

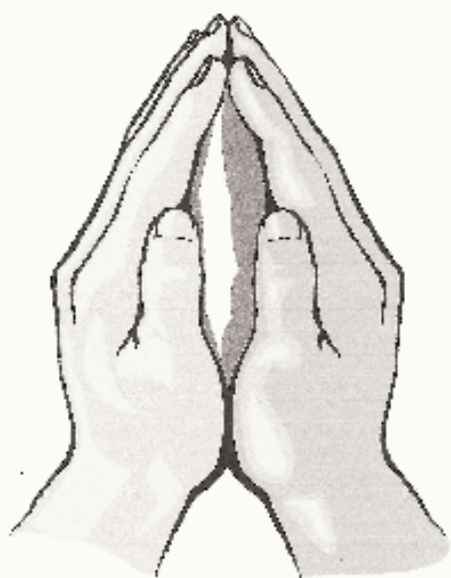
# *St. Patrick Parish Altar Server Handbook*



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PREPARING  
FOR  
MASS

## **Before Mass starts:**

1. Arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of Mass
2. Check the credence table for:
  - 3 cups and 3 purificators
  - water cruet with water in it
  - wine cruet with wine in it
  - pitcher with water [for washing hands]
  - empty lavabo [small bowl for washing hands]
  - finger towel [regular white hand towel]
  - chalice with corporal and purificator
3. Get a robe from the closet and a cincture and cross from the drawer and get dressed.
4. Depending on the number of servers
  - 1 Server – Carry in the cross only
  - 2 Servers – carry in the candles only
  - 3 Servers – carry cross and 2 candles

*Make sure everyone understands which position they are taking!*
5. Say a prayer with the priest and ministers in the sacristy just before Mass begins.
6. Light the candles in the sacristy and line up in the chapel hallway



