

A GUIDE FOR ALTAR SERVERS

you didn't choose ME.

I chose you.

i appointed you to go
and produce lasting fruit,

so that the Father
will **GIVE** you whatever you **ASK**

using My **name**.

John 15:16

Louie Pereira

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Acknowledgement

This guide titled 'I CHOSE YOU' is the product of my service as an Altar Server of the St. Therese of the Child Jesus Parish, Salmiya, Kuwait. I humbly entrust this book to the Ministry of Altar Servers as a sign of love & gratitude, which my fellow altar servers have given me throughout my years in this ministry.

My sincere thanks goes to Fr. Blany Pinto sdb, our Parish Priest & Spiritual Director for lettering the Foreword & approving this handbook.

Continual thanks goes to Mr. Mark Anthony F. Mundala, who through his experience as a Master of Ceremony (EMCEE) for many years willingly coordinated and reviewed the project.

I convey my special thanks to Mr. Francis D'Souza, Ms. Chrisma Pereira and Mrs. Amira Dias Peter for reviewing & editing this handbook.

This guide couldn't have been complete without mentioning Mr. Allan Netto, who encouraged & challenged me, and who is very supportive to this ministry. Thank you.

I would like to acknowledge and extend my heartfelt gratitude to my family, friends, former Spiritual Directors, coordinators & parishioners that I alone cannot express what I owe them for their encouragement and whose patient love enabled me to complete this handbook.

Above all to **GOD**, who makes all things possible.

Foreword

Dear Altar Server,

We all know that the Eucharist is the source and summit of our Christian life. It is during the Holy Eucharist that the greatest miracle takes place – the transformation of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus. If there is any one physically closer to the altar at the moment of this miracle besides the celebrant, it is you. It is a rare privilege bestowed on you to stand close to the altar and witness the greatest miracle of all. This must evoke a sense of deep gratitude in your heart as you stand near the altar and assist the celebrant.

You are called to serve the Lord as an altar server. But often we think that serving the Lord as an altar server implies assisting only at the Holy Eucharist or at the Liturgical functions in the church. Well, this is only the partial truth. Striving to do what is right and pleasing to the Lord and thereby keeping one's self in a state of grace is of paramount importance. Dominic Savio, a young boy of fourteen, is a model in this regard. Nothing would deter him from leading a life pleasing to God. I invite each of you to read the life of Dominic Savio. This will help you to imitate him and keep your soul in a state of grace.

There is certainly a dearth of literature related to your service at the altar. This book will offer great assistance to you; it will not only serve as a great companion, but it will also enlighten you on various matters related to the liturgy.

This book is a brainchild of Louie Pereira, a senior altar server of our parish. I want to express my sincere and deep appreciation to him for undertaking this project. I thank Allan Netto and all those who supported Louie in this venture, thereby ensuring that this book sees the light of day.

Yours sincerely,
Fr. Blany Pinto sdb
Parish Priest

Introduction

“I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do.” – John 13:15

Why should we serve? To serve one another is a duty of each and every Christian. It’s important to realize that you are serving not only the priest, but your family and the whole Church community in your Parish. You are serving God in helping with prayers and celebrating the Eucharist. This guide should help you perform your duties more devoutly and effectively and refine your role at the altar. We ask that you keep this handbook safely so that you can review the instructions later, when needed.

Since altar servers have a very visible role in the sanctuary, the way you look and conduct yourself during Mass makes a big difference.

When becoming an altar server, you are making a commitment to your parish. You need to be faithful to this commitment by being present for each Mass for which you are scheduled. Always remember to have a **WILLING SPIRIT** as an altar server!

We hope that serving at Mass will help you to grow closer to the Lord Jesus and that you will find the ministry interesting, meaningful and enjoyable.

Now that you’re reading this book, it ensures that you become a part of this Ministry and I thank you for joining this Ministry. Your presence and dedication of service is very crucial for the proper celebration of the Holy Mass.

“The altar servers occupy a privileged place in the Mass. In the liturgy, servers are much more than simple ‘helpers of the priest.’ Above all, they are servers of Jesus Christ!”

- Pope John Paul II

An Altar Server is called by **God**. Maybe it was a parish priest or another altar server who made the invitation to you, but keep this in mind: It was God who made the call. It's a little bit like choosing a starting line-up in football. So God said: "**I'll take you**".

Nothing is more important than **the Mass**. It is the heart and soul of our worship of God. To serve at Mass is to serve God himself. During your ministry you are very close to the greatest mystery of our Christian faith.

The Altar Server is a "**prayer leader**". He helps people to pray. So he must remember that, to begin with, prayer is listening to God. We pray by listening. That is why during the Mass there is much to be listened to: the words of Bible, the priest's prayers & the choir. Another part of prayer is: responding to the prayers and singing the hymns.

The Altar Server is a "**public person**". He is seen by others. So he must concentrate on the different actions he is doing during mass: joining hands, genuflections and so on. His posture can really encourage others.

The Altar Server is **dedicated to service**. Remember that there are people counting on you: the priest and the congregation. It is a great privilege and a great responsibility.

To be an Altar Server is a **special honor and a great privilege** in the Catholic Church. Altar servers today can trace their roots or genealogy to the order of the Acolyte, a ministry that once was reserved only for those going who were to be ordained as priests.

One can look upon being an altar server as a special and unique ministry by which you, a young person, can help to spread the word and love of Christ through your actions and words. It is not difficult to be an altar server, but there are some things you must know and remember.

The primary role of an altar server is to assist the priest in the celebration of the liturgy during the Holy Mass. This is done through specific actions and by **setting an example** to the congregation by active participation in the liturgy.

Vision

- To further the faith formation and to develop young children in service to Jesus.
- To develop a sense of participation in parish life and a love for the church's liturgical life.
- To understand the rewards of service towards others and their community.
- To develop closeness to Jesus by serving the Priests and Religious.



