**Altar Server Guide 2023**

There are 3 server positions at a Mass. The jobs are divided among the three as such:

**(1)A - Altar, (2)B - Bells, (3)C– Cross**

Directions in black are for two/all servers.

**Arrival:**

* You must arrive at least 15 minutes before Mass.
* Check in with Mass Coordinator (person with iPad).
* Select an Alb in the correct size.
	+ The bottom hem should hang around the top of your shoes.
* Select and tie a cincture (rope) around your waist
* Pray the “Altar Server’s Prayer Before Mass” (in the vesting area)
* **(3)C**: Check if the priest will be using the missal from his chair or at the altar. Get the processional cross and bring it to the back of the church.
* **(2)B**: check that the bells are in the Sanctuary by your chair.
* Be at the back of the nave at least 5 minutes before Mass.

**The Procession:**

* **(3)C**
	+ Start the procession when the words to the entrance hymn start.
	+ Go to the bottom of the steps, pause briefly, bow your head slightly
	+ Walk up the steps and put the cross in its stand.
	+ Go behind the sanctuary wall. Stand at credence table with **“prayer hands”**

and wait.

* **(1)A & (2)B**
	+ Follow when cross bearer is halfway down the first set of pews.
	+ Walk side by side. Always walk (or stand) with **“prayer hands”**
	+ Go to the steps and stand 5 feet to the right of center.
	+ Stand at the foot of the steps facing the Altar and wait for the clergy.
	+ Turn and face the tabernacle and genuflect when they do
	+ Step up on the Sanctuary and stand in front of your chair.

**Introductory Rites:**

* Stand with “prayer hands”
* Say responses & prayers along with congregation
* After the Gloria, **(3)C** takes Missal to priest at “Let Us Pray”
* Return Missal to the table, go behind the sanctuary wall, and return to chair.

**Liturgy of the Word:**

* Sit still with your hands in your lap.
* Sing along with the Responsorial Psalm.
* Stand when the *Alleluia* is sung and while the Gospel is read.
* Be attentive during the homily!
* Stand and pray along with the Creed and Prayers of the Faithful

**Preparation of the Gifts:**

* **(3)C**
	+ Immediately following the Prayers of the Faithful, take the cross to the back of the church to lead gift bearers.
	+ Watch for when the priest comes down the steps – Move when he moves
	+ When you reach the priest, walk up the steps to return the cross to its stand.
	+ Stand in front of your chair.
* **(1)A & (2)B**
	+ When **C** moves to go to the back go behind Sanctuary wall together to credence table to assist setting the Altar.
	+ Do not place items on the altar yourself – hand them to the deacon or priest from the corner of the altar, then bow slightly with **prayer hands** once he takes it.
		- Priest’s chalice with linens (always 1st)
		- Ciboria with hosts
		- (if present) Tray with pyx for homebound EMHCs
		- (if present) Paten with low-gluten hosts
	+ Assist priest with receiving gifts
	+ Wine & water cruets – carry with handles facing out
	+ Lavabo (finger bowl) & towel
	+ Walk back together behind sanctuary wall to your chair.

**Liturgy of the Eucharist:**

* While *Holy, Holy, Holy* is sung, move kneeling pad in front of you.
* Kneel with congregation after *Holy, Holy, Holy*
* **(2)B**
	+ Quietly move bells so that you can reach them easily.
	+ Ring bells ONE time near the beginning of the prayer (epiclesis)
		- Listen for “…these gifts…” OR “…these offerings…”
		- **Watch for** Priest holding hands **flat side-by-side** over the chalice
	+ Ring bells THREE times during elevation of the bread
		- Listen for “Take this, all of you, and eat of it: for this is my body which will be given up for you.” (then RING)
		- Watch for Priest raising the host
	+ Ring bells THREE times during elevation of the bread
		- Listen for “… which will be poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in memory of me.” (then RING)
		- Watch for Priest raising the chalice
	+ Quietly move bells back out of the way.
* Stand & kneel when the congregation stands & kneels
* Once the priest has received the Body and Blood, stand for receiving Communion
* Sit while the congregation receives Communion.
* When the priest/deacon return to the altar, **A & B** go behind the sanctuary wall to assist clearing the altar.
	+ – Bring cruet of water to priest/deacon
	+ Wait & watch for when the priest/deacon finishes with an item. He may hand it to you or direct you to take it from the altar.
	+ When you take an item, bow slightly, and then return it to the credence table.
	+ Pay attention for when the Eucharist is reposed in the tabernacle – turn towards the tabernacle and genuflect.
	+ **(2)B** – go behind sanctuary wall and sit/stand by chair.
	+ **(1)A** – stay by credence table to hold the Missal for the final blessing (“Let us pray”)

**Exit Procession:**

* **(3)C** – When the St. Michael prayer begins, grab the cross and go down the steps. Stand in front of the baptismal font facing the altar.
* **A &B**  – When the St. Michael prayer begins, go down the steps and stand on either side of **C** facing the altar.
* When the priest bows/genuflects: **A & B** genuflect, **C** bows head slightly
* **A, B, & C** turn immediately turn together and walk to the back of the church.
* When you reach the back, turn together, and face the altar, waiting for the priest.
* Priest / deacon will bow to the cross, saying, “Pro sit” (“May it be of profit to us”)
* Servers respond with “Omnibus et singulis” [OHM-nee-boo-s eht SEEN-gyu-lee-s] (“For all and For each”)

**Finishing up:**

* **(3)C** – Once most of the congregation has left, return the cross to the sanctuary.
* Once in the vesting room untie cincture and return it to the bar.
* Take off your Alb and neatly hang it up according to size.
* *Highly encouraged*: Go into the church and kneel in prayer, thanking God for the opportunity to serve Him during Mass.

**Quick Guide**

**(1)A – Altar**

* Follow the cross bearer. Go side-by-side with **B**
* After the Prayers of the Faithful, move to assist in setting up the altar.
* Help priest with gifts.
* Kneel after the “Holy, Holy, Holy”.
* After the priest drinks from the cup stand to receive Holy Communion.
* Assist after Communion. Cruet of water first.
* Remain at credence table to present book for final prayers
* At St. Michael prayer move to the center aisle with the Cross Bearer, facing the altar
* When the priest turns to the tabernacle and genuflects, you genuflect
* Follow **C**.

**(2)B – Bells**

* Follow the cross bearer. Go side-by-side with **A**
* After the Prayers of the Faithful, move to assist in setting up the altar.
* Help priest with gifts.
* Kneel after the “Holy, Holy, Holy”.
* Ring bells ONE time at epiclesis, THREE times during elevation of the bread & wine
* After the priest drinks from the cup stand to receive Holy Communion.
* At St. Michael prayer move to the center aisle with **A** & **C**, facing the altar
* When the priest turns to the tabernacle and genuflects, you genuflect.
* Follow **C**.

**(3)C - Cross**

* Get cross 5 minutes before Mass & start walking when the words to the hymn start
* Place Cross in stand and go to credence table to bring Missal to priest
* After the Prayers of the Faithful take cross to the back – lead the Gift Bearers
* Kneel after the “Holy, Holy, Holy”.
* After the priest drinks from the cup, stand to receive Holy Communion.
* At St. Michael prayer get the cross, go to center aisle, facing altar.
* When the priest genuflects turn and lead the procession.