

# ASSISTING AT HOLY MASS



## PREPARATION FOR HOLY MASS

Arrive at least 10 minutes prior to Holy Mass. If only one server, 15 minutes is recommended. Dress reverently. Please wear a **Plain t-shirt, black slacks, black socks, and black dress shoes**. **Collared shirts will not work with the Cassock.**

Find the correct size Cassock / Surplice and get dressed. While getting dressed, prepare for Mass by reciting the **Altar Server Prayer** posted in the vestment closet.

Wash your hands in the Sacristy Sink to prepare for Mass.

If more than one server, decide who will retrieve and carry the Crucifix up for Mass.

### Preparing Sacristy / Sanctuary For Holy Mass

**ONE SERVER:** Once dressed, proceed to the Sanctuary / Sacristy. Turn on all the light switches in the Sacristy. Before entering the sanctuary, stop and **genuflect**. Make sure that the sacred vessels are ready for Mass and are placed on the credence table.

If the sacred vessels are not prepared for Mass:

Fill the **Ciborium** with **small hosts** and place a **large host** in the **Patent**. Hosts are found in the cabinets over the sink. Return to credence table.

Fill the **wine cruet** with wine (just enough for the Priest) and the **ablutions bowl** with water. Wine and water are found in the sacristy. Return to credence table.

**Prepare the Chalice** by placing a **Purificator** on top, followed by the **Paten, Pall, and Corporal**. Place the Chalice with the cruet and ablution bowl.

Next, light the candle lighter and proceed to the sanctuary and light the Altar candles. Return to the sacristy, extinguish the candle lighter, and return it to its place.

Lastly, **retrieve the Crucifix** from its stand and walk down in front of the sanctuary. Face the Altar, **head bow**, and walk back to the sacristy for the start of Mass.

**If there are gift bearers** return to the sacristy for the wine Cruet. Place this on credence table in the rear of the Church for the gift bearers and return to the sacristy. The Priest will say a prayer with you before Mass starts.

**TWO SERVERS:** Once dressed, proceed to the Sanctuary / Sacristy. Before entering the sanctuary remember to stop and **genuflect together, side by side**. Once in the sacristy, turn on all the light.

**One Server** will make sure that the sacred vessels are ready for Mass.

If the sacred vessels are not prepared for Mass:

Fill the **Ciborium** with **small hosts** and place a **large host** in the **Patent**. Hosts are found in the cabinets over the sink. Return to credence table.

Fill the **wine cruet** with wine (just enough for the Priest) and the **ablutions bowl** with water. Wine and water are found in the sacristy. Return to credence table.

**Prepare the Chalice** by placing a **Purificator** on top, followed by the **Paten, Pall,** and **Corporal.** Place the Chalice with the cruet and ablution bowl.

**The second server** will light the candle lighter and then proceed into the sanctuary to light the **Altar candles.** Return to the sacristy, extinguish the candle lighter, and return it to its place. **Help the other server if needed.**

Lastly, leave the sacristy together with one server **retrieving the Crucifix** from its stand while the other server heads down in front of the Sanctuary waiting in the aisle on the near side, facing the Altar. **If there are gift bearers** the server not carrying the Crucifix will retrieve the wine cruet.

Walk back to the rear sacristy together with the server holding the Crucifix leading. Remember to Genuflect first if not holding anything. The server carrying the wine cruet will place it on the rear credence table. The Priest will say a prayer with the servers before Mass starts.

### **ENTRANCE PROCESSION**

The Priest will ring the bell signaling to the faithful that Mass is starting.

**ONE SERVER:** Walking in front of the Priest proceed to the sanctuary carrying the Crucifix, stop at the foot of the sanctuary, then proceed into the sanctuary placing the Crucifix in its holder on the right side. Then walk back to the front of the Altar, **bow profoundly**, and then walk to the server's seats and remain standing. The Priest will have walked up to the Altar while you are doing this and may be standing ready to begin the opening prayer.

**TWO SERVERS:** Line up with the server carrying the Crucifix leading. Walking in front of the Priest proceed to the sanctuary stopping at the foot of the steps with the Priest. Genuflect / Bow with the Priest. The server Server holding nothing will walk over to the server's seat and remain standing. The server holding the Crucifix proceed into the sanctuary placing the Crucifix in its holder on the right side. Then walk back to the front of the Altar, **bow profoundly (facing the Altar)**, and then walk to the server's seats and remain standing. The Priest will have walked up to the Altar while you are doing this and may be standing ready to begin the open prayer.

### **INTRODUCTORY RITES / OPENING PRAYER / COLLECT / PENITENTIAL ACT**

**ONE SERVER:** After the penitential rite and the Gloria take the Missal to the Priest. Remember to **strike your chest at "through my fault"**. Hold the prayer book properly (in the palms with the thumbs supporting it) at a height where the Priest can read it.