Mission

Our Mission is to serve the Lord as Altar Servers & to constantly promote the love of Jesus to all the youth of the parish, by our example, just like St. Dominic Savio showed his love for Jesus.



Additionally, through the Intercession of Mother Mary, succeed in developing a tender, kind and loving atmosphere with friends and family.

Prayer of an Altar Server

O God, You have graciously called me to serve You upon Your altar. Grant me the graces that I need to serve You faithfully and wholeheartedly. Grant that while serving You, I may follow the example of St. Dominic, who chose to die rather than sin and to walk the same path that led him to Heaven.

St. Dominic Savio, pray for me and for all the altar servers.

Prayer before Serving

Father in Heaven
Your Son, Jesus Christ
Showed His love for You
By serving His needy brothers and sisters
I now ask You to give me Your help.
As I serve You and Your people
Open my hands to do Your will,
Take me from distracting thoughts.
Help me know what I should do, and do it well.
Help me to serve reverently at Your Holy Altar.
And so give You praise and glory
Now and Forever
Amen.

Prayer after Serving

Lord Jesus Christ
You're the eternal High Priest
You lead all Your Saints in Heaven
And Your people on earth
In praising God, our Father.
Thank You, Lord Jesus
For letting me come before Your Altar
So that, with Your Help
I can praise my Father in Heaven
As His Server
Help me find joy in serving
At Your Altar
Help me find gladness in knowing
And doing Your will in all things.
Glory to You Lord Jesus
And to the Father and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now,
And will be forever.
Amen.

Basic Knowledge

Q.1 : What is the Mass?

The Mass is the Lord's Supper. The Mass is the celebration of the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ. Christ instituted the Eucharist in the cenacle on Holy Thursday, in the framework of the Jewish Passover, to leave to all Christians the new Passover with its saving presence until the end of time.

Christ's Supper is united to his redeeming cross that is why the supper is the ritual anticipation of the sacrifice of the cross which comes to us in the form of a banquet. In this way we have the three elements that are fundamental in any Mass or Eucharist: the sacrifice of Christ, the memorial of His death and resurrection, and the festive banquet where we eat the Body of Christ and drink His Blood.

Thus we see clearly that the Mass or Lord's Supper is at the same time and inseparably: sacrifice, in which the sacrifice of the cross is perpetuated; memorial of the Lord's death and resurrection; [and] sacred banquet, in which by communion with the Body and Blood of the Lord, we eat the Body and drink the Blood of Christ.

*~ Benedictine Father Juan Javier Flores
President of the Pontifical Liturgical Institute
of Rome
ROME, SEPT. 25, 2005*

Q.2 Who are the members of the Ministry of Altar Servers?

Spiritual Director- The Spiritual Director of the altar servers is either from the Diocese or from your Parish Community (*a layman, seminarian, solemnly professed brother, deacon or priest*), who is an appointee of the Parish Priest.

Coordinators- The Coordinator/s are any of the regular members of the organization, who are appointed by the Parish Priest or by the Spiritual Director.

The members of the altar servers fall into the following categories: the **Regular Servers**, and the **Trainees**.

Regular Server- A Regular Server is an active member. He must have been actively and consistently serving in the Parish Masses and attending meetings organized and required by the Coordinators.

Trainee- Trainee is one who volunteers to become an altar server or a former member who has been absent for more than a month or declared AWOL (*Absent Without Leave*). He is required to attend four (4) modules which comprise:

1st Module – Basic Orientation – Catechism, Duties, Responsibilities of an Altar Server, etc.

2nd Module – Knowing Parts of the Mass and Sacred Objects used in the Church.

3rd Module – Proper Mass Serving (*Practicum*)

4th Module – Panel Review

- Installation as an Altar Server (Induction)
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Role, Rights & Responsibilities

Spiritual Director- The Spiritual Director is primarily concerned with the personal and spiritual growth of the altar servers. He gives them formation sessions, spiritual directions and counseling sessions.

Coordinator/s - Coordinators will always be a part of the decision making together with the Spiritual Director on issues or concerns involving the ministry. They can impose community service on any erring or irresponsible member. They can only recommend changes in policies or suspension of delinquent members. The coordinator/s will be tasked with the following duties:

- i. Assist the Spiritual Director in the formation of the altar servers;
 - ii. Assign schedule of altar and liturgical services;
 - iii. Keep records of attendance, minutes of meetings, etc.;
 - iv. Maintain or assign regular server/s in the cleanliness and orderliness of the vestments and other properties of the MAS. (Ministry of Altar Servers)
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Movements & Postures

What you do with your hands is very important! When you're standing or sitting and your hands are busy, or if you can't seem to sit or stand still, you will be a source of distraction for the congregation in the pews, the other altar servers, and most surely, the priest.

Joining of Hands

Your hands are to be “joined” during most parts of the Mass.

What this means is to put your open hands together, palms facing each other, and fold your thumbs one over the other. Point your fingers up, not straight up, but at a slight angle that is comfortable. Also, you need not apply pressure on your palms and wrists. Just keep them together, comfortably. Placing your hands in this way is supposed to be a sign of prayer, not tension. Remember, as altar servers, **you are leading others to pray!** You are the closest person next to the Altar, after the priest.

Sitting & Standing Positions

When you're sitting make sure you sit upright, not in a slumped position. Always do your best to sit up straight and to stand straight. When seated, avoid swinging/shaking your legs.

Genuflections and Bows

A genuflection is made by bending the right knee to the ground, it signifies adoration and therefore it is reserved for the Most Blessed Sacrament, as well as for the Holy Cross for the solemn adoration during the liturgical celebration on Good Friday until the beginning of Easter Vigil.

A bow signifies reverence and honor shown to the persons themselves or to the signs that represent them.

There are two kinds of Bows: a bow of the head and a bow of the body.

1. A bow of the head is made when the three divine persons are named together and at the names of Jesus, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and of the Saint in whose honor Mass is being celebrated.
2. A bow of the body, that is to say, a profound reverence is made to the altar; during prayers and in the creed at the words (and by the Holy Spirit.....was made Man).

