

St. Mary's Church

Altar Server Guide



Before Mass Begins

1. Arrive at least 15 minutes before Mass begins.
2. Put on proper fitting robe and cincture.
3. Insure that the book stand, 5 Chalices, 5 purificators, 2 bread plates, filled water cruet, fresh towel, empty bowl, and pitcher with water are on the credence table.
4. Insure that Bread & Wine, are on the Gift Table in the rear of the Church.
5. Light altar candles five minutes before Mass begins.
6. Once candles are lit, the 3 servers go to the altar and get the 2 front candles and the crucifix. Return to the gathering area in unison.

Serving Mass

Entrance Procession

1. Cross bearer first, followed by two acolytes (side by side) with candles, lead procession to the front of the altar.
2. Upon reaching the sanctuary, the cross bearer continues to the right, (to the side steps) and places the Crucifix on the stand, then proceeds down the rear steps and around the back of the altar to the chairs on the left side of the sanctuary.
3. Acolytes proceed directly up the steps of the altar and place the candles on the holders. With hands folded, the Acolytes proceed back down the front steps in unison and proceed across front of altar to the chairs on the right side of the sanctuary, and remain standing.

Opening Prayers

5. Acolyte to the left of the priest gets the white prayer book and faces the priest, about 3 feet away, holds the book open with the bottom of the book resting on the palms of both hands and the top of the book resting on the acolyte's chest. (This is the reading position) The Celebrant will then continue the opening prayers from the Sacramentary (Red Book) Upon completion of the readings, the acolytes remain standing until the Gloria (or Kyrie) is over. The acolytes then sit with the Sacramentary on his (her) lap.

6. After the Homily, the celebrant will return to his chair on the right side of the sanctuary. He will rise to invoke the Creed. Near the end of the Creed, the Celebrant will signal the Acolyte to retrieve the white book, and hold it in the reading position in front of the celebrant.

Offertory

1. At the beginning of the offertory hymn, the cross bearer will rise, walk behind the altar to the right side of the sanctuary, walk up the rear steps, retrieve the Crucifix, walk down the side steps to the front of the sanctuary, down the center aisle, to the rear of the church, to await the leading of the procession of the gifts.
2. Also at the beginning of the offertory hymn, the two acolytes rise (one carrying the Sacramentary), proceed to the front of the altar, stop, face the altar, bow, and proceed to the credence table. One acolyte will get the Celebrants chalice and the 5 purificators, the other place the Sacramentary on the book stand, and the two acolytes together will ascend the steps on the left side of the sanctuary to the altar. The Sacramentary on the book stand will then be placed on the left side of the altar table at a 45 degree angle to the front of the altar. The other acolyte will place the Chalice and purificators on the right side of the altar table.

Remember these actions should be done in unison.

3. The acolytes should return to the credence table and each acolyte should take 2 chalices and together place them on the left edge of the altar table.
4. The acolytes should proceed down the left steps, around to the front of the altar, face the rear of the church, and await the celebrant.

Remember when you are not carrying anything keep your hands folded.

Offertory (continued)

5. The cross bearer will lead the procession down the center aisle. Upon reaching the sanctuary, the cross bearer proceeds to the right, up the side steps, replaces the crucifix on the stand, descends the side steps, and moves behind the altar to the seats on the left side of the sanctuary, and takes a seat next to the credence table.
6. The celebrant will take the money basket and hand it to the acolyte on his left. The other acolyte will receive the wine decanter from the celebrant.
7. The Celebrant preceded by the acolyte with the wine decanter will ascend the center steps and proceed to the left side of the altar table, placing the wine decanter on the altar table next to the chalice. The acolyte will remain standing on the side of the altar table, waiting for the other acolyte.
8. The acolyte with the basket will wait until the celebrant starts up the steps and then proceed to the credence table placing the money basket under the credence table. The acolyte will then **remove the stopper from the water cruet** , place the stopper on the credence table, pick up the water cruet and ascend the stairs joining the other acolyte at left side of the altar table, facing the celebrant holding the water cruet.**Do not set it on the altar table. The handle from the cruet should be facing the celebrant.**

Offertory (continued)

9. The celebrant (or Deacon) will then take the cruet, add the water to the wine, and return the cruet to the acolyte. The acolyte will take any excess bread, wrapped in a purificator, from the celebrant. The two acolytes then turn, **in unison**, and return down the steps to the credence table. The acolyte should then return the stopper to the cruet. The other place the bread on the credence table.