Once the Priest is finished with the prayers close the Missal, **bow** to the priest, and return to your seat placing the Missal aside.

**TWO SERVERS:** After the penitential rite and the Gloria the server sitting next to the Prayer Book (typically the server on the right) will carry it to the Priest. Remember to **strike your chest at "through my fault"**.

Hold the prayer book properly (in the palms with the thumbs supporting it) at a height where the Priest can read it.

Once the Priest is finished with the prayers close the Missal, **bow** to the priest, and return to your seat placing the Missal aside.

### **LITURGY OF THE WORD**

#### **First Reading / Second Reading / Responsorial Psalms**

Servers have no duties during the readings. You should be sitting up straight, hands on knees and looking attentively at the reader.

## The Reading of the Gospel

**WITH ALTAR CANDLES - TWO SERVERS:** Stand when the Priest stands then walk together to the Altar.

The server on the right will walk first to retrieve the far side candle **bowing** to the Altar as you walk in front of it. Stand in front Altar facing the Priest holding the candle holder at chest height.

The server on the left will retrieve the nearest candle then stand facing the Priest holding the candle holder at chest height.

The Priest will then walk over and pick up the Missal Book and proceed to the podium. Once the Priest passes the server on the far side, both servers will walk over and stand on the correct side of the podium for the Gospel reading. The server on the far side of the altar will be on the Priest's left side. After the Gospel, both servers will walk over and place their candles on the Altar with the server closest to the Altar walking first to the far side of the Altar. Once the candles are on the Altar, bow together and return to your seats. Once seated, keep hands on legs, palms down during sermon. Pay attention to the homily, keeping your eyes on the Priest.

**WITH ALTAR CANDLES - ONE SERVER:** Stand when the Priest stands and walk to the Altar and retrieve the far side candle **bowing** to the Altar as you walk in front of it. Stand in front Altar facing the Priest holding the candle holder at chest height. The Priest will then walk over and pick up the Missal and proceed to the podium. Once the Priest passes you, walk over and stand on his right side next to the podium while the Gospel is read. After the Gospel, return the candle to the Altar and return to your seat for the homily remembering to **bow** as you pass the Altar. Keep hands on legs, palms down during sermon. Pay attention to the homily, keeping your eyes on the Priest.

**NO ALTAR CANDLES - ONE SERVER / TWO SERVERS:** Stand when the Priest stands, placing your hands at your chest and holding them there. Be attentive to the reading looking at the Priest.

When the Gospel is over, sit down by placing hands on legs. Keep hands on legs, palms down during sermon. Pay attention to the homily, keeping eye on the Priest.

## Creed / Profession of Faith

Stand. Hands folded, praying the creed. **Profoundly bow** during the mention of the **Incarnation**.

## Prayers of the Faithful

Stand. Hands folded, paying attention to the reader.

## LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

### Preparing the Altar / Gifts are Brought Forward

**ONE SERVER:** Once the collection begins prepare the Altar. Walk the **Missal, Chalice (with Corporal / Purificator / Pall / Patten)** over to the Altar, handing them to the Priest. Be sure and hold the Chalice with both hands, placing one hand on the top and one hand on the bottom. Two / Three trips will be necessary.

Next, bow to the Priest and move to the front of the Altar, facing the Altar. The Priest will then walk down to receive the Gifts. Follow the Priest and stand beside him.

**Receiving the Gifts:** The Priest will hand you the collection basket, place it on the floor in front of the Altar. The Priest will then hand the other gifts to you. Bow to the gift bearers with the Priest and then walk up and set the gifts on the credence table.

Lastly, retrieve the Ablution / Lavabo bowl and place one small Purificator over your forearm. Once the Priest is finished purifying his hands, bow to the Priest and return these items back to credence table Return to your seat.

**TWO SERVERS:** Once the collection begins both servers will work together to prepare the Altar. Be sure to work in union with each other being careful not to cross paths.

The server closest to the Missal will walk it up to the Priest. Bow when walking away, then proceed back to the credence table and retrieve the Ciborium (unless the other server has already done this) and take it to the Priest.

Next, bow to the Priest and move to the front of the Altar, facing the Altar. The first server to the Altar should stand on the far side. Once both servers are at the front of the Altar, the Priest will walk down to receive the Gifts. Follow the Priest and stand beside him.

The other server will **take the Chalice (with Corporal / Purificator / Pall / Patten)** over to the Altar, handing them to the Priest. Be sure and hold the Chalice with both hands, placing one hand on the top and one hand on the bottom. The Paten should contain a large Host.

Bow when walking away, then proceed back to the credence table and retrieve the Ciborium (unless the other server has already done this) and take it to the Priest.

Next, bow to the Priest and move to the front of the Altar, facing the Altar. The first server to the Altar should stand on the far side. Once both servers are at the front of the Altar, the Priest will walk down to receive the Gifts. Follow the Priest and stand beside him.