*Review of a few things that are **NOT** reverent*

1. **No running anytime in Church**, even when you're not serving.
 2. **No chewing gum in church**, even when you're not serving.
 3. **No using of cell phones in the church.**
 4. **No talking in the Church**, even while in the sacristy, make sure you do not disturb the Priest or the congregation.
 5. It's important that you remember **discipline and prayer** is needed, while you're at service as Altar Servers.
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Guidelines

1. Prepare for the task. Before you arrive at church, be sure to wear good clothes, such as a collared shirt and formal pants. However, be sure to wear presentable shoes (formal shoes – black) that you can easily walk in. Refrain from wearing trainers, flip-flops, clogs or any such type of footwear. If you have long hair, make sure you cut it. Also, it is preferable you take a bath before coming to serve Mass.
2. Arrive at Church at least 20 minutes before the Mass begins (make a visit to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament in the Chapel). The earlier you arrive, the more time you will have to prepare yourself for serving the Mass. When you first arrive at the Church, be sure to go to the toilet or drink water if needed.

NOTE: *You may not receive Holy Communion if you have consumed anything other than water one hour before Communion.*

If you will not receive Communion, please do not serve.

3. Sign-in on the altar server log. The log is on the table in the sacristy/changing room.
 4. If you are a substitute, **WRITE YOUR OWN NAME** on the log. If you are a last minute “volunteer,” **WRITE YOUR OWN NAME** on the log.
 5. Go to the Sacristy/ Changing Room that holds the altar serving robes. Try to avoid making loud noises, but whisper or speak softly. Put on your robe correctly by buttoning it up or zipping it up all the way. Sometimes robes simply go on over your head. Remember to choose an alb/robe that fits you, coming down to your shoes. Try to wear it at around the same length as the other servers, but if you are unsure, ask a senior altar server. If any of the robes are ripped or torn inform your Coordinator or Parish Priest about it.
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6. Decide who will be doing which duty. Usually the Master of Ceremonies (emcee) will decide this. But mostly the choice will fall upon the most senior Altar Server available.
7. Wait for the Priest or deacon and, on some festive occasions, the Bishop, to join you at the entry to the church, before you are in procession at the Mass. – **NO TALKING DURING THE MASS.** Always keep your hands joined while standing and your hands over your laps while sitting. The leader of the Mass (i.e. the senior altar server) must distribute duties to all servers appropriately. Depending on different rites, different leaders will lead the group.

NOTE: *On festive Occasions: Often it is the duty of the cross bearer, accompanied by the candlestick bearers to lead in the procession, followed by the Thurifer (Thurible bearer) & then the Altar Servers.*

8. Don't start heading up the aisle until the priest tells you to or gives you a signal or after the choir begins the entrance Hymn. Once you arrive at the sanctuary, genuflect if you are not carrying anything. If you are carrying something (e.g. cross or candles), make a profound bow before the altar. Next proceed to your seat, where you should stand. When going around the altar, make sure that you and your partner go around on alternate sides; one should go around the left of the altar, whilst the other should go around the right.
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Special Guidelines

1. Try to spread things out evenly between you and the other servers. Don't make one server do all the work! If there is an Emcee or the deacon is distributing the jobs, they will make sure that this is so.
 2. Remember that during Mass people are watching you. They do make comments to the priests and the Emcee about the servers' behavior at Mass. Although this is usually praise, it is sometimes the opposite. To avoid this, you should not laugh or talk while serving. However, you may give instructions during Mass and help out servers if they are unsure of what to do.
 3. Be quiet in the sacristy and avoid making unnecessary noise. At this time you can say a prayer before Mass begins.
 4. Be ready to help the priest or deacon, especially if he is a visitor to your parish. He may ask you some questions about how Mass takes place in your church. If he does, try to answer them clearly and correctly.
 5. If two servers need to move then they are to move together, just don't move without your partner. Usually servers will have partners, unless they are doing certain jobs, such as bearing the cross.
 6. Hang up your vestments after using them. Do not dump them on the floor of the cupboard, which is disrespectful to your church custodians.
 7. If something goes wrong, don't show it! Act as if everything is going on as normal so the congregation will not notice.
 8. Remember to get a good night's sleep first - there's nothing worse for a congregation than to look at a tired server!
 9. If the weather is bad, remember to leave home a bit earlier than normal.
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- IO. When lighting candles or handling fire (Incense), keep the flame away from your vestments and hair. Albs/Robes can either catch fire, or in some cases even melt, and stick to your body, depending on their type.

- II. If you have a headache, cold, fever or running nose, be sure not to serve Mass as you will be a distraction to everyone.

I. PERSONS

Celebrants

- i. *The Pope:* The Pope is the Bishop of Rome and the leader of the worldwide Church. The Pope is the Supreme Head of the Catholic Church, the Vicar of Christ on earth. He is known as the Supreme Pontiff.
 - ii. *Cardinal:* A Cardinal is a senior ecclesiastical official, usually an ordained Bishop and ecclesiastical prince of the Catholic Church. Cardinals are collectively known as the College of Cardinals, which as a body elects a new Pope.
 - iii. *Nuncio:* It is an ecclesiastical diplomatic title, derived from the ancient Latin word *Nuntius*, meaning "Envoy", all within the structure of the Roman Catholic Church. A Papal Nuncio is equivalent to an Ambassador of other countries, although in Catholic countries, the Nuncio often ranks above Ambassadors in diplomatic protocol.
 - iv. *Archbishops/Bishops:* A Bishop is an ordained or consecrated member of the Christian clergy who is generally entrusted with a position of authority and oversight. They administer the territory assigned to them, namely archdiocese, diocese respectively.
 - v. *Priests:* They are ordained men with the order of priesthood. The most significant liturgical acts reserved to priests are the administration of the Sacraments, including the celebration of the Holy Mass.
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Assistants at the Altar

