



Immaculate Conception Catholic Church

Altar Servers' Manual

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Introduction

Our parish is deeply grateful for your acceptance and commitment to be altar servers. Your service and dedication are important parts of our parish life.

The place of the altar server in the liturgical celebrations remains one of prominence and distinction. As you are destined in a special way for the service of the altar, you should learn all matters concerning liturgical worship and strive to grasp their inner spiritual meaning.

The altar server retains a genuine and vital role in the liturgical assembly. Your role, through your actions and conduct, is to bring the assembly to a fuller understanding of the liturgy and a greater love of God. You have a place of honor at Mass, because you assist the priest in many ways. Your behavior and accomplishment are signs of your faith and love of God and God's people.

Altar servers are chosen from the faithful who display a desire to participate in a more intimate way during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. It is an extreme privilege to kneel so close to the altar as our loving Savior, Jesus Christ, becomes truly present, body, blood, soul and divinity. In the presence of Our King it is both wise and necessary for you to perform all assigned duties with attention, dignity and reverence.

Also keep in mind to attend to every action of the Divine Liturgy as a team, all serving the Sacred Mass in the same manner and style as your companion altar servers.

As you participate as instructed, you will enter into a fuller participation in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass while assisting the priests. Therefore, it is imperative that all servers do their assigned tasks in the prescribed form and manner.

This manual is designed to give you direction for our parish Masses and to be a guide to help you as you assist the priests at the Altar of God.



Altar Server Prayer

Father in heaven, your Son, Jesus showed his love for you
by serving His needy brothers and sisters.
I now ask you for your help as I serve you and your people.
Open my mouth to praise you in word and song.
Open my ears to hear your Word.
Open my hands to do your work well.
Take from my heart all evil and distracting thoughts.
Help me to know what I should do, and do it well.
Help me to serve you reverently at your holy altar,
And so give you praise and glory, now and forever.

AMEN

The Jubilee for Altar Servers during the Millennium Year

(Address at the General Audience, August 1, 2001, the 1,000th of Pope John Paul II's pontificate)

Dear Brothers and Sisters! Dear Young People!

Today St. Peter's Square is the square of youth. About a year ago, at the heart of the Great Jubilee 2000, youths from all over the world found solicitous welcome here for the celebration of World Youth Day. Today this Square, which hosts the 1,000th general audience since divine Providence called me to be a Successor to the Apostle Peter, receives the thousands of boys and girls, who have come from all over Europe on pilgrimage to the tomb of the Prince of the Apostles.

Dear altar servers! Yesterday you crossed St. Peter's Square in a long procession to be near the basilica's altar of Confession. By so doing, you prolonged in some way the path that the youth of the world began in the Holy Year. The motto of your pilgrimage to the Eternal City, "Toward a New World," is a sign of your willingness to take your Christian vocation seriously.

I greet you affectionately, dear young people, and I am happy that this meeting has taken place. In particular, I thank Auxiliary Bishop Martin Gächter, president of Coetus Internationalis Ministrantium, who has spoken such cordial words to me on your behalf. With special joy I address the altar servers of German-speaking countries, who numerically constitute the largest group. It is beautiful that so many young Christians have come from Germany! Your commitment to the altar is not only a duty, but also a great honor, a genuine holy service. In connection with this service, I wish to propose some reflections to you.

The altar server's clothing is very special. It recalls the garment that each one puts on when he is welcomed in Jesus Christ in the community. I am referring to the baptismal gown, whose profound meaning Saint Paul clarifies: "For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ" (Galatians 3:27). Even if you, dear altar servers, can no longer fit into your baptismal gown, you have put on the clothing of altar servers. Yes, baptism is the point of departure of your "authentic liturgical service," which places you next to your bishops, priests and deacons (see Sacrosanctum Concilium, No. 29).

The altar server occupies a privileged place in the liturgical celebration. He who serves at Mass, presents himself to a community. He experiences firsthand that Jesus Christ is present and active in every liturgical act. Jesus is present when the community comes together to pray and render praise to God. Jesus is present in the Word of sacred Scripture. Jesus is present above all in the Eucharist under the signs of bread and wine. He acts through the priest who, in the person of Christ, celebrates the holy Mass and administers the sacraments. Therefore, in the liturgy, you are much more than simple "helpers of the parish priest." Above all, you are servers of Jesus Christ, of the eternal High Priest. Thus, you, altar servers, are called in particular to be young friends of Jesus. Be determined to go deeper and to cultivate this friendship with him. You will discover that in Jesus you have found a true friend for life.

The altar server often has a candlestick in his hand. How can one not think of that which Jesus says in the Sermon on the Mount: "You are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). Your service cannot be limited to the inside of a church. It must shine in everyday life: in school, in the family, and in different realms of society. Because, whoever wishes to serve Jesus Christ inside a church must be his witness everywhere.

Dear young people! Your contemporaries wait for the real "light of the world" (see John 1:9). Do not hold your candlestick only inside a church, but carry the light of the Gospel to all those who are in darkness and are living through a difficult time in their life.

I have spoken of friendship with Jesus. How happy I would be if something more sprang from this friendship! How beautiful it would be if some of you were to discover a vocation to the priesthood! Jesus Christ has urgent need of youths who will be at his disposition with generosity and no reservations. Moreover, might not the Lord also call one or two of you girls to embrace the consecrated life to serve the Church and the brothers and sisters? Even for those who wish to be united in marriage, the service of altar servers teaches that a real union must always include readiness for reciprocal and free service.

General Requirements and Rules

“I will go to the altar of God, to God who gives joy to my youth.”

These words from Psalm 42 were said before Mass for many centuries, and they encapsulate the attitude the server should have. It is the goal of each server to take these words to heart. Serving Mass is a privilege and a joy. It was not that long ago that only a few people were allowed in the Sanctuary, where God is present. You are given the opportunity to enter a sacred space, where others only dreamed of entering. With this in mind, we need to show reverence and respect for God’s true presence.

Who may serve: At Immaculate Conception, all registered parishioners who are young gentlemen and ladies in the fourth grade and higher are welcome to serve. Interested third graders are considered on an individual basis. Servers are encouraged to participate through their senior year of high school, and are welcome to return to assist during college breaks. All candidates must have this role with reverence.

The primary role of the altar server: Assist the priest/deacon, sacristan in the celebration of the liturgy during Mass. This is done through specific actions and by setting an example to the congregation by active participation in the liturgy by their actions, singing of hymns, responses of the people, looking alert and sitting or standing at the appropriate times.

Required basic knowledge of the Mass:

- a) All candidates are required to know the principal prayers of the Mass: The Gloria, Our Father, Nicene Creed, Lamb of God, Lord, I am not worthy and Holy, Holy, Holy.
- b) All candidates should be able to recite the basic flow of the mass. They must learn this so as to later perform their tasks at the proper times. They should know the use of all the liturgy items they will be handling and the purpose of each item.
- c) All candidates must demonstrate their ability to make use of the “tools of the trade” such as matches, candle lighter, books and candles, processional cross, chalice, ciboria, purificator, mass colors, etc.

Appearance:

- a) **Sleep:** Be sure to get a good nights sleep the night before Mass
- b) **Dress:** Dress neatly, cleanly, and lightly. Be mindful of clothes that you will wear under your Alb, because these can be seen through it. Avoid loud patterns, crazy colors, pictures, or other designs that can be seen through the Alb.
- c) **Shoes:** Especially be aware of your foot ware, for this will definitely be visible. Make sure that your foot ware is clean, nice looking and simple. Dress shoes, especially black, are preferred for every Mass. Please no flip-flops.
- d) **Hair:** Concern for girls, be careful to contain it so that there is no chance of it catching on fire around the candle flames: berets, ponytails, braids work with long hair. This includes boys, as well; be careful of the candle flames.
- e) **Hands:** Scrub hands and nails thoroughly before arriving at church.

General Requirements and Rules Continued

Arrival: Please arrive about 15 minutes before Mass begins. This gives you enough time to get dressed, light the candles on the Altar, to pray, and to ask any questions about the Mass you are to serve.

Unable to attend Mass: If you cannot attend the Mass for which you are scheduled, it is **your** responsibility to get a replacement. An e-mail asking for a replacement is not enough. Try to arrange for a buddy with whom you can switch off, when needed.