10. One acolyte will retrieve the pitcher and the bowl, the other will retrieve the towel. The acolytes will ascend the steps to the left side of the altar table. When the celebrant comes to the side of the altar, the acolyte with the pitcher, pours the water over the celebrants hands and into the bowl. The other acolyte unfolds the towel and **hands it fully open** to the celebrant to dry his hands. The celebrant will return the towel to the acolyte. He should also grab the wine decanter. The two acolytes will then turn, **in unison**, and proceed down the steps, returning the pitcher, bowl, folded towel, and wine decanter to the credence table.

5. The 3 servers will then stand in front of their chairs.

Consecration

1. At the end of the Holy, Holy the 2 acolytes will kneel on the mats on bottom step on the left side of the altar. The bell acolyte should kneel on the mat closest to the bells. The cross bearer will kneel on the mat at the right side next to the Lector.

2. The bell acolyte will ring the bell at each of the following times:
 - Shortly after the Holy , Holy the celebrant will hold his hands over the bread and wine
 - When the celebrant raises the bread to the congregation
 - When the celebrant raises the chalice to the congregation

3. At the completion of the Great Amen, the 3 servers rise, and stand in front of the chairs, holding hands during the Our Father.

4. After the Sign of Peace it is time to finish setting the table. The two acolytes ascend the altar and place the 2 small bread plates on let left side of the altar table.

5. At the Lamb of God, return to your kneelers and kneel down. You will remain kneeling until the last Eucharistic Minister is receiving the “Blood of Christ”. At that time, rise and go up the aisle behind the choir, receive communion. Return to your chairs and sit down. **Do not leave your chairs**.....it is very congested in that area at that time.

After Communion

1. Once Communion is distributed, the celebrant returns to the altar table. At this time, one acolyte removes the stopper from the water cruet, lays it on the credence table. The acolytes move to the left side of the Altar Table. The acolyte will pour water into the Celebrants chalice. The other acolyte will take the celebrants bread plate. The two will return to the credence table.
2. The two acolytes return to the altar table and finish clearing the altar table . The acolytes will make as many trips as necessary, **in unison**, to the altar table until the entire altar table is empty. The last items to be retrieved are the Sacramentary and the Celebrant's Chalice. Lastly, when you are clearing off the altar after communion, the stand for the sacramentary should be put under the credence table.
3. The 2 acolytes then take the Sacramentary, walk, **in unison**, to the front of the altar, face the altar, **bow**, turn and proceed to their seats on the right side of the sanctuary. Upon reaching their chairs the acolytes are seated.

Closing Prayer

1. The acolyte on the celebrants left will position himself (herself) in the reading position holding the Sacramentary. The celebrant will read the final prayer. Upon completion, the acolyte will then stand in front of chair holding sacramentary,
2. Once the celebrant completes the announcements, the acolytes will then position himself for reading the final blessing, Once the blessing is given, return the Sacramentary to the chair, and remain standing.

Recessional Procession

1. At the beginning of the recessional hymn, the cross bearer rises, proceeds behind the altar to the right side of the sanctuary, retrieves the crucifix, walks to the front of the sanctuary, to the edge of the carpet in the center aisle, and faces the altar.
2. On the celebrant's lead, the 2 acolytes proceed to the front of the altar, face the altar, bow, ascend the steps to retrieve the candles, return to the bottom of the steps, face the rear of the church. The celebrant bows, the acolytes fall in behind the cross bearer, in front of the lectors, the cross bearer turns and leads the procession to the rear of the church to the sacristy.

After Mass is Over

1. Extinguish the candles, and place the candles on stands at entrance of sacristy.

Place the crucifix against the wall.

2. Extinguish candles on altar.

3. Remove robes and **hang up neatly on hangers in the closet.**

4. Return the candles and crucifix to the sanctuary.

Important Notes:

1. Schedules for serving are prepared for two months at a time. They are available two Sundays prior to the end of the current schedule.

2. The schedules are available in 3 places:
 - Sacristy
 - Web Site: www.stmaryskutztown.com under menus:
Ministries → Schedules → Altar Servers
 - Bulletin for the current and following week.

3. It is important that you report for the assigned Mass or get a substitute to take your place. There is a phone contact list available in the sacristy. Please use the call list to get a substitute.

4. Any changes that arise will be included with the schedules.