SERVING  
THE  
MASS

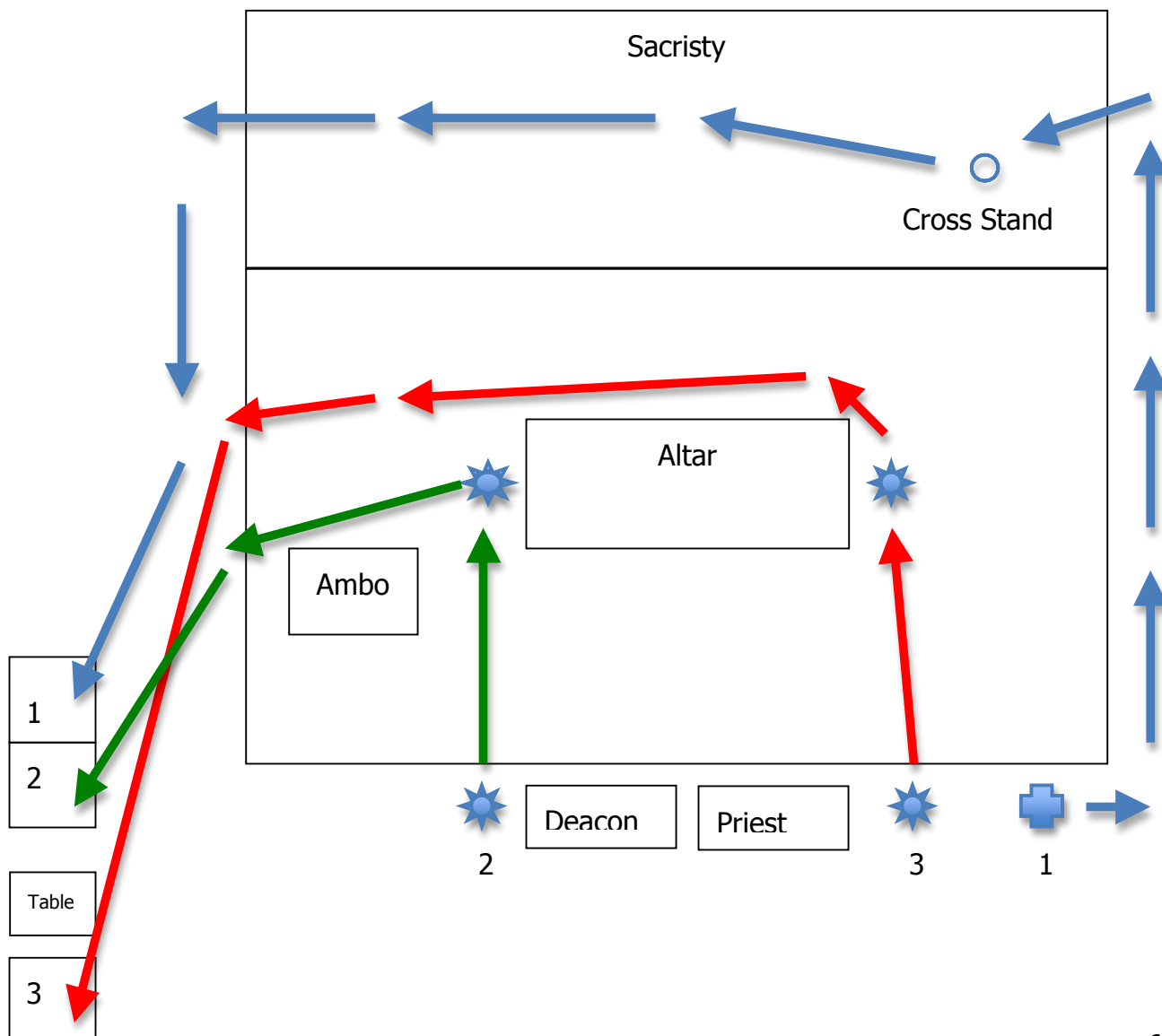
## **Procession Order**

Server with the cross  
Servers with the candles  
Lector  
Deacon  
Priest

## **While Processing In:**

1. Carry the cross for all to see – about a foot above your head. Use your hands to keep it in balance. Keep it clear of your feet.
2. Carry the candles at level with your chest in front of your body. Be careful to keep the flame away from hair and clothing. Do not tip the candles!
3. Walk at a moderate pace – Do Not Rush but Do Not walk at a snail's pace either.
4. Process down the middle of the aisle to the steps of the sanctuary. After reaching the steps.....
  - The server with the cross will turn and walk a few paces to the right and face the sanctuary.
  - The second server will turn and walk a few paces to the left and face the sanctuary.
  - The third server will turn and stand next to the server with the cross facing the sanctuary
  - The priest and deacon will stand in the center of the aisle facing the sanctuary.
  - When all in the procession are standing at the altar steps watch for the priest to bow.
  - The altar servers will then bow their heads only.

- The server with the cross turns to the right, walking around the sanctuary, passes into the sacristy and places the cross in the stand. The server then proceeds through the sacristy to the opposite hallway and returns to the church and stands in front of their chair [see blue arrow]
- The two servers with the candles step up into the sanctuary and gently place the candles in the stands. They then walk over and stand in front of the server seats on either side of the small table [see red and green arrows]



## **The Priest Begins the Mass**

After the Gloria, the priest says..."Let us pray."

- Server #2 bring the Sacramentary up to the priest and presents it to him. The priest will open the book to the needed page while the server holds it. The server will continue to hold the book open through the prayer until the priest closes it. Carry the book back to the table.

### **All servers are seated.**

**The Lector will read the two readings** [servers remain seated]

**The Priest will read the Gospel** [servers stand]

**The Priest will give a homily** [servers seated]

**Profession of faith** [servers stand]

**Prayers of the Faithful** [servers continue standing]

**All servers sit following the Prayers of the Faithful**

### **ALL SERVERS**

Watch the Priest or Deacon closely.....

When the Priest rises from his seat, all servers will rise.

- Server in chair #3 picks up the Sacramentary and goes to the credence table.
- Servers in chairs #1 & #2 go to the credence table and pick up the chalice and cups

- Together, all of the servers step up into the sanctuary and stand at the back corner of the altar to wait for the deacon or priest.
- The deacon or priest will take the corporal from the top of the chalice, spread it on the altar and will then take the chalice from the server.
- The deacon or priest will take the sacramentary from server #3.
- The deacon or priest will then take the two cups from the remaining server.

*All Servers will then bow together*

- Two of the servers will return to the credence table to take the remaining cup and three purificators to the deacon or priest while the third server remains at the steps of the sanctuary.
- At the offertory, all servers will step out of the sanctuary to the right of the pillar and walk around to the center front of the sanctuary to receive the gifts – Facing the congregation – one server stands to the left of the priest and two servers stand to the right of the priest.
- Gift bearers will present the gifts to the priest and he will hand each server one gift. Accept the gift and wait in place.
- The priest will accept the money basket and will give it to a server. At that time ALL the servers will turn to face the altar.
- Servers with the bread and wine will bring their gifts to the altar – as they face the congregation - the bread is and the wine are placed on the right side of the altar.



- The server with the basket places it in the sanctuary at the front right corner of the altar.
- All servers step out of the sanctuary and over to the credence table;
  1. One server takes the cruet of water – removing the top
  2. The second server takes the cruet of wine – removing the top
  3. The third server will not take anything from the credence table
- All servers step into the sanctuary holding their cruets with the handles facing forward to wait for the deacon or the priest to turn to them
- The altar servers with the cruets will move forward to serve the deacon or priest.
- When the deacon or priest is finished pouring the water and the wine and returns the cruets to the servers, all servers will bow and then go back to the credence table.
  1. One server will take the lavabo [the glass bowl for washing hands]
  2. The second server will take the water pitcher
  3. The third server will take the finger towel and place it folded over their forearm
- All servers will wait at the bottom of the steps to the sanctuary until the priest turns and comes near you. Together all servers will step forward into the sanctuary to meet the priest and wash his hands.
- The server with the lavabo will hold it under the priest's hands. The server with the pitcher will pour water over the priest's fingers. Stop pouring water when the priest indicates "enough."

- The server with the towel will then extend their arm to offer it to the priest to dry his hands and then wait until the priest has folded it and placed it back on their arm.
- All servers bow to the priest.
- All servers return to the credence table and place the items on it.
- All servers will then step to the bottom of the sanctuary stairs and remain standing.