- i. **Deacons:** They are ordained men with the major order of diaconate. He proclaims the Gospel and, if need be, preaches the homily, and assists the priest celebrant at the Altar.
 - ii. **Master of Ceremonies (EMCEE):** The Master of Ceremonies is an official of the Papal Court responsible for the proper and smooth conduct of the elegant and elaborate rituals involving the Pope and the Sacred Liturgy. He may also be an official involved in the proper conduct of protocols and ceremonials involving the Roman Pontiff, the Papal Court, and other dignitaries and potentates. Examples of official liturgical books prescribing the rules and regulations of liturgical celebrations are *Cæremoniale Romanum* and *Cæremoniale Episcoporum*.
However, it is desirable, at least in Cathedrals or larger church's, to have a competent minister or Master of Ceremonies, to see the appropriate arrangements of sacred actions and to their being carried out by the Eucharistic Ministers and the lay faithful with decorum, order and devotion.
 - iii. **Extraordinary Ministers:** An extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, under the Code of Canon Law, "an acolyte, or another of Christ's faithful deputed", in certain circumstances, to distribute Holy Communion. The term "extraordinary" distinguishes such a person from the ordinary (normal, regular) minister of Holy Communion, namely a bishop, priest or deacon.
 - iv. **Lectors:** The lector proclaims the Scripture readings used in the Liturgy of the Word from the liturgical book (Lectionary). He also announces the Intentions for the Prayers of the Faithful.
 - v. **Readers:** In the absence of the Lectors they perform their function.
 - vi. **Acolytes:** They serve at the altar performing the tasks such as: lighting candles on the altar and carrying them in procession and during the solemn singing of the gospel; they prepare wine and water for the Sacrifice of the Mass; and also assist the Ministers at Mass and other public services of the church.
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- vii. *Altar Servers*: They are boys and girls who carry out the functions of the acolytes in their absence.

Congregation

The people assembled in Church/Places of Worship that take part in the Holy Sacrifice of Mass is the congregation. Together with the priest, the congregation is the Church representing the memorial of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Christ.

II. PLACES

- i. **The Church:** A place where the faithful gather to worship God and the Holy Sacrifice of Mass is celebrated. It has four main parts; the nave, the sanctuary, the altar and the tabernacle.



- ii. **Nave:** The place where the congregation is gathered and is the biggest part of the church. Its meaning is 'ship'.



- iii. **Sanctuary:** The holy place around the Altar marked off from the nave either by a higher floor level or by distinctive structure or décor. It is large enough for all the ministers to carry out their functions solemnly.



- iv. **Altar:** It is the table on which the Holy Sacrifice of Mass is offered in the Church. It can also take the form of a wooden table when the Sacrifice is offered outside the church.



- v. **Credence Table:** A table at the side of the Altar to keep the Sacred Altar Vessels and other articles needed for the Holy Mass.



- vi. **Tabernacle:** It is a Casket where the consecrated hosts are reverently kept for public veneration in faith and to be administered to the congregation during the Holy Mass, and to the aged and sick people at their homes.



- vii. **Sanctuary Lamp:** It is a sign of Jesus' presence in the tabernacle; it is lit and placed close to the tabernacle.



- viii. **Ambo or Lectern:** It is a place at the side of the Altar from where the Word of God is proclaimed.



- ix. **Pulpit:** A place from where the preachers preach the Word of God.



- x. **Celebrant's chair:** It is occupied by the priest as he presides over the congregation during Holy Mass. This chair reflects the dignity of the one who leads the community in the person of Christ.



- x. *Holy Water Font:* A container or vessel holding the holy water. It is usually used when one enters the Church to ask God to free one's mind and heart from evil and create a positive disposition for prayer.



- xii. *Baptismal Font:* An adorned receptacle made of stone, metal or wood, holding baptismal water to be used in solemn administration of the sacrament.



- xiii. *Confessional:* A place where the penitent usually approaches the priest to confess his sins and beg pardon for them. It is a kind of enclosure where the priest sits and communicates with the penitent through an opening covered by a grating in order to insure the privacy of the penitent.



III. SACRED OBJECTS & ALTAR LINENS USED IN THE MASS

Sacred Vestment

1. **Amice:** This is a rectangular piece of cloth with two long ribbons attached to the top corners. The priest puts it over his shoulders, tucking it in around his neck to hide his collar. It is tied around his waist.



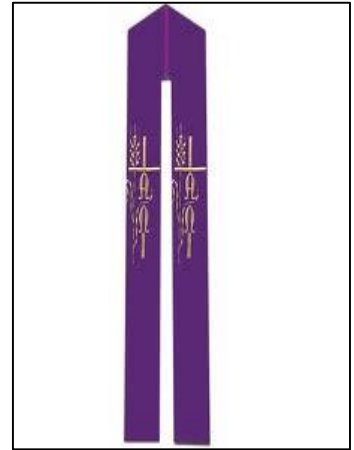
2. **Alb:** This long, white, dress-like vestment can be worn by all liturgical ministers. An altar server can assist the priest or deacon/seminarian by making sure that it hangs properly in the back.



3. **Cincture:** This long cord is used for fastening some albs at the waist. It holds loose fitting albs in place and is used to adjust the proper length. The cincture is usually white.



4. **Stole:** A stole is a long cloth “scarf,” often ornately decorated, of the same color and style as of the chasuble. A priest wears it around the neck, letting it hang down in the front. A deacon wears it over his left shoulder and fastened at his right side, like a sash. Neither seminarians nor other lay-ministers wear stoles.



5. **Chasuble:** The chasuble is the sleeveless outer vestment, slipped over the head, hanging down from the shoulders and covering the stole (sometimes) and alb. It is the proper Mass vestment of the priest and its color varies according to the feast or liturgical season.



