

St. Ignatius Catholic Church

**Guidelines for Altar Servers**

**Thank you for your ministry as an Altar Server. As you prepare for Mass today, please review the check list below to make sure you're prepared to minister:**

**Arrive 15 minutes before Mass begins to dress with alb, cincture, and cross**

- \_\_\_\_ Notify sacristan you are serving at this Mass
- \_\_\_\_ Sign your name on the serving schedule on inside door of Servers' closet
- \_\_\_\_ Put on your white alb, appropriate liturgical colored cincture, and cross
- \_\_\_\_ One Server should do the following:
  - \_\_\_\_ Light candles on high altar, light the candles next to the tabernacle first then any other candles
  - \_\_\_\_ Light candles on low altar
  - \_\_\_\_ Light candles in front of ambo/lectern
- \_\_\_\_ One Server should gather songbooks (Breaking Bread) and Prayer cards
- \_\_\_\_ Place book mark for "Gloria" (p. 7) and "Creed" (p. 8) in songbook
- \_\_\_\_ Place book mark for Communion song
- \_\_\_\_ Place music book and Prayer cards on chairs in sanctuary reserved for altar servers

**\*\*\*Altar Servers are expected to actively participate in the Mass by singing, using the prayer cards for the Gloria, and Profession of Faith, and song books for other sung responses, and Communion song. People will see you participating through your listening, praying and singing.**

- \_\_\_\_ Walk to back of church using the south aisle or outside sidewalk.
- \_\_\_\_ One server carries cross
- \_\_\_\_ Other servers carry lighted candles located next to low altar
- \_\_\_\_ Meet with priest, lector, sacristans, for prayer together before Mass begins

**Order of Entrance Procession:**

- 3 Servers: Cross, 2 candles, lector, sacristans, priest/s
- 2 Servers: Cross, 1 candle, lector, sacristans, priest/s
- 1 Server: Cross, lector, sacristans, priest/s

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## Ministry of Altar Servers

### During the Mass

#### Expectations of you in your role as Altar Server at St. Ignatius Catholic Church:

- Participate in the Mass and be aware of your duties and when to perform them.
  - Give yourself enough time to stand up and move to where you need to go to perform your duties.
  - Move slowly and reverently around the altar so you are not a distraction to the people in the assembly.
  - Move together as a “team” unless you are doing something requiring one server.
  - Never run in the sanctuary.
  
- Stay focused on the Mass and what’s happening in the sanctuary; when your hands are not in use, they should be folded except when you are seated.
  - At the Gospel Acclamation:
    - Candle bearers walk to the main altar, remove lighted candles from holders, and walk down sanctuary steps.
    - Stand in front of the ambo, facing each other, as priest reads Gospel.
    - Return candles to holders on both sides of the main altar after Gospel.
    - Take song books with you from Server chairs to front pew.
  - Sit in front pew on south side of church, near musicians, during homily, Profession of Faith, and Prayers of the Faithful.
  
- When Ushers begin collection, get two St. Vincent de Paul baskets from south sacristy & bring to bottom step of sanctuary and remain standing one step above baskets.
  - After people have placed canned foods in baskets, pick up baskets and place on steps directly below high altar.
  
- Walk to credence table; pick up bowl, water, & towel.
- Stand facing priest; when priest “nods” for you to come forward:
  - Walk over to him & let him wash his hands
  - Bow
  - Take bowl, water, & towel to north sacristy & place on counter next to sink.
- During Holy Communion, remain seated in sanctuary. Do not leave sanctuary.
- After Final blessing, process out of church in the same order as you entered.
- Please return your alb, cincture, and cross to the “Altar Servers” closet in south sacristy.

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Walk to the back of the church and wait for Mass to begin. Before Mass begins, the priest, altar servers, lector, and sacristans share a brief prayer together.

### **ENTRANCE PROCESSION**

This begins once the congregation begins singing the Entrance Song.

- Walk slowly down the center aisle. Servers with candles should walk 3 or 4 pews behind the server carrying the cross.
- When servers reach the sanctuary steps, walk to the top step in front of the high altar and turn and face the congregation.
- After the lector places the *Book of the Gospels* on the front altar and all in the procession bow, the cross bearer carries cross into the south sacristy and places it in its stand. Close the door.
- Candle Bearers place candles in their stands on either side of the front altar.
- All servers walk to their chairs, remain standing, pick up the song book, and sing the remainder of the Entrance Song.