## **Liturgy of the Eucharistic [consecration]**

All servers will kneel along the bottom step of the sanctuary between the pillar and the Mary Shrine during the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Kneel tall, do not sit back on your heels.

- The server closest to the wall will ring the bells at the appointed time. WATCH FOR THE CUES TO RING THE BELL:
  1. As the priest raises the large host above his head and is no longer speaking – ring the bells to a slow count of five and place the bells gently on the floor.
  2. As the priest raises the chalice above his head and is no longer speaking – ring the bells to a slow count of five and place the bells gently on the floor.
- When the congregation stands to pray the Our Father, all servers will step up into the sanctuary in a single line next to the priest, join hands and recite the prayer.
- Stay in place for the sign of peace. Exchange the sign of peace with the priest and each other then step to the far left at the top of the sanctuary steps in a single line to wait to receive communion.

- Once you have received the precious body and blood, remain in place until all the Eucharistic Ministers step into their positions. Once they leave the sanctuary, all servers will return to their chairs by way of the opening between the pillar and the Mary Shrine.
- When communion is finished and the Eucharistic Ministers step back into the sanctuary, all the servers will go to the credence table. One server will take the top off the water cruet and hold it with the handle pointing forward. Together all the servers will step into the sanctuary and wait in the corner.
- The priest will take the cruet from the server and pour some water into the vessels to purify them. Do not leave the sanctuary!
- Once the vessels are purified, the priest will hand them to the servers who will bow together and return them to the credence table.
- All servers will return to the sanctuary to receive the remainder of the items from the priest.
- The priest will bow when all the items are cleared from the altar and are in the servers hands. The servers will bow to the priest and return the remaining items to the credence table.
- Return to your seats.

Following any announcements.....

The priest will say, "Let us pray."

- The server in chair #2 will bring the priest the red sacramentary and hold it so the priest can open it. The priest will finish the prayer and close the book while it is in the server's hands. The server will carry the book back to the small table between the server's chairs.

- As soon as the server in chair #2 takes the sacramentary to the priest, the server in chair #1 [the cross bearer] will go to the sacristy to get the cross and return to their chair.
- All servers stand for the final blessing and dismissal.
- When the recessional song begins, servers #2 and #3 will step into the sanctuary and carefully remove the candles from their stands.
- Server #3 will carry the cross to the far right on the sanctuary and face the altar.
- Servers #2 and #3 will step down the steps of the sanctuary and turn to face the altar; one on the left and one on the right next to the cross bearer.
- The priest and deacon will join you. Watch for them to bow. All servers will gently bow their heads.
- Turn toward the congregation and process out in the following order; server with the cross, servers with the candles, deacon and priest.
- Walk to the back of the church at a moderate pace. Extinguish the candles being careful not to let hot wax drip. Walk up the right side aisle to return the candles to their stands at the sides of the altar.
- The cross bearer will walk up the right side aisle and return the cross to the sacristy.
- Remove the cincture and cross and return it to the top drawer.
- Remove and hang up your robe in the closet.



# ALTAR PIECES



**Please study the names of the Altar pieces  
[appointments] and learn their functions.**

**Chalice** – large cup used to hold the wine for the consecration.

**Ciborium** – the dish or bowl that is used to hold the hosts for the consecration.

**Cruet** – glass containers for holding the water that the priest will mix with wine for the consecration.

**Lavabo [finger bowl]** – the bowl that is used for washing the priests hands.

**Water Pitcher** – the container the holds the water for washing the priests hands.

**Carafe** – the glass container that holds the wine. The priest will accept this from the altar server and pour the wine into the chalice at the altar.

**Credence Table** – the side table that holds the chalice, cruets, pitchers, lavabo and other appointments used during the consecration.

**Corporal** – the large cloth that is placed on the altar. The priest will place the chalice, the cups, the ciborium on top of this for the consecration.

**Purificator** – White cloth used by the Eucharistic ministers to wipe the edge of the cups when distributing the precious blood. The priest will also use one of these to purify the vessels.

**Finger Towel** – The small towel used by the priests to dry his hands.

**Altar Cloth** – the large cloth that covers the altar; the colors will change depending on the liturgical season.

**Lectionary** – The book of the scriptures

**Sacramentary** – the book of prayers used by the priest during Mass

**Book of the Gospels** – The large book that contains all the Gospel readings for the liturgical year

**Missalette** – the book that is used by the people attending Mass. This book contains the prayer and reading for Mass for the current liturgical season.

**Music Missalette** – The book that contains the songs sung during Mass.

**Vestments** – the garments worn by the priest; alb, cincture, stole, and chausable. Like the altar cloth, the chausable will be different colors depending on the liturgical season or feast day.

**Pascal Candle** – the large candle in the sanctuary that is lit during the Easter Season and during baptisms and funerals. This candle represents Jesus, who is the light of the world.

**Censer** – the metal container that holds the burning charcoal and incense

**Incense** – scented resin that is burned in the censer during special liturgies and for funerals.