If you are charitably substituting for an absent server, you substitute for the absent server. You don't switch places with another server already scheduled, regardless of your experience. (The exception is when you are requested to do so by the priest/deacon or sacristan.)

Vesting (Dressing for the Liturgy):

Alb: The garment that you will wear is called an Alb. The word Alb is a Latin word meaning white. It symbolizes the purity each one of us possessed when we were baptized. It is a reminder that we should remain pure as we serve our Lord on the Altar.

Cincture: The rope worn around the waist. It is also a reminder to remain pure, and to be prepared to serve.

Dressing: Find an alb that is long enough to reach your ankles. You do not want an alb that is too long, because you might trip, and you do not want an alb that is too short, because it should cover your clothes.

- a) First undo the snap button on the top of the alb, and take it off the hanger.
- b) Take the bottom of the alb and pull it over your head.
- c) As you pull the alb down put your arms and head through the appropriate holes.
- d) Snap the button at your neckline; make sure the hood is off of your head. The hoods are only used for outside ceremonies.
- e) Find a Cincture and fold it in half.
- f) Take the top part of the loop with your thumb and pointer finger, and fold the rope down to form a pretzel.
- g) Make a loop and hold it in place while you wrap the rope around your waist.
- h) Take the end of the rope and place it through the loop you made in step F.
- i) Pull the rope tightly to your right side. (The cincture should be worn on the right when you are not ordained.)

As soon as you put on your alb, you are stepping into a special, reverent role as Altar Server doing an important job in a special place in direct presence of God.

Approaching the Altar is always done most reverently: Whether before Mass as you go up to the Altar, during or after Mass. as long as you are wearing your alb you should have a special reverence. (Although, you should observe this reverence even if you are not in your alb).

General Requirements and Rules Continued

Actions and Attitude: No food, gum, candy, running, horsing around, or unnecessary talking is ever appropriate in church. Vesting and preparing for Mass is a prayerful time, not a time to visit or chat even if others around you are doing so. Keep a reverent and purposeful demeanor. This includes being quiet, and respectful, thinking about what you are about to be doing. Be careful, thoughtful, and prayerful at all times.

You must each take personal responsibility to maintain a prayerful attitude which is best attained in silence regardless of the actions of others.*

- * Notice, this is what the priest is doing as he prepares in the other sacristy.
- * “Even before the celebration itself, it is commendable that silence be observed in the church, the sacristy, the vesting room, and adjacent areas, so that all may dispose themselves to carry out the sacred action in a devout and fitting matter.” (GIRM 45)

Note: The priest’s sacristy is **off-limits** unless you are directed by the clergy or the sacristan to enter.

Rules:

- a) If there are not at least four (4) servers present ten (10) minutes before Mass starts, tell the sacristan the number of servers still needed so he/she make announcement asking for volunteers from the assembly.
- b) The servers at all times should join the assembly in singing and the responses to the prayers.
- c) Before or after Mass, show reverence to the Tabernacle.
- d) During Mass, show reverence to the Altar - not the tabernacle.
- e) **Never touch** a ciboria, chalice, or paten that contains the Precious Body or Blood unless you are asked to do so!
- f) Bow your head when the name “Jesus Christ” is mentioned in prayer. The same goes for the name of Mary or the Saint of the Feast Day.
- g) If the presider/deacon asks something while on the Altar and you do not understand, the correct response is, “Excuse me, Father? Or Excuse me Deacon?”
- h) Keep your voices down in the sacristy before Mass. Your voice echoes!
- i) Keep calm and walk slowly. Don’t look like you are rushed! This is especially important for the server carrying the cross down the center aisle at the beginning and end of Mass.
- j) Keep off the predella (the raised platform on which the altar sits) unless you are interacting with the priest.
- k) You’ll make fewer mistakes if, during Mass, you keep your eyes on the action.

One of the best ways to learn how to serve effectively is to watch other more-experienced servers. Suggest to your family that you sit closer to the front of the Church next time. Watch and pay attention to when the servers move, where they go, etc. Most importantly, ask questions when the opportunity presents. Ask the sacristan before or after Mass if you have questions. You can ask the priest, too, but the priest is usually very busy before Mass.

The Mass

For Catholics, nothing is more important than the Mass. It is the heart and soul of our worship of God. It is the celebration that gives us the strength we need to live a Christian life. Because of its importance, the Church places a serious obligation on all of its members to take part in the Mass each Sunday and Holy Day.

First and foremost, the Mass is a sacrifice. Jesus offered His Father a sacrifice: Himself. Jesus promised us that “when we eat this bread and drink this cup” He would continue His great sacrifice until He comes again.

The Mass is a sacred meal called the Eucharist (from Greek word meaning “thanksgiving”). In the Mass, we give thanks for all that God has done for us, and we all eat the same food “the Bread of Life and the Cup of Eternal Salvation.”

The Mass is a memorial of the Last Supper when Jesus instituted the Eucharist and told His followers “Do this in memory of Me.”

The way in which the Mass is celebrated has developed over two thousand years. Despite its development, two elements have always been the same: the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

The following is the basic outline of the Order of Mass, the Sanctuary, the Books used at Mass, and the Ministers at Mass – all of which you should learn well to get a basic understanding of the Mass as the instructions to serving the Mass unfold.



The Order of Mass

The two most important parts of the Holy Mass are the **Consecration** and the **Communion**. But the Mass as we know is made up of two principal parts - the **Liturgy of the Word** and the **Liturgy of the Eucharist**, plus introductory and concluding rites.

Introductory Rites:

- Entrance Antiphon
- Greeting
- Penitential Rite_ (Penitential prayer, Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling)
- Gloria_ (Glory to God)
- Collect

Liturgy of the Word:

- First Reading, usually from the Old Testament, and the Responsorial Psalm, usually by one or two laypersons, (man or woman).
- Second Reading from a Letter (Epistle) of the New Testament, usually by Laypersons, (man or Woman).
- Third Reading, from the Four Gospels, by the deacon or priest, which starts with the Gospel Acclamation (Alleluia).
- Homily, by the priest.
- Silence
- Profession of Faith (Nicene Creed) or (Apostles' Creed).
- General Intercessions (Prayer of the Faithful): For the Church, Public Authorities, Salvation of the World, Local Community ... the sick, the poor...

Liturgy of the Eucharist:

Preparation of the Gifts (Presentation):

The priest prepares the altar and the gifts, prays over the bread and wine, and helps the assembly get ready for the tremendous Sacrifice that will take place in an unbloody manner. Includes the following:

- **Offertory Song...**
 - Offering of the bread and wine
 - Preparation of the Altar
 - Preparation of the Bread
 - Preparation of the Wine
 - Washing of Hands
 - Invitation to Prayer
 - Prayer over the Gifts

- **Eucharistic Prayer:**

Introductory Dialogue

Preface

Sanctus

Roman Canon:

Eucharistic Prayer

Thanksgiving

Acclamation

Epiciclesis - Invocation of the Holy Spirit to consecrate the Host and wine

Consecration of the Bread ... elevation of the Holy Host ... adoration to the Holy Host

Consecration of the Wine... elevation of the Holy Cup ...adoration to the Holy Cup

Offering

Intercessions

Final Doxology

Memorial Acclamation

Great Amen

- **Communion Rite**

The Lord's Prayer

Rite of Peace (Sign of Peace)

Fraction Rite

Breaking of the Bread

Commingling: The priest places a small part of the Host into the Cup

Lamb of God (Agnus Dei)

Personal Prayer

Communion of the Priest

Communion of the Faithful

Silent Prayer

Prayer after Communion

Concluding Rite:

Immediately after the Communion Rite, should there be any announcements, these are made, but should be kept brief. Then just as the people were greeted at the beginning of the Mass, so now the presider greets the people again and blesses them in one of three forms, the simple one, or at his discretion a more solemn Blessing, particularly at various seasons or on specific feast days, or a Prayers over the people. Includes the following:

Blessing

Dismissal

The Sanctuary

Our Sanctuary at Immaculate Conception Parish



The Sanctuary is the space at the front of the church within which most of the action of the Mass takes place. The word means, “Holy Place.” It is often set apart from the rest of the church by being slightly elevated. There are many things in the sanctuary with which you should be familiar.