Red: Signifies martyrdom and is worn on the following feasts and memorials: Passion Sunday which is also known as Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Solemnity of Pentecost, Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, Solemnities & Feasts of Apostles (except St. John the Evangelist) and solemnities, feasts & memorials of martyrs (except the solemnity of the birth of John the Baptist, June 24).

Green: Signifies hope for life to come and is used during Ordinary time.

White (Gold, Silver, yellow, off- white): Signifying joy and victory for life, is used during Easter, Christmas, solemnities, feasts & memorials of the Lord (except His Passion), Mother Mary, the angels and saints other than martyrs, All Saints (November 1), John the Baptist (June 24), John the Evangelist (December 27), Chair of St. Peter (February 22) & the Conversion of Paul (January 25).

Purple: Signifying penance & sorrow, is used in Lent and Advent as well as in the Holy Sacrifice of Mass for the dead.

6. **Dalmatic:** The dalmatic is a loose-fitting robe with open sides and wide sleeves worn by the deacon. The color varies according to the liturgical feast or season of the liturgical year.



7. **Cope:** A cape-like vestment that is put on over the shoulders and hangs to the ankles, it is open at the front and clasped at the neck. The priest wears this at Benediction and in certain processions. Copes can be of any liturgical color.



8. **Humeral Veil:** This is a long, narrow, shawl-like vestment used at Benediction and in processions when the Blessed Sacrament is carried.



9. **Server's Alb:** This is a vestment used by servers in place of a Cassock. A cincture is often tied around the waist.



10. *Cassock*: A long outer garment worn by clerics and servers. Usually black, but on special feasts, it can be red or white. The length should reach to the tops of one's shoes.



11. *Surplice*: The surplice is in the form of a tunic of white linen or cotton fabric, reaching to the knees or to the ankles, with wide or moderately wide sleeves.



Sacred Altar Vessels

1. **Chalice:** The large cup used at Mass to hold the wine that becomes the blood of Christ. Some can be very ornate.



2. **Paten:** This is a saucer-like dish that usually matches the chalice with which it is used. It holds the bread that becomes the body of Christ.



3. **Ciborium:** This is a cup- or bowl-like vessel with a lid. It contains hosts that will be used for communion. It is also used to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle.



4. **Monstrance:** This is a large, ornate vessel used to hold the Blessed Sacrament for Adoration, Benediction and solemn Eucharistic processions.



5. **Lunette:** A thin, circular receptacle, having a glass face that holds the Consecrated Host used for Adoration and Benediction. It slides into the monstrance on a little track.



6. *Pyx*: A case, about the size of a pocket watch, in which Communion is carried to those who are sick or homebound.



7. *Communion Paten*: This is a plate with a handle that a server uses to catch communion crumbs. The server stands to the right of the Communion minister and holds the plate under the chin of the one receiving Communion on the tongue.



8. *Large Paten or Bread Plate*: Used in some churches, this is used in place of a ciborium during the presentation of the gifts. The bread to be consecrated is placed on this large paten.

9. *Flagon or Decanter/Cruets*: This is a bottle or carafe-like vessel used to hold the wine that will be consecrated at Mass for the communion of the people. It is filled before Mass, taken to the rear of the church and is brought forward at the procession of the gifts. At daily Mass, smaller bottles, called *Cruets*, are used.



10. *Lavabo/ Water Bowl*: A container with water for the cleansing of the priest's fingers after the presentation of gifts at the Holy Sacrifice of Mass.



11. *Ablution Bowl*: Bowl containing water used by priests, deacons & extraordinary ministers of communion to wash their fingers after the distribution of communion to the congregation.



12. *Thurible or Censer:* The metal container extended from a chain in which charcoal and incense are burned for liturgical ceremonies. It has a lid that can be raised. It is used at solemn Masses and at Benediction.



13. *Boat:* This is a small metal container that holds the incense to be put into the thurible. It has a cover and comes with a small spoon. Frequently shaped like a boat, it is a symbol of the church.



14. *Stock:* Metal containers with Holy oils used for baptism, confirmation and anointing of the sick.



15. *Processional Cross:* A processional cross is a crucifix or cross which is carried in Christian processions.



16. *Candle Sticks:* Altar candlesticks hold the candles used in the Catholic liturgical celebration of Mass.



17. *Aspergillum or Sprinkler*: It is a perforated metal ball or tube on a handle that holds the holy water used by the priest to sprinkle the faithful or articles to be blessed. It is often kept in a small metal bucket (with a handle) that holds the holy water.



18. *Candle lighter or Extinguisher*: Used for lighting and extinguishing candles. It is a pole-like instrument with a tube at one side on the top with a retractable wick for lighting candles. The server using it should have enough wicks exposed so that the flame will not go out until all candles are lit. Then the tab should be used to retract the wick to put the flame out (once the flame is out be sure to leave a little of the wick sticking out—the wick is made of wax and it will stick to the inside of the tube when it cools, if you don't leave it sticking out a little.)



19. *Altar Bell*: A small bell placed on the credence or in some other convenient place on the side of the altar.



Sacred Altar Linens

1. **Pall:** This is a stiff square white cover that is placed over the paten when it is on the chalice and over the chalice during Mass to protect its contents.



2. **Altar Cloth:** Always white, it covers the Altar.

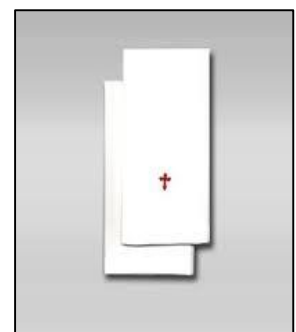
3. **Corporal:** A white linen cloth usually starched, on which are placed the vessels containing the bread and wine during Mass. It is also used at Adoration and Benediction.



4. **Purificator:** This is a triple folded white cloth used to cleanse the chalice and the celebrant's fingers after the last ablution (washing). In setting up the chalice, the purificator is placed over the top of the chalice beneath the paten.

