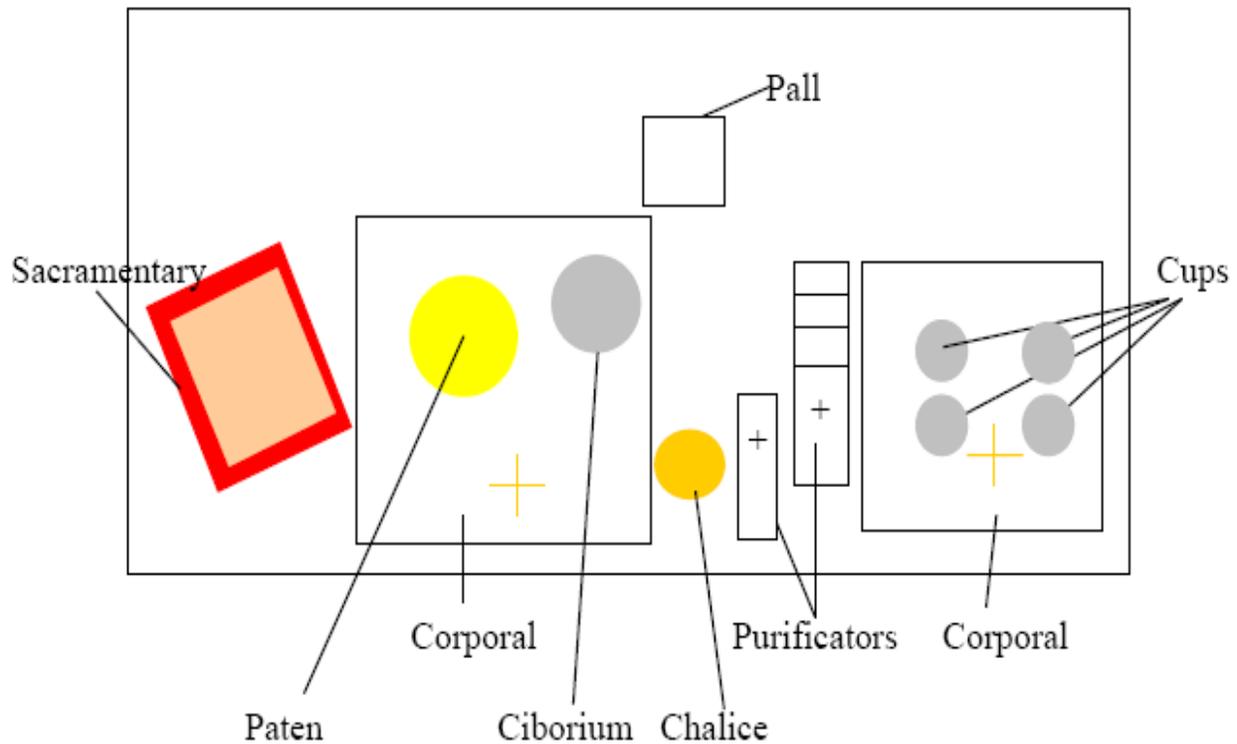
Entrance Procession:

1. Line up. **Crucifer, Candles, Altar Servers.**
2. When the bells ring or the opening song starts, proceed up the aisle at a slow pace. Proceed to the far left. Line up: **Crucifer, Candles, Altar Servers.**
3. When the priest bows to the Altar, servers bow. The rule is: if you're carrying something long (like candles or cross), then you do not bow at the waist. **Crucifer/Candles:** After the priest bows, bring the cross and candles to the stand and return to your seat. **All Altar Servers:** Go to your seat. **Book:** Go up, pick up the Sacramentary (red book), hold it in front of you and stand next to the priest's seat. (Father John does not require the book until later in the mass.)
4. The priest begins the Mass with the Sign of the Cross. After the Sign of the Cross, go in front of the priest, hold the book so the priest can open the book. If you are taller than the priest, please stand a little to the side, so that the priest can see the congregation.
5. After the Opening Prayer, the priest will close the book, bow to the priest, set the book on the table and return to your seat. (*Remember to fold your hands in front of you at chest level as you walk back to your seat*).

Liturgy of the Word:

1. **All servers** sit quietly, listen to the Scripture Readings and say the appropriate responses. Look at the lectors, with your hands together or face down resting on your knees. Both feet flat on the floor. *Please do not fidget or slump, it is distracting to the priests and the congregation.*
2. After the homily, the priest returns to his seat. **Book:** (*If the priest sits down, wait until he stands up.*) Go up to hold the book for the priest during the Profession of Faith and the Prayer of the Faithful.
3. **Book:** When the priest closes the book, bow to the priest, bring the book to the altar, bow to the tabernacle, place the book on the left side of the altar (*if Monsignor is celebrating the Mass, place the book in the center*), open the book to the white tab or to the "Liturgy of the Eucharist" page, step back, bow to the altar and return to your seat. (*Remember to fold your hands in front of you at chest level as you walk back to you seat*).