The Sanctuary Continued

Main Altar

This is the large, high table located in the middle of our sanctuary. Most of the action of the Liturgy of the Eucharist takes place on the main Altar. In ancient times, the Altar was the place where a sacrifice was offered to God; therefore it is at the Altar where the sacrifice of the Mass takes place. Our main Altar is at Blessed Sacrament.



Ambo (Pulpit/Lectern)

This is the place from which the sacred readings and homily are given. Most of the action of the Liturgy of the Word takes place at the Ambo. It is the special place, set aside for Sacred Scripture.

Book Holder

This is the holder the Book of Gospels is placed during Mass.



The Sanctuary Continued



Tabernacle, Tabernacle Key, Vigil Light

The **Tabernacle** is the ornate place where the Eucharist is reserved, and is kept locked with the **Tabernacle Key**. If the entire Church is, “God’s House,” then the Tabernacle is, “Jesus Room.” Hosts are

taken from and returned to the Tabernacle at Communion time. The **Vigil Light** is a candle in a red holder that is lit when the Blessed

Sacrament is present within the Tabernacle. Proper reverence by genuflection is to be given to the Tabernacle at all times the vigil Light is lit.



Ablution Bowl

The **Ablution Bowl** is a bowl of holy water found near the Tabernacle. This bowl allows the priest and Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist to wash their fingers or hands after Communion is distributed during the Mass.



Candles and Candle Lighter

There are four candles at each corner of the green square framing the main altar. These candles are to be lit before Mass by the candle lighter.



The Sanctuary Continued

Cruets, Bowl, and Finger Towel

The cruets are the pitcher-like vessels, containing the water and the wine. The bowl and finger towel are to be used during the Preparation of the gifts. These will be kept on the Sanctuary credence table.



Bells

The bells are to be rung at the Consecration during the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Our bells are kept near the kneeling cushion of the server whose duty it is to handle the bells.

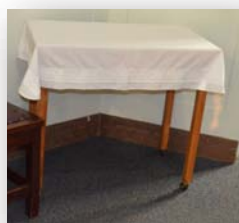


Processional Cross

This is the crucifix mounted on a long pole that is carried at the head of the entrance procession. Our cross is kept in a stand in the altar servers' vestry before and after Mass, and is kept behind the sanctuary during Mass.

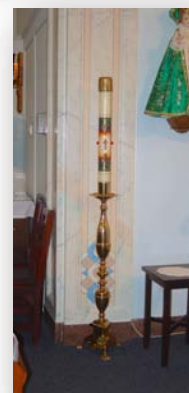
Pascal Candle

The Pascal Candle is used during Mass from the Easter Vigil until the end of the Easter Season and at funerals. It is placed at the left forefront of the Sanctuary. This candle is to be lit before Mass to commemorate the Risen Christ among us. After Pentecost, it remains next to their baptismal font, and is not lit during mass.



Credence Table

One of these tables is located on either side of the Sanctuary for the purpose of holding the cruets, bowl, Chalice, Ciboria, and other items required for the celebration of Mass.



Presider's Chair

The chair from which the priest leads the prayers and rites of the Church. The adjacent chairs are for deacons or concelebrants.

Sacred Vessels and Other Items

All altar vessels are called sacred, since they have been set apart for a distinctive role in worship. Here are some sacred vessels and other items that you should be familiar about.

Sacred Vessels



Chalice – Chalice is Latin meaning, “cup.” This is a consecrated cup made of gold or silver, and if silver, the interior must be of gold. It holds the wine for the Holy Sacrifice, and is a striking figure of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Paten – Paten is Latin our “plate”. This is a small plate of gold or silver upon which the large bread for consecration rests.



Ciborium – The ciborium is a vessel that contains the small Hosts used for communion of the faithful. It can look like a chalice with a large top and cover or a large bowl with a cover.



Pyx – The pyx is a smaller vessel in which the Sacred Host is either preserved or carried. A pyx should have hinged lid and a small carrying pouch called a “bursa.” It is often used for carrying the Blessed Sacrament to the sick.



Communion Cups – These are chalice-like vessels used at Communion when people receive the most Precious Blood.



Monstrance – The monstrance is a metal vessel, usually gold or silver-plated, with a transparent section in which the Blessed Sacrament is carried in procession or exposed for Adoration.



Luna – This is a circular receptacle, usually with glass sides, inserted into a monstrance to show the Sacred Host.



Other Items

Pall – This is a square pocket shaped piece of cloth with a cardboard/plastic inserted in order to stiffen it. It is placed over the chalice to prevent dust or other matter falling into it.



Corporal – The Corporal is a square piece of cloth. In size and appearance it resembles small napkin. It is spread on the altar, and the chalice is placed upon it. Its purpose is to ensure that any small particles or crumbs from the Sacred Host can be cleaned easily.



Aspersory and Aspergillum – The aspersory is a container for holding holy water. The aspergillum, the holy water sprinkler, is a stick-shaped implement with holes in it to dip into the aspersory and catch the holy water for sprinkling the people and things.



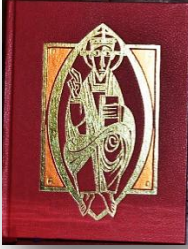
Holy Oils – There are three kinds: Sacred Chrism, Oil of Catechumens, and Oil of the Infirm. Sacred Chrism contains a mixture of balm or balsam. The other two are pure olive oil.



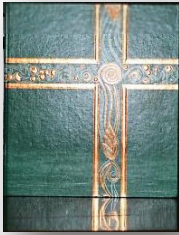
Thurible and Incense Boat and Stand – The thurible is a metal vessel in the shape of a vase or cup, with cover suspended by chains. It is used for burning incense. The incense boat is a small metal container that holds the incense to be placed in the thurible. The boat has a cover and a spoon. Usually shaped like a boat, it is the symbol of the Church, the ark of Peter. Both the thurible and the incense boat are placed on their stand.



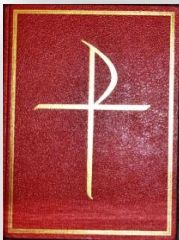
The Books of Mass



Roman Missal– This is a large book that contains all the words the priest uses during Mass, except the reading, hymns and homily. Our Missal is kept at on a stand on the main altar.



Presider's Book (Book of the Chair) This book contains prayers from the Missal needed by the priest when he is at his chair. This book or binder is kept at the seat of the presider.



Lectionary – This book contains all the sacred Scripture readings for mass. It is usually at the Ambo before Mass.



Book of the Gospels – This book contains the Gospel readings. It is usually carried in the entrance procession by the deacon or lector.



Hymnal – This book contains the hymns and psalms for Mass. This book should be available at your seat so that you may sing during Mass.

Explanation of Vestments



The Alb

The Alb is a long cloth robe reaching to the feet used to cover the priest's clothing and body. It represents Baptism. The vesting prayer is: *"Make me white, O Lord, and cleanse my heart; that being made white in the Blood of the Lamb I may deserve an eternal reward."* (Photo is of a altar servers alb.)

History: All who enjoyed any dignity wore the alb or tunic, in ancient times. It recalls for us the garment which Herod clothed Our Lord, and signifies the purity of conscience demanded of God's priests.



The Cincture

The cincture, or girdle, is a cord fastened about the waist to confine the alb and hold everything in place. It represents Purity. The vesting prayer is: *"Gird me, O Lord, with the cincture of purity, and quench in my heart the fire of concupiscence, that the virtue of continence and chastity may abide in me."*

History: Walking and active exertion made in necessary for one to gird up a long garment like the alb. Hence the cincture was an essential article of dress. We think of the cord that bound Our Lord to the pillar when He was being scourged. It further symbolizes modesty, and also readiness for hard work in God's service.



The Stole

The stole is a long narrow strip in the liturgical color and is used to identify the person, a bishop, priest or deacon. It represents the power the priest has by virtue of ordination. It has a cross sewn in the middle and the priest kisses the middle cross and places the stole upon his neck. Deacons wear it over one shoulder. The vesting prayer is: *"Restore to me, O Lord, the state of immorality which I host through the sin of my parents and although unworthy to approach Thy Sacred Mysteries, may I deserve nevertheless eternal joy."*

History: A kind of neckpiece or kerchief, the stole was part of the dress of the upper classes. The stole is a mark of sacramental authority and the power of Orders. As such, it is also used outside the Mass whenever power is used (in sacrament of Penance, when giving blessings in more solemn fashion, when handling the Eucharist, in the administration of other sacraments, etc.) Worn as it is over the shoulders, it reminds us of the cross Our Lord carried, and of the yoke of Christ; the priest's burden is a heavy one, which Christ nevertheless makes sweet.