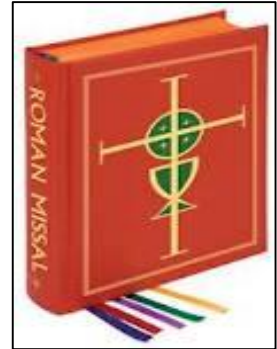


5. **Finger Towel:** A folded rectangular cloth resembling a purificator, but much narrower. It is used by the priest to dry his fingers after they have been washed during the preparation of the gifts. It is kept with the water cruet and finger bowl.

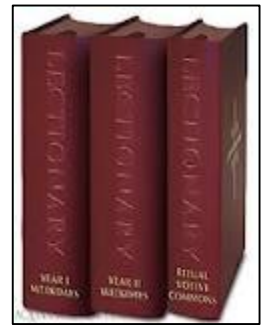


Liturgical Books

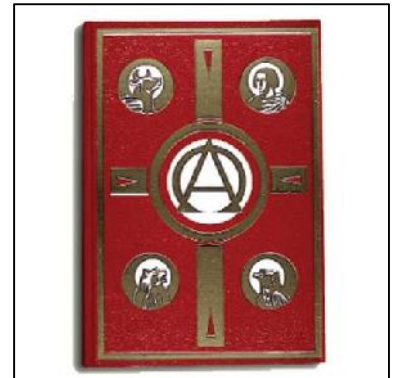
1. **Sacramentary/ Roman Missal :** The Roman Missal (Latin: *Missale Romanum*) is the liturgical book that contains the texts and rubrics for the celebration of the Mass in the Roman Rite of the Catholic Church.



2. **Lectionary:** The Lectionary is the official liturgical book of the *Roman Missal* containing the texts of the Holy Scriptures used in the Roman Catholic Liturgy or worship. The Lectionary for Sunday worship is organized into a three year cycle of readings: A, B, and C.



3. **Gospel Book:** Is a codex or bound volume containing one or more of the four Gospels from the New Testament. It contains the full text in a normal sequence, thus differing from the Lectionary, which only has those portions of the Gospels used in the Mass and other services.



The Bishop's Insignia

1. **Mitre:** The Mitre or Miter is a ceremonial hat used by Roman and Eastern Catholic bishops when presiding over the Catholic liturgy.



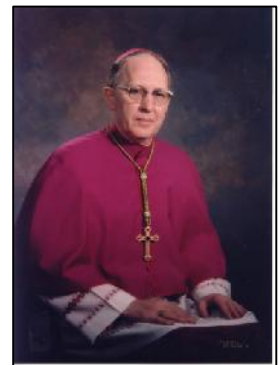
2. **Zucchetto or Scull Cup:** It is worn during liturgical and some non-liturgical functions and it is removed during the liturgy at the Holy, Holy, Holy... so that the head might not be covered in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. The color of the zucchetto denotes the wearer's rank: the Pope's zucchetto is white; those worn by cardinals are red while those worn by bishops, territorial abbots and territorial prelates are violet.



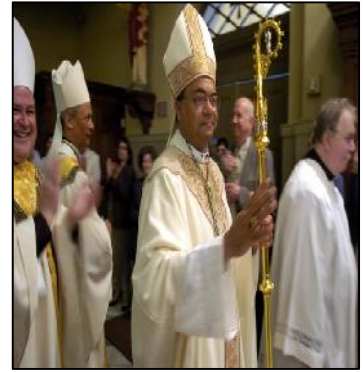
3. **Pallium:** It is a strip of white wool, embroidered with six black crosses, worn like a collar over the chasuble, with two strips, one hanging down in the front & other at the back.



4. **Pectoral Cross:** The Pectoral Cross is worn by the pope, cardinals, bishops and abbots. It is worn over the breast (*pectus*) of the wearer. The pectoral cross reflects the order of dignity of the office of bishop or abbot. The bishop assumes the cross upon his ordination and wears this cross either suspended from a ceremonial cord at liturgical services or on a chain with his clerical suit.



5. *The Crosier:* The crosier or pastoral staff is a symbol of the bishop as the spiritual shepherd of a diocese. The crozier is carried by the bishop during liturgical ceremonies as a sign of his jurisdiction and authority.



6. *The Episcopal Ring:* The ring is a sign of the fidelity of the bishop to the Church.



7. *Cathedra:* The bishop's chair, or cathedra, is a sign of the bishop's teaching office and pastoral power in the particular church or diocese. Thus, the bishop's chair is reserved for the bishop. The bishop may however allow another bishop to use his chair, but never a priest. Another presidential chair is placed in the cathedral church from which a priest presides.



THE ORDER OF THE MASS

Introductory Rites

1. Entrance Procession

- i. When the people are gathered, the Priest approaches the altar with the ministers while the Entrance Chant is sung.
- ii. When he arrives at the altar, after making a profound bow with the ministers, the Priest venerates the altar with a kiss and, if appropriate, incenses the cross and the altar, then with the ministers, he goes to the Chair.

Note: *Incense the Bishop, Archbishop, Nuncio or Cardinal is celebrating the mass, make sure to receive his Staff/Crozier and Mitre. It depends upon the Bishop or senior Clergy member whether to give it before stepping/kissing the altar or after genuflection.*

2. Sign of the Cross

- i. When the entrance chant is concluded, the Priest and the faithful remain standing and sign themselves with the sign of the Cross (which you make too). The Priest greets everyone and introduces the Mass. The priest or deacon or any other minister, may very briefly introduce the faithful to the Mass of the Day.
 - ii. Then follows the Penitential Act. A brief pause of silence follows. Then all recite together the Prayer for general confession.
 - iii. The Priest invites the faithful to make the Penitential Act (Lord have Mercy, Christ have Mercy, Lord have Mercy)
 - iv. The priest gives the absolution. “*May almighty God have mercy on us...*”
-

3. Gloria (Stand with hands joined)

1. Then, when it is prescribed, this hymn is either sung or recited altogether GLORIA.....
2. When the Gloria is concluded, the Priest, with hands joined, says: LET US PRAY.
The Priest, with hands extended, says the Collect Prayer, at the end of which the people acclaim: AMEN

NOTE: *During Advent (period before Christmas) and Lent (period before Easter), the Gloria is omitted altogether.*

Liturgy of the Word (Be Seated)

Note: *If the Bishop is the Celebrant, the altar server must give the Mitre to the Bishop.*

1. Then the Lector goes to the Ambo and reads the First Reading, while all sit and listen.
2. The psalmist or cantor sings or says the Psalm, with the people making the response.
3. After this, if there is a Second Reading, the Lector reads it from the Ambo, as above.
4. Then follows the Gospel Acclamation (Alleluia or another chant) that is laid down by the Rubrics, if required.