**Receiving the Gifts:** The Priest will hand the collection basket to a server who will place it on the floor in front of the Altar. The Priest will then hand the other gifts to the servers. Both servers will walk up and set these on the credence table after the Priest bows to the Gift Bearers and proceeds to the Altar. Be sure to work in union with each other being careful not to cross paths.

Lastly, one server will retrieve the Ablution / Lavabo bowl while the other server places a small Purificator in their hand. The server with the Ablution Bowl will proceed first to the Altar, standing very near the Priest. Once the Priest is finished purifying / drying his hands, both servers will **head bow** to the Priest, and return these items back to credence table. Return to your seats.

### Eucharistic Prayer

**ONE / TWO SERVERS:** **Kneel** with the congregation at the start of the Eucharistic Prayer, being prepared to ring the bells. The bells may need to be moved to the floor before Mass or after the washing of the priest's hands.

Server nearest the bells will ring them during the Eucharistic Prayer. Typically, this will be the left server.

**RING THE BELLS:** Ring bells once at the  **Epiclesis** (Priest's hands over the gifts) stopping before the priest makes the sign of the Cross. **Free hand at chest while ringing the bells.**

Next, at the  **elevation of the host** and during the  **elevation of the chalice** the bells are rung three times (4 seconds each pausing 1 second). **Free hand at chest while ringing the bells.**

Server not ringing bells should **lightly beat your breast three times during the elevation of the host and wine.**

### Our Father

Servers stand for the Our Father - **Do not hold Hands – hands at chest in prayer.** Do not extend hands upwards.

**SIGN OF PEACE – IF TWO SERVERS:** Do not shake hands. **Bow** towards each other saying “Peace be with you”. Exchange a sign of peace with Priest.

### Holy Communion

**ONE / TWO SERVERS:** Once communion is over and the Priest is at the Altar, the server who handled the Missal will retrieve the Missal from the Priest and return to their seat (kneel). **Head Bow** to the Priest when walking away. The Priest will return the sacred vessel to the credence table for purification and return to His seat. Get ready to stand for the concluding rites.

### CONCLUDING RITES AND EXIT

**ONE SERVER:** When the Priest stands carry the Missal to the Priest and hold it for him so he can read from it. When the prayer is over, **bow** to the Priest and return the Missal. Remain standing.

**After the Prayer to Saint Michael / Priest’s Dismissal:** When the hymn starts, walk over and retrieve the Crucifix (**bowing** when passing in front of the Altar). Walk into the aisle standing on the far side, leaving room for the Priest to stand on your left. Turn around and face the Altar, waiting for the Priest. After the Priest bows, proceed out carrying the Crucifix. The Priest will follow.

**TWO SERVERS:** When the Priest stands the server sitting next to the Missal will carry it to the Priest and holds it for him so he can read from it. When the prayer is over, **bow** to the Priest and return the Missal. Remain standing.

**After the Prayer to Saint Michael / Priest’s Dismissal:** When the hymn starts, the server who carried down the crucifix will walk over and retrieve it (**bowing** when passing in front of the Altar). Once the crucifix is picked up from its stand the server standing will walk over and meet the first server at the Altar facing each other. Both servers will walk into the aisle and stand side by side, leaving room in between for the Priest. Both servers will turn towards the Altar waiting for the Priest. The Priest will walk down and face the Altar. **Bow** with the Priest towards Altar and proceed out with the server holding the Crucifix leading (**the server holding the Crucifix will remain standing**).

**After Mass:** Return the Crucifix to its stand in the front of the Church. Retrieve the Candle Light and using the **Snuffer** extinguish the candles. Empty the ablutions bowl into the Left Sacristy Sink. Turn the light switches off in the sanctuary and return to the sacristy, genuflecting as you leave the sanctuary. Place your Cassock and Surplice back on the correct hanger. If they are dirty please let the Priest know.

*Thank you for assisting at Holy Mass!*

# Server Gestures / Posture

**Bowing:** Hands together in Prayer position, bending at waist while keeping back straight. Bowing is always done towards the Priest or towards the Altar / Tabernacle.

**Profound Bow:** Profoundly bow during the mention of the **Incarnation** and before Mass when entering or leaving the Sanctuary. Bend at waist when bowing.

**Bowing Head:** Bow head when the name of Jesus is mentioned in Mass. Bow your head or when interacting with the Priest or walking in front of the Altar / Tabernacle. Hands together in Prayer position.

**Carrying the Crucifix or Candles:** Hold the cross with one hand on the bottom of the pole and one hand on the pole. Candles holders should be held chest high.

**Genuflection:** Outside of Mass always genuflect anytime you walk in front of the Tabernacle / Altar unless you are carrying something into the sanctuary.