The Chasuble

The chasuble is the outer and chief vestment of the priest. Its name means “little house” and it represents the overshadowing power of Christ. It is exclusively reserved to the priest. The vesting prayer is: *“O Lord, Who has said, ‘My yoke is sweet and my burden light,’ grant that I may also carry it as to merit Thy grace.”*



History: Imagine a large circular cloth with a hole cut out in the center for the head. This will help you to visualize the ancient chasuble, which was an immense cloak that went over the head and completely enveloped the body. When it was necessary to use the hands, the garment had to be folded up on each side over the arms. Because of its inconvenience (for 2 assistants were needed to manipulate it), the vestment was gradually cut and altered until it now has its present shape. It is usually ornamented on the back, and sometimes on the front of the garment. We occasionally see chasubles made in the Gothic or Mediaeval style. These are more ample, and drape over the shoulders down to the wrists. The cross on such chasubles has the shape of the letter “Y”, the tops of the arms of which extends over the shoulders towards the front. It makes us think of a purple cloak worn by Our Lord when he stood before Pilate. This ample garment is an emblem of charity. The ordaining bishop gives it to the new priest saying: “Receive this priestly garment, for the Lord is Powerful to increase you in love and perfection.”



The Cassock

The Cassock is the principal vestment used by members of the clergy. It is a robe reaching down to the feet, and normally has 33 buttons (representing Christ’s earthly years). For priests it is black; for bishops, violet; for cardinals, red; and the Pope white.



The Surplice

The Surplice is a smaller version of the alb, without a cincture, and is occasionally embroidered at hem and sleeves. It is a liturgical garment worn by all, clergy to altar servers, during processions, and when administering the sacraments. Like the alb it represents the garment given to each of us at our baptism.

Explanation of Vestments Continued



The Cope

The cope is a cloth, opened in the front and fastened at the breast with a band or clasp, and is used for benediction, processions, and other occasions outside of Mass. It represents the Royalty of Christ, and is reserved for the most special occasions.



The Humeral Veil

The Humeral Veil is a long, wide rectangular fringed cloth that is often ornamented in the middle. It is worn by the priest or deacon when carrying the Blessed Sacrament in procession or giving benediction. Its purpose is to keep people from being distracted by the hands and arms of the priest/deacon by covering them entirely, freeing the people to just focus on the Eucharist. It is worn around the shoulders like a shawl.

Postures at Mass

Form: The Latin word for beauty and form go hand in hand. Form is not a rigid proposition, but is needed in order to express the beauty of the liturgy. Man can say something about himself just by his posture (form). It is important to have proper posture when serving. Your posture sends a message to the congregation.

“Gestures and posture of priest, deacon, server, lay people, and congregation, ought to contribute to making the entire celebration resplendent with beauty and noble simplicity, so that the true and full meaning of all parts of the celebration is evident...attention should be paid (to the details) and traditional practice of the Roman Rite, and to what serves the common spiritual good of the people of God, rather than private inclination or arbitrary choice.”_ (GIRM 42)

Upon entering the church building, a genuflection is made, signifying adoration of the holy presence of the Blessed Sacrament, Holy Cross. (GIRM 274)

Bowing: When you bow it signifies reverence and honor shown to a person or to a sign that represents a person. It should be a smooth forward inclining of your head and shoulders. Never walk and bow at the same time stop before bowing.

There are two kinds of Bows you must know:

- a) Simple Bow - A Bow of the head (called the inclinatus) bow head fully and shoulders slightly. When to use: At the names of “Father, Son, and Holy Spirit”, “Jesus”, “Blessed Virgin Mary”, and the name of the Saint whose honor the Mass is being celebrated. (GIRM 275a)
- b) Profound Bow - A Bow of the Body - (called profundo inclination). Bow low at the waist so that hands might touch knees if you if you let your arms hang down (although, of course, your hands will remain folded palm to palm at chest). You do not give a profound bow if you are holding or carrying something.

When to use the bow: Every time you approach the Altar with empty hands (like clearing the table after Holy Communion). Also during the words, “By the power of the Holy Spirit and became man”, (et incarnates est), and before and after doing incense. (GIRM 275 b, 277).

Genuflecting: When you genuflect, keep your hands in front of your chest while you go down on your right knee. Keep your body straight, bow your head briefly, and rise to the standing position. (Fotescue 41) Be sure that your alb does not trip you on the way down or up.

When to use the genuflect: When first entering the Sanctuary, when crossing in front of the tabernacle with empty hands, and at the beginning of Mass when you are not holding candles, cross, thurible, etc.

Postures at Mass Continued

Hands: Unless you are sitting down or carrying something (like the cross), your hands should be kept joined in front of your chest; either locked together, palm-to-palm, fingers pointing upward. If you are carrying something in one hand hold the other hand flat on your chest.

Eyes: During Mass always look towards the place where the action is happening: the celebrant's chair, the ambo or altar. When the reader is reading the scriptures, you should be looking at the reader. Keep your attention on the presider in case he is in need of your assistance.

Kneeling: When you kneel, your body should be upright and your hands should be in front of your chest, well above your waist.

Standing: Always stand up straight with both feet firmly on the floor six to eight inches apart. This will give you balance and comfort at the same time. Do not lean against the furniture or walls.

Sitting: Sit down on your chair carefully. Once you are seated, sit tall and do not slouch. Place both feet on the floor. Place your hands on your lap or flat on your thighs in a relaxed manner.

Sign of the Cross: A correct sign of the cross is made by placing the left hand flat against the body just under the chest. At the word Father (Patris), touch forehead with right hand; at Son (Filii) touch chest above left hand; at Holy Spirit (Spiritus Sancti) touch left, then right shoulders; at Amen bring hands together.

Walking: Always walk with back straight and your head held straight and high. The pace should not be rushed but deliberate. The cross-bearer always sets the pace in processions. When walking in pairs, act in unison, remember you are a team.

Finally, posture is how you are using the parts of your body at a particular time. An Altar server has to carry out a number of different actions at Mass, and so there are a number of different postures. Know what you are to do while serving, and when you are to do it. Always do things smoothly. If you make a mistake, never get flustered, just move on smoothly and quietly.

Preparations before Mass

When you come to church:

- Arrive at the church at least fifteen (15) minutes before Mass begins. If weather is bad, you probably should leave home a bit earlier than usual.
- Put on a clean, unwrinkled vestment. The alb with a cincture is the official vestment for Altar Servers. Treat these vestments with care, and check that the alb is not too short or too long. They should touch the top of your shoes. Note where you got your vestment from, so you can put it back in the same place
- Check to see if the bells are placed on the proper side of the Altar and the Missal Book is in its proper place.
- Check to see if the Wine Cruet and Host Ciborium are on the offertory table. If not, notify the Sacristan right away. He will get them ready for you to place on the table.
- Check to make sure the candles on the Altar are lit, including the Paschal Candle if present. If they are not lit, light them right away. Lighting of the candles lets the people know that Mass is about to begin.
- After all of the above items are checked and completed, wait for the five (5) minute bell announcing Mass, proceed quietly to the ushers' room. (Note - Be sure to genuflect to the tabernacle, then take the cross and processional candles with you.)

Instructions for Serving at Mass

The following instructions are for Sunday Masses for four altar servers: server 1 is the cross bearer (**XB/S1**), server 2 is the Book Bearer and bell ringer (**BB/S2**), and servers 3 and 4 are the Candle Bearers(**CB/S3 & S4**) and handle the gifts on the Credence table when the Celebrant asks for them.