Liturgy of the Eucharist:



1. During the Offertory Collection, **Crucifer** bows toward the Sanctuary with hands folded and retrieves the cross from the stand. Proceed down the side aisle, to prepare for the Procession of the Gifts.
2. **Altar Servers:** Bring the Chalice to the altar, bow to the tabernacle, set the Chalice down on the right side of the altar. Remove the Pall, place it off to the right side of the Corporal. Take the Corporal, place it in the center and unfold carefully. *Do not pick it up and wave or flip it over - the corporal is used to catch the particles that fall from the host and so if you flip it over - there flies the fragments that may have been there from the previous Mass.* Next place the Paten on the Corporal, the Purificator on the right of the Corporal (not on the corporal) and place the Chalice on the right also. Step back, bow to the altar and return to your seat. *(Remember to fold your hands in front of you at chest level as you walk back to your seat).*
3. **Altar Servers:** Bring the side chalices (one or two at a time) to the altar and place them on the second corporal. *Be careful, these chalices are full of wine.* Bring the purificators to the altar place them in between the two corporals. Step back bow to the altar and return to your seat. *(Remember to fold your hands in front of you at chest level as you walk back to you seat).*
4. **Altar Servers** (seated): Pay attention to the Altar servers on the altar. If you see them struggling, PLEASE HELP THEM.
5. When the priest stands up, **all servers** go to the foot of the sanctuary with the priest to receive the gifts. Two servers on the left and two servers on the right. *Hands should be folded at your chest level.*
6. The **servers** take the cruets of wine and water, the ciborium and the collection basket. After receiving the gifts, bow with the priest to the Gift Bearers.
7. **Server with the cruets** of water and wine bring them to the credence table, take off the stoppers and wait here. **Server with the ciborium** bring it to the altar, set it on the corporal, take off the top, step back, bow to the altar and go to the credence table. **Server with the collection basket**, place the basket in front of the altar and return to your seat. *(Remember to*

fold your hands in front of you at chest level as you walk back to your seat).

8. **Servers** bring the water and wine cruets to the priest. The cruet handle should be facing towards the priest. Wait next to the altar with one hand on your heart until the priest is ready. Hand the wine cruet first. After the priest hands the cruets back, bow to the priest (together) and return the cruets to the credence table.
9. One **server** brings the pitcher, one **server** brings the finger towel (on the left arm) and the third **server** brings the bowl to the priest. Pour a small amount of water on the priest's fingers in the bowl. After the priest dries his fingers, bow to the priest and return everything to the credence table. Go back to your seats and remain standing. *Hands should be folded in front of you.*

Eucharistic Prayer:

1. **Servers** stand in front of your seats for the Eucharistic Prayer and the Preface Acclamation (Holy Holy Holy). Then the servers kneel on the first step of the sanctuary.
2. During the Consecration, **Altar Server**: ring the bell, when the priest lifts the host, keep ringing until the host is lowered. Ring the bell again when the priest lifts the chalice, keep ringing until the chalice is lowered.
3. After the Mystery of Our Faith (Christ has died...) is proclaimed, the Great Amen is sung, **servers** stand for the Lord's Prayer.
4. At the Rite of Peace, exchange a Sign of Peace with the priest.
5. After singing the "Lamb of God," servers kneel again.

Communion:

1. After the priest distributes Communion to the Eucharistic Ministers, **servers** stand up to receive Communion. Bow before receiving Communion. **Servers** return to their seats. *Think about the great gift that God our Father has given us in the Body and blood of Christ.*
2. Once the priest finishes Communion distribution, he will return to the altar to purify the vessels and clear the altar. **All servers** go to the altar.
3. **Altar Server**: Bring the water cruet to the priest. Pour water into the chalice when the priest asks to do so. Bow and return the water cruet to the credence table. Come back to the altar.
4. **Each Server**: As the priest hands you each item from the altar, bow and bring back it to the credence table. Then come back to the altar to receive the next item until the altar is clear.
5. **Book**: Lastly, take the Sacramentary, bow and stand next to the priest's seat, hold the book in front of you.
6. **All Altar Servers**: Return to your seat.

Recessional:

1. **Book**: When the priest stands, move in front of the priest and hold the book for the Closing Prayers. During announcements, bow and step aside with the book still in your hands. After announcements, again hold the book for the priest for the Final Blessing. When the priest closes the book, bow and set the book on the table. Wait next to the priest. After he steps down to go to the altar, walk to the bottom of the steps and wait for the priest.
2. **Crucifer/Candles**: when the final song begins, go up to get the Cross and candles, and wait next to the priest. After he steps down to go to the altar, go to the center of aisle, wait by the first and second pews facing the altar.
3. **Remaining Altar Servers**: Line up to the left of the priest. Bow with the priest, turn and follow the Crucifer and candles to the back of church.

After Mass:

1. **Crucifer/Candles:** Remain at the back of the church until the music ends. Return the cross and candles to the sanctuary. (Use the side aisle)
2. **Altar Servers:** Hand out bulletins.
3. **All servers:** Return to the sacristy. Carefully **hang up** the albs (match the alb to the sizes on the hanger) and cords. Do not leave the alb balled up in the sacristy they will become wrinkled. If the alb needs to be washed please fold it and leave on the chair.

Thank you so much for Altar Serving!

"May you always be friends and apostles of Jesus Christ" - Pope Benedict XVI



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the **Apostle**
Catholic Parish

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Sign-Up

NAME: _____

PARENT'S NAMES: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE (Parents): _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

SCHOOL: _____

GRADE: _____

MASS PREFERENCE: (Please Circle One)

Saturday	5:30 pm
Sunday	7:45 am
	9:00 am
	11:15 am

We will try our best to schedule you to serve the mass of your choice.

Is anyone in your family involved in the children's choir, adult choir, mass set-up, lector, usher, lay minister, altar server?

Yes _____ No _____

PARENT'S SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____