Meanwhile, if the incense is used, the Priest puts some into the turible. After this, the deacon who is to proclaim the Gospel, bows profoundly before the Priest and asks for the blessing.

Note: *If the Bishop is the Celebrant, the Altar Server must take the Mitre from the Bishop (after the Bishop blesses the Priest preaching the Gospel). If needed by the Bishop, hand him the Crozier.*

Then, proceed on to the altar with the Incense and Boat.

5. The deacon, or the Priest, proceeds to the ambo, accompanied, if appropriate, by the ministers with incense and candles and at the same time, he makes the sign of the Cross on the book and on his forehead, lips and breast.
6. Then the deacon, or the priest, incenses the book, if the incense is used, and proclaims the Gospel.
7. At the end of the Gospel, the deacon or the Priest kisses the Lectionary.
8. Then follows the homily, which is to be preached by the Priest or Deacon on all Sundays and Holy Days of obligation; on other days when recommended.

Note: *The Altar Server must give the Mitre to the Bishop; receive the Crozier if the Bishop doesn't need it for the Homily.*

4. **Profession of Faith-Nicene Creed** (Stand with hands joined)

At the end of the homily, the symbol or profession of faith or creed, when prescribed is either sung or read.

5. **Prayer of the Faithful** (Stand with hands joined)

Then follows the Universal prayer, that is, the prayer of the faithful or Bidding Prayers.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

1. Offertory

Note:

- a) *If there is a processional offertory, two Altar Servers are supposed to stand on either side of the Celebrant to receive the Gifts.*
- b) *If the Bishop is the Celebrant, the Altar Server must again give the Mitre to the Bishop.*

- i. When all this has been done, the Offertory Chant begins. Meanwhile, the ministers place the corporal, the purificator, the chalice, the pall, and the missal on the Altar.
- ii. The Priest at the Altar takes the paten with the bread and wine and holds it slightly raised above the altar with both hands, and says the prayer. Then he places the paten with the Bread on the Corporal.

Note: *If the offertory Chant is not sung, the priest may recite the prayer aloud.*

- iii. The Altar Server is supposed to give the water and wine Cruets. Walk over together, right away. **Don't wait for the deacon or priest to give you a nod.** There is nothing wrong with you standing ready, right beside the altar. Be sure to get close enough so that the priest or deacon doesn't have to reach far.
- iv. The server with the wine should **stand to the left** of the server with the water. The priest or deacon will take the wine and water and pour it. He will then hand the cruets back. Both servers should **stay in position** until both cruets have been handed back. The two servers turn (toward one another) and return the cruets to the credence table.
- v. The Priest at the Altar takes the Chalice with the bread and wine and holds it slightly raised above the altar with both hands, and says the prayer. Then he places the Chalice on the corporal.

Note: *If the offertory Chant is not sung, the priest may recite the prayer aloud.*

Then the priest bows profoundly.

Note: *The Thurifer and Incense holder must immediately go to the Celebrant after the water and wine cruets are given and then offered.*

After the Celebrant incenses the Altar, the Thurifer must receive the Thurible and incense the Celebrant (If there are Co-Celebrants, he must incense them too) & then proceed in front of the Altar and incense the Congregation.

- vi. Upon returning to the credence table, the server who has the water picks up the washing bowl and the water cruet while the other Server sets down the wine cruet or decanter and takes the hand towel and **opens it**. Both go back to the altar, preferably with the water pourer **to the left** of the towel bearer.
- vii. **Go right away**; don't wait for the priest to turn—it's more important that you are right there waiting for him. **Don't make him wait for you!** Again, move in close enough so the priest can reach easily and doesn't have to stoop over too far. The priest will put out his hands over the bowl and the Server pours water over the priest's fingers, catching the dripping water in the finger bowl. The priest will whisper the prayer, "*Lord, wash away my iniquities; cleanse me from my sin.*"
- viii. The other Server hands the finger towel to the priest. The priest dries his hands and returns the towel to the Server who grasps the towel with the thumbs of his folded hands.
- ix. Both Servers **bow**, turn toward one another, and return the items to the credence table.
- x. Then standing at the middle of the Altar, facing the people, extending and then joining his hands, the Priest says the prayer. Then with hands extended, the Priest says the Prayer over the offering. Concluding this begins the Eucharistic Prayer.

The Eucharistic Prayer

The servers should stand in front of the Altar immediately after the offertory is over.

The priest begins the Eucharist Prayer.

1. Preface (Stand with hands joined)

At the end, he joins his hands and concludes the Preface with the people singing/reciting the Sanctus.

2. Holy, Holy, Holy....(Stand with Hands joined)

3. Consecration (Stand with hands joined)

Note: *The Thurifer and Incense holder must already be standing in front of the Altar. Once the bell is rung they are supposed to kneel & when the Bread & Wine are lifted by the Celebrant, the Thurifer is to incense it.*

- i. Depending upon parish rules, when the Priest blesses the gifts (i.e. blessing the Chalice and Ciborium) the bell is supposed to be rung, and all the altar servers are supposed to kneel at this time.
- ii. The Priest joins his hands and, holding them extended over the offerings, says a prayer and then he makes the sign of the cross over the bread and chalice together, upon which the bells are rung. At this time, altar servers are to kneel down.
- iii. Then he takes the bread, slightly raises it above the altar and says the prayer, “*Take this... This is My Body which will be given up for you.*” After which he shows the consecrated host to the people, places it again on the paten and genuflects in adoration. When the priest genuflects or bows, you can offer a **head bow** in reverence of our Lord’s presence.