Introductory Rite

Once the priest is ready to begin Mass, all line up as follows: (see **Diagram A**)

- 1st (**XB**) The Cross Bearer
- 2nd (**CB**) The Candle Bearers side by side
- 3rd (**BB**) The Book Bearer
- 4th (**BOG**) The Book of Gospel carried by the Deacon or Lector
- 5th (**CC**) Co-Celebrant if any
- 6th (**P**) Priest/Celebrant

When the people begin to sing the entrance hymn, the XB will carry the procession cross and lead the procession to the sanctuary walking slowly. The eyes of all the other servers should be focused on the processional cross during the entrance. After walking slowly down the main aisle and upon entering the sanctuary the XB and BB will stand to the right of the altar in front of the candle and patiently await the priest. The candle bearers will stand to the left of the altar in front of the candle and await the priest. The Deacon/Lector will place the Book of Gospels on the altar and return to the line in front of the altar. (See **Diagram B**) The priest, deacon/lector will genuflect to the Tabernacle. The servers **will bow**, since they are carrying something in their hands. The priest and deacon will then proceed to venerate or kiss the altar; that's the time for the servers to place the cross and candles in their holders and stand in front their seats, quietly and reverently.

BB/S2 - The sacristan will open the Missal to the proper text and place it in the server's hands. When the priest says, "Let us pray", the server will proceed directly in front of the priest and hold the book open so the priest can read from it.

Note:

- Hold the book open so the priest can read the prayer.
- Use both hands to hold the book.
- Keep the pages flat, and fingers out of the text.
- Stand still (not swaying) while the priest is reading.

When the priest is finished with the Opening Prayer, the server will return directly to his/her seat for Liturgy of the Word.

Instructions for Serving at Mass Continued

Liturgy of the Word

ALL - All servers will sit down in their respective chairs for the readings remembering to be attentive and respectful - keeping their eyes on the reader.

S3 - At the end of the second reading and before the Alleluia, S3 will take notice if the lector has removed the lectionary from the ambo. If the lector has not, S3 immediately will go to the ambo, close and remove the lectionary to the shelf inside the ambo, and return to his/her seat before the priest/deacon is at the ambo.

ALL - During the Gospel reading, all servers will be standing, attentive and respectful, facing the priest/deacon who is reading the Gospel, for it is the Word of God. All servers will pay close attention to the words of the Gospel. Thereafter, all servers will sit down and be attentive to the homily.

ALL - During the creed, all servers will recite the creed, and will remember to bow as instructed for the lines: *“by the power of the Holy Spirit, He was born of the Virgin Mary and became man.”*

ALL - All servers will sit with the people during the collection.

Liturgy of the Eucharistic

P - The priest/deacon will approach the altar for preparation, all servers will stand up. **S2** will hand him the lectionary, **S3** and **S4** will hand him the priest's chalice, layered with the corporal, purificator, paten, and pal (the priest's chalice is always carried with two hands - one around the stem, the other hand flat across the top). **S3** and **S4** will hand him the remaining cups and ciboria, depending on what Mass it is (predetermined by the sacristan earlier). The priest/deacon will return to his seat and the servers will sit down.

ALL - Once the collection is finished the ushers will select a family to bring the gifts and collection basket to the altar. The priest/deacon and all servers will approach the front of the sanctuary in front of the altar facing the people (see Diagram C). The priest will welcome the offertory procession and receive all the gifts as follows: 1st the collection basket, which he gives to the **XB**, who places it on the first step in front of the altar. 2nd the water cruet, which he gives to **S4**, 3rd the wine cruet, he gives to **S3** and last the Host. He then turns and all proceed to the altar or to the side of the altar. The **XB** and **BB** will stand in front of their seats.

Instructions for Serving at Mass Continued

S3 and S4 Will stand in front of the credence table holding the water and wine cruets with handles facing away (toward the priest). Cruets do not go on the altar. After the priest has presented the bread, S3 and S4 will step forward in unison with their toes against the bottom step of the altar and hand the priest the cruets. S3 will be first with the wine cruet and then S4 with the water as directed. When the priest has finished with the cruets he will hand them back to the servers, who turn and step to the credence table again in unison. S3 will cap the wine cruet and place it on the credence table. S3 will take the finger towel and place it over his/her wrist, and carry the bowl with both hands. S4 will still have the water cruet with the cap in one hand and the cruet in the other hand, both facing the altar. When the priest is ready, S3 and S4 will step forward with their toes touching the bottom step of the altar facing the priest. The priest will place his hands over the bowl and S4 will pour some of the water from the cruet on his hands. The priest will then take the finger towel from S3 and wipe his hands. After the priest replaces the towel, the servers will both bow together to the priest and return to the credence table. Both servers will neatly arrange the cruets, towel, and bowl on the table leaving room for other vessels to be placed there after communion.

ALL - No one is to sit down at this time. All servers should remain standing. After singing the Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy), all servers will kneel for the Eucharistic Prayer.

S2/BB - S2 will be ready and alert after kneeling.

S2 will ring the bells reverently. *

* Three times at the full elevation of the consecrated Host.

* Three times at the full elevation of the consecrated Wine.

(The bells are rung three times in honor of the Trinity; bells rung three distinct times for the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.)

ALL - Because the elevation of the Body and Blood of Jesus are solemn times, (the bread and wine we offered just before has now become the real BODY and BLOOD of our God, Jesus Christ), make a profound bow to the Body and the Precious Blood when the priest elevates the Host and Chalice. After the Eucharistic Prayers, all servers will sing the Great Amen. All servers will then stand for the Our Father. Be alert to respond to the Sign of Peace from the priest before exchanging peace with each other.

S3 - S3 will ensure that any empty ciboria on the credence table are brought to the altar. **S3** will bow after giving them to the priest and return to his seat.

ALL - All kneel after the “Lamb of God” prayer is completed

When the chalice containing the Precious Blood touches the Priest’s lips all servers except **S4** line up in front of the altar to the left of the candle, leaving room for the other Eucharistic Ministers (see Diagram D). **S4** will take two purificators from the sacristan and proceed to the side of deacons chair and give them to the first two Eucharistic Ministers and take his/her place in line next to **S3**. After they have all received communion, everyone moves at the same time, the Eucharistic Ministers go to their stations and the servers return to their seats and maintain the dignity and respect that is required during Communion.

Instructions for Serving at Mass Continued

SCN - The sacristan will clear the altar while Communion is distributed.

ALL - When Communion is ending, and the priest/deacon begin to return to the altar, all the servers will stand. When the priest reposes the Blessed Sacrament in the Tabernacle, the servers face the Tabernacle and Kneel (both knees to the ground). The priest will then drink the remaining Blood all may be seated but the servers. Once all the vessels have been purified and the priest takes his seat the servers may be seated.

Concluding Rite

When the priest stands, he will begin with, “Let us pray.” The BB shall bring the Missal to the Priest, the BB should make sure the priest is finished with the Missal before leaving. Sometimes there, are extra prayers. The key is to watch the priest (head-up, not head-down). If he motions to close the book, you’re done.

ALL - When the final hymn is started the priest will proceed to the front of the altar and all servers will line up on each side of the priest and deacon. When the priest genuflects, all servers genuflect at the same time. When the priest and deacon move to reverence the altar, the servers retrieve the cross, candles, and the Missal and line up as before at the entrance facing the altar. When the priest arrives from the altar, all turn and proceed to the front of the church (see Diagram E).

Finishing Up

Remember you are still in church, you should proceed very quietly.

- Return single file to the server’s sacristy along the side aisle on the Blessed Mary side. (Don’t knock people over going back.)
- The XB shall return the cross to its proper place.
- The BB shall return the Missal to its proper place.
- The candle bearers shall return the candles to the ambo and put them out along with the altar candles (**do not** blow them out; use the snuffer tool.)
- Hang up your alb, cincture, and cross, where they belong, neatly and in size order.

Legend for Instructions for Serving Mass and Diagrams:

A-Altar, **BOG**-Book of Gospels, **C**-Co-Celebrant, **D**-Deacon, **Cup**-EM of Chalice, **Host**-EM of Host, **P**-Priest Celebrant, **S1, S2, S3, S4**-Altar Servers, **BB**-Book Bearer (**S2**), **CB**-Candle/Bearer (**S3** and **S4**), **XB**-Cross Bearer (**S1**), **Sac**-Sacristan.