### **At the Beginning of Mass**

- Server sitting nearest the pews brings *The New Roman Missal* when he says, “May almighty God...” or at the end of the Gloria.
- Some priests may signal you when it’s time for you to bring the book to him. Otherwise, the server brings the book to the priest, stands in front of him, opens the book to the page marked with the ribbon, and holds it open for him.
- When the priest finishes the prayer, the server closes the book, places it on the table next to the priest’s chair, and returns to his/her own chair.
- All servers sit down.

### **At the Gospel Acclamation**

- The priest stands up at his chair, walks to the back of the altar and picks up the *Book of the Gospels*.
- When the priest stands up, the altar servers stand, walk to the candles on either end of the altar, remove the candles from their holders, and stand on either end of the altar.
- The priest walks to the front of the altar, stands at its center, and displays the *Book of the Gospels* to the congregation until the musicians finish singing the Gospel Acclamation.
- When the priest moves toward the ambo, the server candle bearers let him pass in front of them; they follow him and walk down to the front of the ambo, and stand on either side, **facing each other** as the Gospel is proclaimed.

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- After the priest finishes reading the Gospel, return the candles to their stands. Servers pick up their song books and walk to the front-south pews to be seated during the homily, Profession of Faith, and Prayers of the Faithful.

### Following the Prayers of the Faithful

- The lector reads these prayers, and then will say, “If you have brought items for the St. Vincent de Paul Pantry, please place them in the baskets in front of the altar after the ushers have passed your pew.”
- At this time the servers stand, go into the south sacristy and bring out the baskets for the food collection. Place baskets on the carpeted area in front of the sanctuary.
- Stand behind the basket until all members of the congregation have had a chance to bring sacks of food/canned goods and placed them in the baskets.

**After members of the Congregations bring forward the Gifts of Bread and Wine and hand them to the priest and sacristan(s),** altar servers pick up food baskets and immediately follow the priest and sacristan(s) into the sanctuary.

- Servers put baskets on each side of the steps below the high altar.
- Servers walk directly to the credence table, pick up the bowl & water & towel from the table, and wait in the doorway.
- When priest nods, servers walk to him and let him wash his hands.
- When he finishes, bow.
- Take the bowl & water & towel into the north sacristy; place them on the counter next to the sink after emptying the water from the bowl.
- Return to your chairs in the sanctuary by way of walking through the back hallway and south sacristy door.
- Stand by your chairs. Remain standing until the beginning of the Lord’s Prayer.
- When the priest introduces the Lord’s Prayer, walk over to the altar and join hands with the priest. At this time the altar servers should stand on the left side of the priest. Sacristans stand on the right side facing the congregation.
- Following the Lord’s Prayer, greet each other, the priest, and Eucharistic Ministers with the sign of peace.
- Return to the south side near your chairs and at the end of the line of Eucharistic Ministers.

### Communion

- After you’ve received Communion and the Eucharistic Minsters have walked down the stairs to distribute Communion to the congregation, take the baskets with food to the south sacristy and **return to your chairs in the sanctuary**. Please pick up your songbooks and sing.

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### Exit Procession

- When the priest has finished reading the announcements, altar servers need to prepare for the exit procession.
- Cross Bearer: retrieve the cross from the south sacristy and stand ready at the sacristy door.
- Immediately, when the Closing Song begins, the other two servers get their candles and walk down sanctuary steps. Stand in the aisle in the large open area between the three front pews and the pews behind the open space.
- The cross bearer stands between the candle bearers and all face the sanctuary.
- The priest will signal all lectors, and sacristans to bow. When they do, the Cross Bearer and the two candle bearers turn around and face the church door and proceed down the main aisle toward the front doors in this order: Cross bearer followed by two candle bearers.
- Once the Cross Bearer and two candle bearers reach the vestibule, return to the south sacristy by way of the small aisle on the south side of the church.

**Thank you for saying “YES” to being an altar server. Our parish is grateful for all you do to bring people closer to Christ by responding to his call to serve.**