Note: *The bells are rung when the Host is raised and when the priest genuflects. Also, if there is incense the thurifer incenses the host when it is raised.*

iv. Similarly, then he takes the chalice, slightly raises it above the altar and says the prayer, *“Take this all of you and drink... sins may be forgiven. Do this in memory of Me”*. After which he shows the consecrated chalice to the people, places it again on the corporal and genuflects in adoration. When the priest genuflects or bows, you can offer a **head bow** in reverence of Our Lord’s presence.

Note: *The bells are rung when the Chalice is raised and when the priest genuflects. Also, if there is incense the thurifer incenses the chalice when it is raised.*

4. Memorial Acclamation (Stand with hands joined)

The people acclaim the Mystery of Faith. This is when the priest says, *“Let us proclaim the mystery of faith.*

5. Elevation of the Host & Chalice (Stand with hands joined)

The Priest takes the chalice and the Paten with the host and raising both, he says, *“Through him, with him, in him...”* and it is the highest point in the Mass. Of all moments in the Mass, this is **the time** to pay the most attention! Upon which people acclaim the Great ‘AMEN’.

Then follows the Communion Rite.

The Communion Rite

1. The Lord's Prayer

After the Chalice and the Paten have been set down, the Priest, with joined hands says a prayer.

After which he invites the people to join him as they say the Lord's Prayer.

2. The Sign of Peace

- i. With hands extended, the Priest alone continues to say a prayer.
- ii. After this, the Priest turns towards the people, extending and then joining his hands greets the people and shares the Lord's peace. And all offer the sign of peace, in keeping with the local customs.
- iii. Servers will extend the sign of peace to each other, the priest, deacon and other ministers. **Please actually say something; do not look down and mumble.** Look at the person you're greeting, in the eyes and wish them "*Peace be with you.*"

3. Lamb of God (Stand with hands joined)

At the end of the Lamb of God, **all servers remain standing** with hands joined.

Sing or recite the Lamb of God.

4. Communion

- i. The Priest genuflects, takes the host and holding it considerably raised above the paten or above the chalice, facing the people, says a prayer. After the people's response, the Priest reverently consumes the Body and Blood of Christ.
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- ii. The Altar Servers ring the bell when the priest consumes the Body & Blood of Christ.
- iii. After the priest receives the Consecrated Host and the Precious Blood from the chalice, he will begin distribution to the other ministers.
- iv. After this, he takes the paten or ciborium and approaches the communicants, and gives the Holy Communion to the People.
- v. The communion chant is sung during this time.
- vi. The servers stand and should be ready to receive communion. When the priest says, "*The Body of Christ*," your reply is "*Amen*."
- vii. After receiving communion, all servers are to return to their seats and make their thanksgiving.

5. After Communion

Note: *If the Bishop is the Celebrant, wash his hands using the lavabo & finger towel.*

- i. When the distribution of Communion is over, the Priest, Deacon or Acolyte purifies the paten, over the chalice and likewise purifies the other Holy Vessels over the Chalice itself.
- ii. **Do not remove the chalice or ciborium remaining on the altar.** The other Altar Server should bring the water cruet over to the altar for the purification of the chalice. The Server pours a small amount of water into the chalice or leaves the cruet on the Altar. After pouring, return the cruet to the credence table.
- iii. The Priest may return to the Chair. If appropriate, a sacred silence may be observed for a while.

NOTE: *Each priest may have their own way of doing some things, and we ask that you be flexible and attentive to each priest's requests.*

- iv. After this, the Prayer after Communion or any other praise is sung or recited.
 - v. Then standing at the altar facing the people, with hands extended, he says the Prayer after Communion.
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The Concluding Rites

i. Closing Prayer & Dismissal (Stand with hands Joined)

Note: *After the final Prayer is over and before the Final Blessing, if the Bishop is the celebrant, then the Altar Server must handover the Mitre and Crozier.*

When the Celebrant says, “*Let us pray*”, the Servers along with the congregation are supposed to rise. You are supposed to stand in front of the altar. The Celebrant says the closing prayer and gives the final blessing (*May Almighty God bless you...*).

2. Recession

- i. Then the priest/ deacon say, “*The Mass is ended, go in peace to love and serve the Lord*”...
 - ii. The priest/deacon leaves his chair to venerate (kiss) the altar.
 - iii. After making a profound bow with the ministers, he withdraws.
 - iv. Proceed out **slowly** to the sacristy. When you get to the sacristy, and after the priest makes a bow in front of the crucifix you may leave the room.
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Incensation

Thurification or incensation is an expression of reverence and of prayer, as is signified in Sacred Scripture.

Incense may be used optionally in any form of Mass:

1. During the entrance procession
2. At the beginning of Mass, to incense the cross and the altar.
3. At the procession before the Gospel and the proclamation of the Gospel itself;
4. After the Host and the Chalice have been placed on the altar, to incense the offerings, the cross and the altar, as well as the Priest and the people.
5. At the Elevation of the Host and the Chalice after the consecration.

Note:

1. Before incensation, a profound bow is made to the person or objects that are incensed, except for the altar and the offerings for the sacrifice of the Mass.
 2. Three swings of the thurible are used to incense:
The most Blessed Sacrament, a relic of the Holy Cross and images of the Lord exposed for public veneration, the offerings for the sacrifice of the Mass, the altar cross, the Book of the Gospels, the paschal candle, the Priest and the People.
 3. Two swings of the thurible are used to incense:
Relics and images of the Saints exposed for public veneration; this should be done, however, only at the beginning of the celebration, following the incensation of the Altar.
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NOTES

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