Instructions for Serving Mass / Diagrams

Diagram A

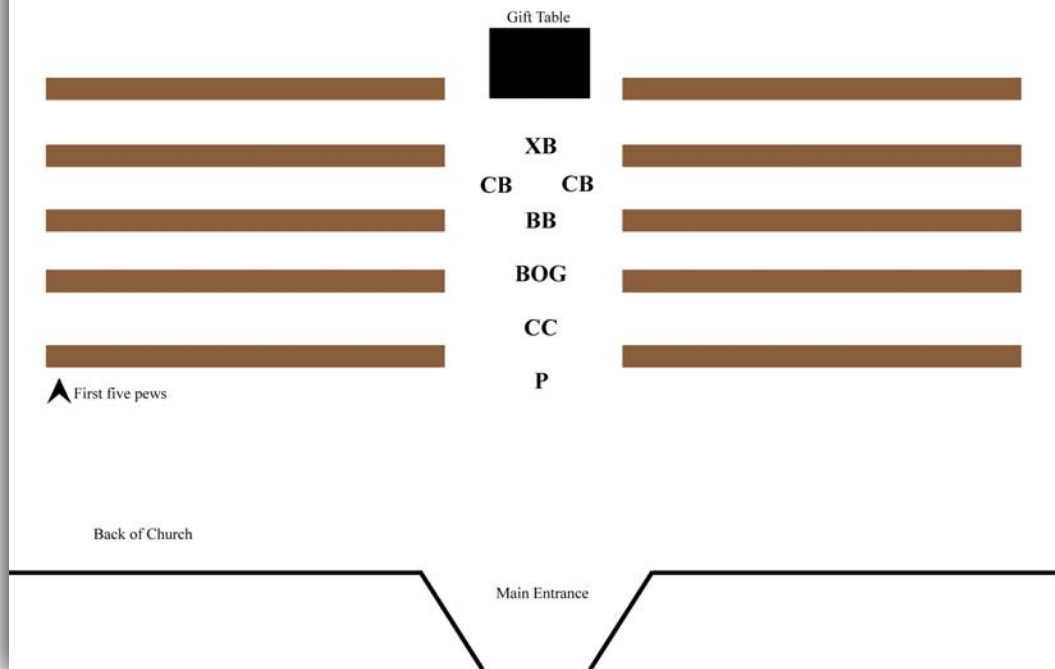


Diagram B

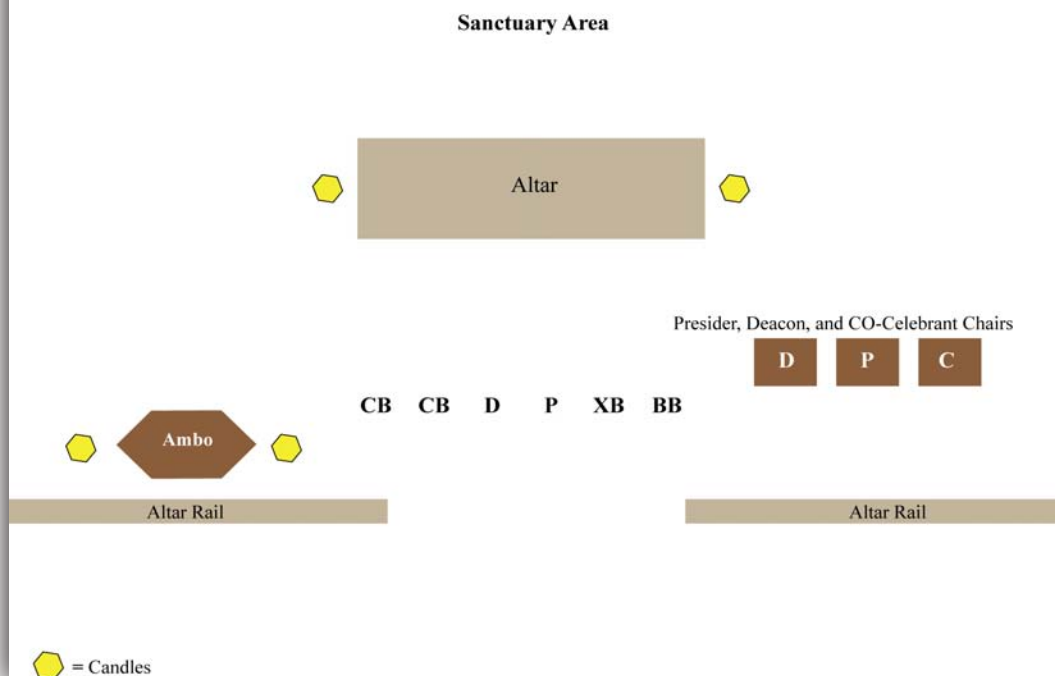


Diagram C

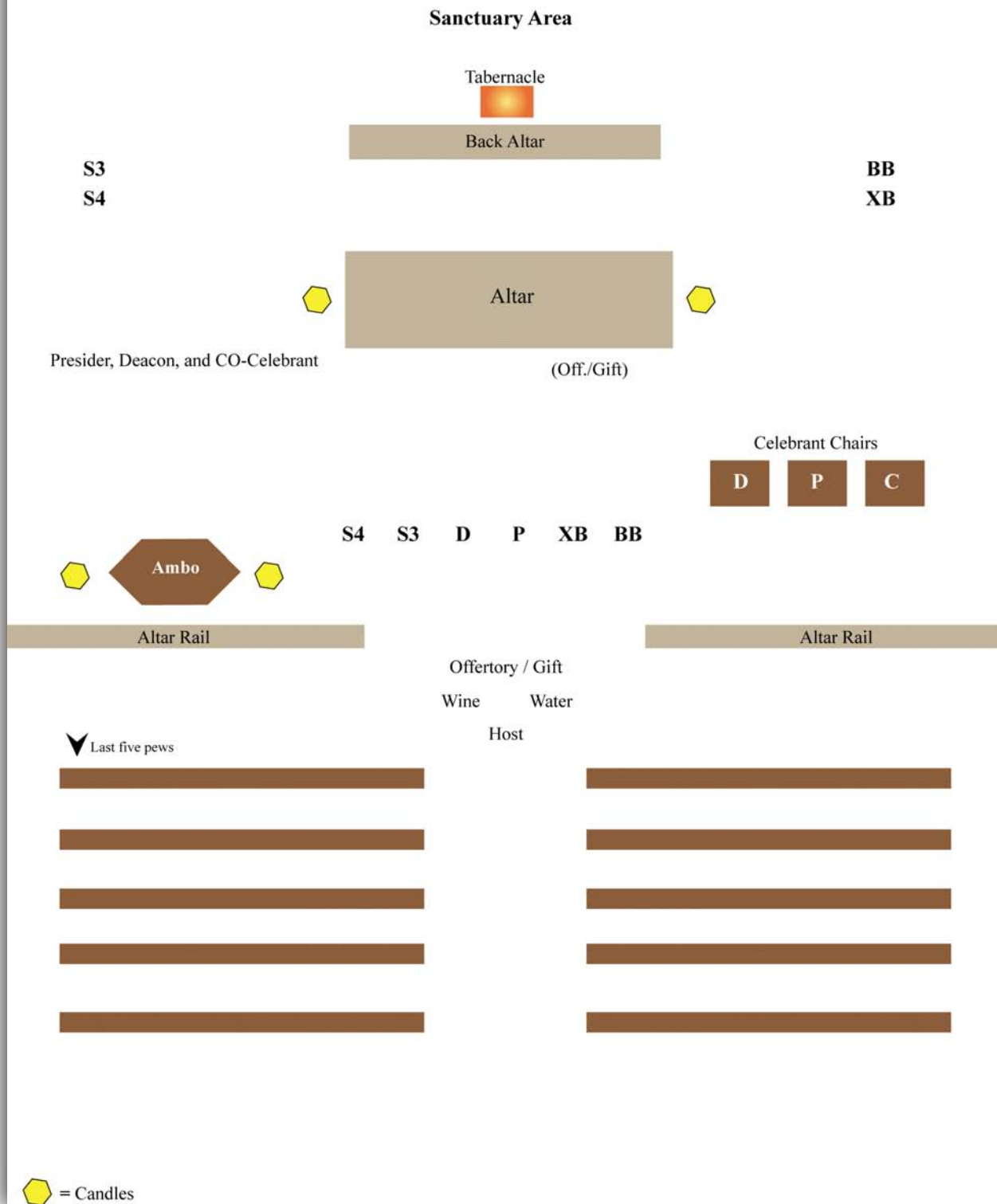


Diagram D

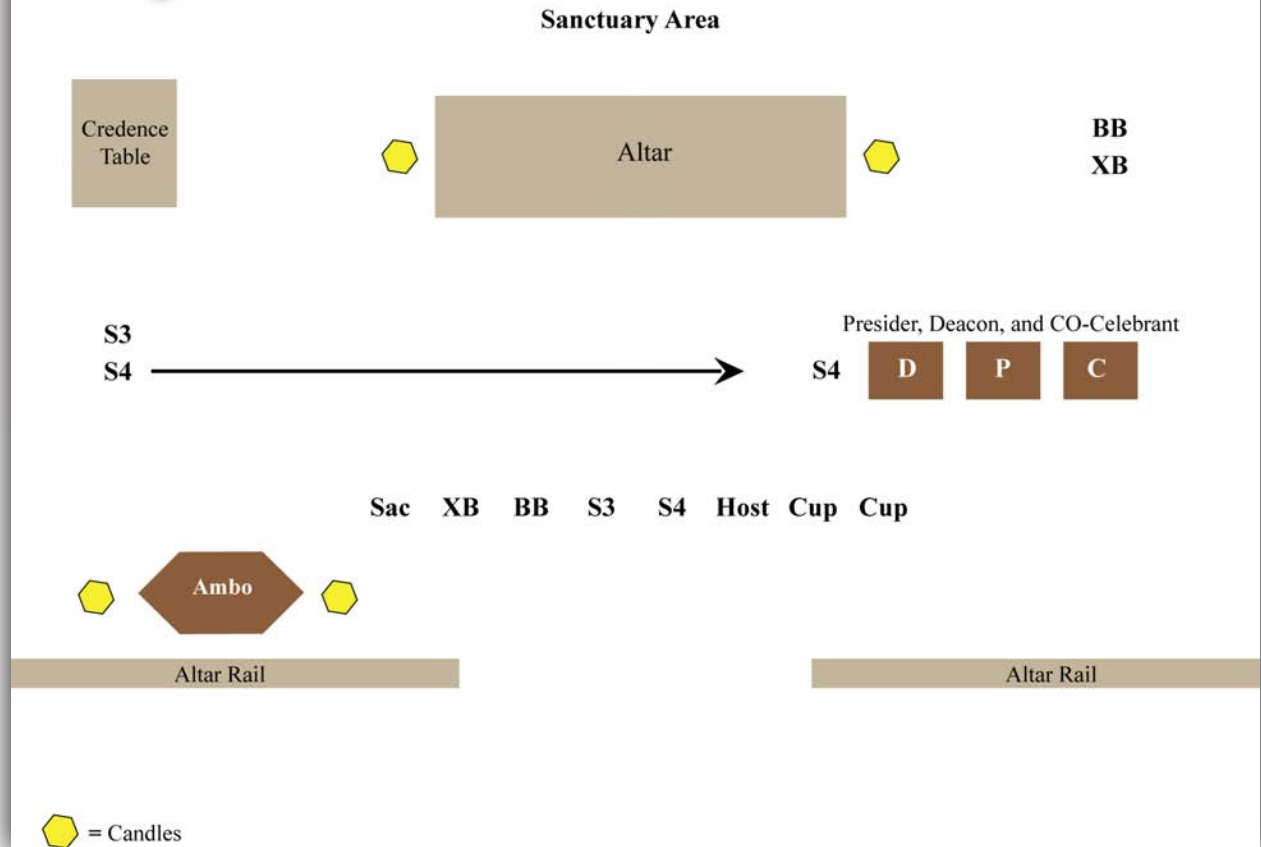
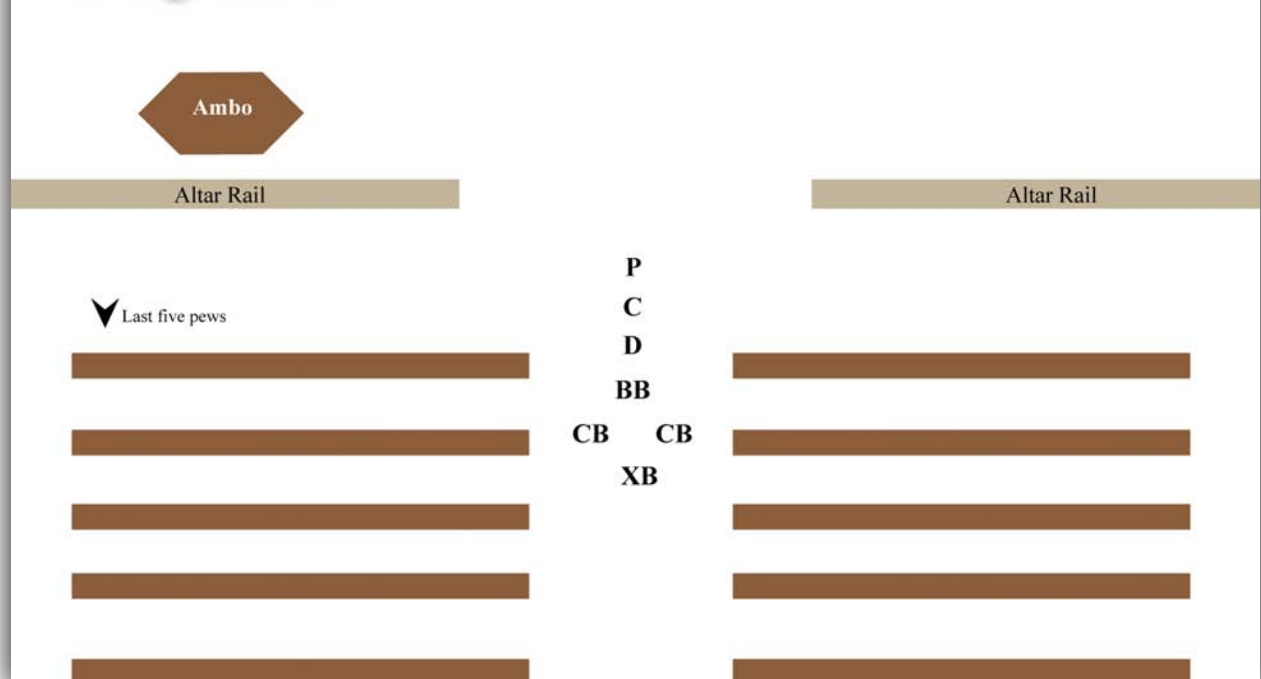


Diagram E





God of glory,
Your beloved Son has shown us that true
worship comes from humble contrite hearts.

Grant that our ministry may be fruitful and our
worship pleasing in your sight. We ask this
through Christ our Lord.

AMEN.

Adapted from the Prayer of Blessing for Servers, Sacristans, Musicians, and Ushers.
Book of Blessings #1868

Prayers to Know

You are already familiar with most of the prayers at Mass from having attended Mass for such a long time. The important thing to remember is that prayers are never mumbled. They are said clear and in a conversational tone. Here are some prayers that you should know accurately and well to say or sing during Mass.

After the priest introduces the rite, one of three forms may be used. One of them is known as the Confiteor that you will need to know.

Confiteor I confess to almighty God and to you my brothers and sisters,
that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words,
in what I have done, and what I have failed to do,
(and striking their breast they say:)
through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault;
(then they continue)
therefore I ask blessed Mary ever Virgin, all the Angels and Saints,
and you my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

The Gloria is sung or said on Sundays, outside of Advent and Lent and on solemnities and feast days.

Gloria Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.
we praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God heavenly king, O God, almighty Father,
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us:
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer:
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

Prayers to Know Continued

On Sundays and Solemnities the Nicene-Constantinople Creed or the Apostles' Creed is read.

Nicene Creed I believe in one God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.
I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only begotten Son of God,
Born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and our salvation he came down from heaven,
(all bow at the following words)
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
and became man.
(then continue)

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate
he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified.
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic church.
I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins,
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead
and life of the world to come Amen.

Toward the end of preparation of the gifts, after the priest washes his hands:

Priest Pray brethren, (brothers and sisters) that my sacrifice and yours may be
acceptable to God, the Almighty Father.

All May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of His
name, for our good and the good of his Holy Church.

Priest The Lord be with you.

All And with your spirit.

Priest Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them up to the Lord.

Priest Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right and just.