**Hands:** Hands should always be in prayer position unless holding something. If using one hand, the other hand should be placed over your heart. Hands should never be hanging at your side.

**Handing wine or water cruet to Priest:** Handle out, hand under cruet, other hand on chest. Bow to Priest when washing hands is over.

**Incarnation:** Bow when the incarnation is mentioned during the Creed: *“By the power of the Holy Spirit He became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.”*



**Kneeling:** Hands at chest in prayer position. Head up, paying attention.

**Pouring water for Priest:** Bow to Priest when done.

**Praying:** Hands together, not folded over. Thumbs crossed.



**Ring bells:** Ring bells once at the **Epiclesis** (Priest's hands over the gifts). Next, at the **Elevation** of the host and then chalice the bells are rung three times. Free hand on chest while ringing the bells.



**Sign of the Cross:** We make the sign of the cross with our right hand. Left hand placed on chest, palm down. Once complete hands together at chest.

**Sitting:** Place hands on knees and sit. Once seated, keep hands on legs. Eye's following what is happening in the sanctuary.

**Standing up from Sitting:** Remove hands from knees, fold them together and place at chest while standing.

**Standing:** Hands folded at chest looking attentively towards Priest. Stand with straight back with feet straight ahead. Do not sway back and forth.

**Sanctuary:** Front area of the Church which is considered sacred. Contains the Altar and the Tabernacle. Never walk between the Altar and the Tabernacle.

**Walking:** Servers should never walk in front the other server when moving around in the Sanctuary.

**To serve well you must:** Go to confession often. You must study the faith and these instructions well. Arrive to Mass early in order to prepare yourself for Mass. You must fast 1 hour before receiving communion. Look your best for Holy Mass. Do not goof around before Mass or while serving. Do not hurry in your duties. If you make a mistake pause and without hurrying perform the action correctly.

**SITTING**



**KNEELING**



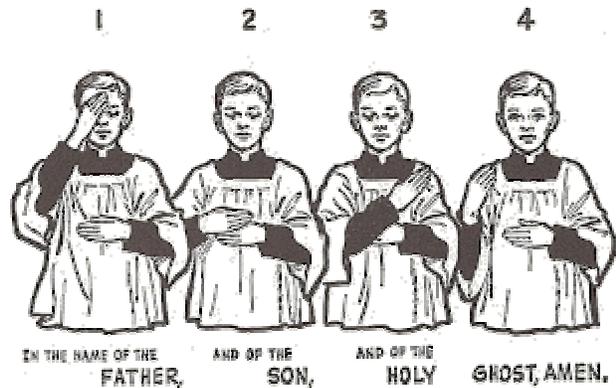
**GENUFLECTING**



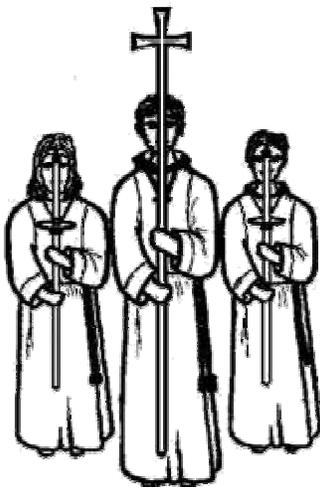
**STANDING**



**SIGN OF THE CROSS**



**HOLDING CANDLE/ CRUCIFIX**



**PROFOUND BOW**



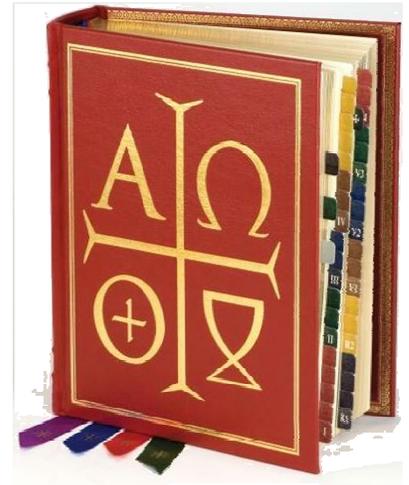
# ITEMS USED DURING MASS



PURIFICATOR



CHALICE WITH PURIFICATOR



MISSAL



CORPORAL

CHALICE AND PATENT



CHALICE WITH PALL



ABLUTION BOWL



WINE AND WATER CRUETS

## **\* Server Prayer Before Mass \***

Heavenly Father, as I prepare to assist You at Your altar, I declare my faith in You. At this Mass, keep me from distractions. Let me remember that in assisting the priest I am assisting Jesus in offering You the merits of His passion and death. I thank You for allowing me the opportunity to give my service to You. At this Mass, I join with your Priest in offering You the sacred Body and Blood of my Savior, Jesus Christ, Your Son. May my sharing the Divine Food in Holy Communion bring me eternal salvation.

Amen.