Prayers to Know Continued

Sanctus – After the preface, we sing or say the Sanctus.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts,
heaven and earth are filled with your glory:
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Memorial Acclamation – After the consecration, the priest sings or says, **the mystery of faith**.

We respond with one of three memorial acclamations:

- We proclaim your death, O Lord, and profess your resurrection until you come again.
- When we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim your death O Lord, until you come again.
- Save us, Savior of the world, for by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free.

The Lord's Prayer

The priest introduces the Our Father.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Priest Deliver us Lord....

Response For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever.

Lamb of God – Invitation to Communion

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

Priest Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

All Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof,
but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Liturgical Colors

The liturgical seasons are there to help us change, grow and become more mature as followers of Jesus Christ. One of the clearest signs of these seasons is the changing liturgical color. With each change of seasons, the Church changes the color of vestments as a visible sign of our need to change and grow.

White or Gold : The symbol of celebration and triumph, purity and innocence. It is used on all feasts of the joyful and glorious mysteries of our Lord's life (e.g. Christmas and Easter), on the feast of our Blessed Mother, on the feasts of angels and of all saints who were not martyrs. White/Gold can always be worn since every Mass is a celebration of Christ's Resurrection, and is often worn at funerals to celebrate the life of the deceased and pray for their triumphal acceptance into heaven.

Red : The symbol of Sacrifice because it is the color of blood, is used on all feasts of our Lord's Cross and Passion, on the feasts of the Apostles and of all martyrs. It is also a symbol of the Holy Spirit when it is used on Pentecost and in Masses of the Holy Spirit, in memory of the tongues of fire of the First Pentecost.

Purple : The symbol of Penance and Waiting, is used during the penitential seasons of Advent and Lent, and on days of fast. It reminds us of preparation. It also may be worn during funerals as an alternative dark color, to show mourning and the preparation of the dead.

Rose : They symbol of Subdued Joy that half a penitential season is over, it authorized only on the Third Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday) and on the Fourth Sunday of Lent (Laetare Sunday) as an alternative to violet.

Green : The symbol of Hope and Growth, Green is the color of budding and living vegetation. It is used during Ordinary Time, to show that our common state is one of growing in our relationship with God, longing and hoping for eternal life.

Black : They symbol of Mourning and Death, it may be used in funerals or a day commemorating the dead or great loss of life, like All Soul's Day. It is rarely used.

Note of Thanks



I want to tell you of our deep appreciation for the devotion and attention you have given to serving at Mass in our parish of Immaculate Conception. This is a service, which you have rendered to Almighty God in the sacredness of the sanctuary.

I extend these words of thanks, not alone, but for the priests you have served, your family and friends, and for the many who have attended the Masses at which you served.

I am sure that the messages in this manual will be inspirational and of encouragement to you at prayer, at school, and at home

I am hopeful that the contents will be of daily usefulness to you in the months ahead. Equally as important, in the years to come, I pray that this manual will afford you, many pleasant memories of your days as a Altar Server

Yours in Christ
Rev. Joe Esper

Pastor - Immaculate Conception Catholic Church

Definitions

Ablution Cup	Is a covered dish of water on the side of the tabernacle used by the priest, deacon or extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion to wash their fingers after distributing communion.
Alb	The full white garment worn by the priest, deacon, and servers. The alb is symbolic of Baptism. The rope tied around the waist is called a cincture.
Altar	The place where the Eucharistic Sacrifice takes place. The altar is sacred and often contains relics of the saints.
Ambo	The platform, lectern or pulpit from which the reading and homily are given.
Ambry	The place where Holy Oils are kept. The ambry at Immaculate Conception is on the wall near the altar. There are three holy oils stored there. The Oil of Catechumens, the Sacred Chrism, and the Oil of the Sick.
Aspergillum	The Holy Water sprinkler.
Baptism Font	Is the large marble bowl in front of St. Joseph where baptisms take place.
Book Binder	This used for the General Intercessions read at Mass. Usually, the deacon or the Lector will read them.
Candelabrum	Immaculate Conception has two, which holds multiple candles. They are placed on the altar during Adoration.
Cassock	A long tunic like garment which reaches from the neck to the heels which is worn by servers and clergy in some churches.
Chalice	A cup of precious metal that holds the wine which becomes the Blood of Jesus after the consecration. All chalices should be placed in their proper place after Mass. If the chalices were left unpurified by the priest or deacon for some reason they should be left out on the counter in the sacristy for the priest or deacon to purify. Never put unpurified chalices away.
Chasuble	Is the outer garment worn by the priest at Mass. It usually matches the color of the stole.
Ciborium	A large cup or container of precious metal with a cover of the same material which holds the Body of Jesus after consecration for distribution of Holy Communion to the faithful.
Cincture	Is a rope or cord worn around the waist (like a belt) over the alb.

Corporal	A white linen cloth, usually with a cross in the center, used to protect any particles of the Precious Body and Blood of Jesus from falling to the altar cloth. It is always folded and unfolded as to protect any particles from being lost. The corporal is like the body winding sheet used to hold the crucified body of Our Lord in the tomb.
Credence Table	The table in the sanctuary where the cruets, chalices, and ciborium are kept before and after the consecration.
Cruets	The vessels containing the water and wine used at Mass.
Dalmatic	Is the outer garment worn by the deacon. It too usually matches the color of the stole.
Flagon	Is a pitcher that contains the wine that will be consecrated during the Eucharist.
Funeral Pall	Is a large decorated cloth that covers the casket during a Funeral Mass.
Holy Water Bucket	Is the container used to hold holy water.
HIS	The first three letters of Jesus' Name in Greek and often used to decorate the altar and other church facades.
Incense	Is a mixture of leaves, bark, and other natural materials which, when burned, produces a sweet-smelling smoke. The smoke rises and represents our prayers rising to God.
Incense Boat	(sometimes just called the Boat) is the container that holds the unburned incense. A spoon is used to scoop the incense from the boat into the thurible.
Lavabo	Is a bowl over which the priest washes his hands during Mass (water drips into this bowl).
Lectionary	Is a large book containing the readings from the Bible that are proclaimed at all weekly Masses. The lector, deacon, and the priest use it. Sometimes a separate Book of the Gospels is also read.
Lunette	A thin, circular receptacle, having a glass face that holds the Consecrated Host used for Adoration and Benediction. It slides into the monstrance.
Monstrance	This is a large, ornate vessel used to hold the Blessed Sacrament for Adoration, Benediction and solemn Eucharistic processions.
Pall	A square piece of cardboard or plastic, which is covered by linen and used to cover the chalice.
Pascal Candle	Or the Easter Candle is a large candle that is located near the baptismal font. The candle is used during the entire Easter Season and at funerals.

Paten	A small saucer shape plate of precious metal that holds the Host. Everyone should be very careful when they have to handle it as part of duties.
ProceSSIONal Cross	Is the large cross that is carried in by a server at the beginning of Mass and is carried out at the end of Mass.
Purificator	A linen cloth used by the priest or deacon to dry the chalice after washing and purifying it. Used purificators must always be placed in the proper container for sacred cloths and properly cleaned.
Pyx	A case, about the size of a pocket watch, in which Communion is carried to those who are sick or unable to come church.
Sacrarium	A sink with a drain going directly into the ground usually fitted with a cover and lock, which is used for the disposal of the following: The sacred linens wash and rinse water, used holy water, used baptismal water, and blessed ashes. No other use is allowed.
Sacristy	Is the room where the priest vests (gets dressed) and prepares for Mass and where all supplies for liturgy are kept. At Immaculate Conception, the servers have a separate room where their vestments are stored and they vest (get dressed) for Mass.
Sanctuary	Is the area in the center of the church where the Presider's chair, the Ambo, and the Altar are located. In Immaculate Conception, the sanctuary is slightly higher than the rest of the church (one step higher).
Stole	Is a long, narrow band of cloth that looks like a scarf. A priest wears the stole draped over his shoulders and hanging down the front; a deacon wears a stole draped over one shoulder and diagonally across his chest. Stoles may be white, green, red, purple, or gold.
Surplice	A wide sleeved, linen worn over a cassock by clergy and altar servers in some parishes.
Tabernacle	The place in a church where the Blessed Sacrament is held.
Thurible	The special vessel which holds burning charcoal and into which incense is placed.