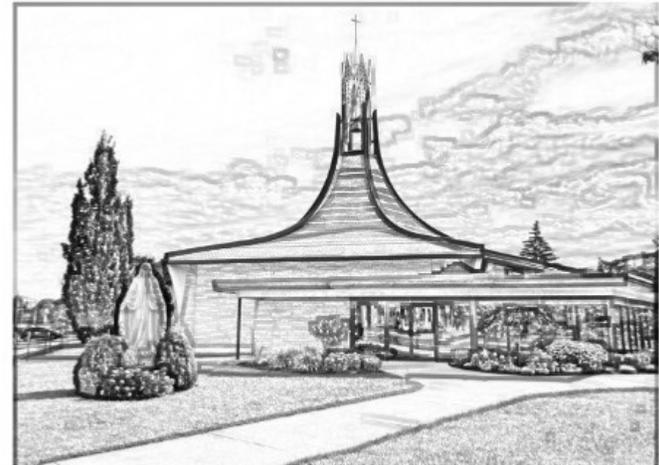


Celebrating our Faith

**ALTAR
SERVERS**



**Holy Rosary Parish
Milton, Ontario.**

**TRAINING
MANUAL**

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Glossary

CRUETS	Small bottles for holding the water and wine at Mass.
HOST	Altar breads consecrated for communion at Mass.
Book of Gospels	The Book of Gospels contains the Gospels and is brought in precession at Mass.
PATEN	A small, thin round plate of gold on which is placed the priest's host.
PURIFICATOR	The linen type towel the priest and Eucharistic Ministers use to dry the chalice or communion cup.
RED MISSAL	Large book used by the priest for the Eucharistic Prayers during Mass. It is kept behind the altar wall and rests on a clear plastic stand.
Red Presiders Book	Used by the Priests for Opening, Closing Prayers, for the Creed and Intercessions.
SACRISTY	Room where servers robe and items for Mass are kept.
SANCTUARY	The whole area above the steps where the Altar, Ambo, etc. are located.
THURIBLE	The small pot that contains the charcoal for making incense (usually during funerals and for special Masses).

Introduction

Thank you for deciding to join our group of altar servers. Serving at the Lord's altar is a great honour and responsibility. We become dependent on your participation and contribution at our Sunday celebrations. We need your commitment and dedication to the times when you are asked to serve. If you feel that you are able to meet these expectations, then please proceed to read this training manual which is designed to assist you in learning the actions and responsibilities of an altar server.

SECTION I

PREPARATION FOR THE SUNDAY LITURGY

a.) **PREPARATION: A Week In Advance**

- Number of Altar Servers
- When asked to serve
- Proper dress attire
- Need help?

Number of Altar Servers

Typically, a mass requires **three** altar servers to be present. At some masses more servers are allowed but not exceeding **five** servers.

When Asked to Serve

Please make sure our Director of Altar Servers has your email address and contact number. You will receive your schedule via email. When a new schedule is available, please put your scheduled times on your HOME CALENDAR where you schedule all your other activities (perhaps on your fridge) so that your server times will be clear before your eyes.

If you are unable to serve at the appointed time indicated on the schedule, **please find a replacement**, first from your same mass time, then from another mass time.

GLOSSARY

Important Terms to Know For Serving

ALB	The white over-garment worn when serving. It is a reminder of our Baptism.
ALTAR	Table at the center of the sanctuary.
AMBO	Reading stand where the readings and Gospel are proclaimed.
BOAT	Metal container where incense is kept for priest to put in censer.
CENSER	(Thurible) Metal bowl shaped container on chain in which charcoal is burned (Used at funerals and at special liturgies).
CHALICE (CUP)	Vessel or cup used for holding the wine at Mass.
CIBORIUM	A sacred vessel that holds the consecrated hosts, the Body of Jesus. It is kept in the Tabernacle.
CINCTURE	The rope worn around the waist.
CORPORAL	Large white napkin size cloth which is placed on the altar and on which the cup and paten with hosts are placed during the Liturgy of the Eucharist.
CREDENCE TABLE	Table behind the altar wall where the altar servers sit, on which items needed for Mass are placed.

viii.) The Closing Rite

After receiving the Final Blessing, the final hymn will begin. As soon as you hear music, all servers move to pick up the cross and candles and go to your positions in front of the sanctuary—facing the altar.

When the Priest(s) have come forward, kissed the altar and are standing in the main aisle, the priest will bow to the altar. Then, everyone turns toward the church's main doors and reverently processes back to the sacristy using the same path as during the procession.

The **Cross Bearer** leads, all **Servers** follow.

ix.) Back in the Sacristy

When back at the sacristy: ALL bow to the Cross of Christ in thanksgiving.

Then:

- a) **Cross Bearer** returns the cross to its stand and Servers 1 & 2 return their candles to their stands.
- b) **All Servers** take off their robes and place them on their hangers.
- d) Double check to make sure everything is OK.
Bring all vessels from the credence table to the counter top in the sacristy.

Thank you for serving!

Proper Dress

The dress of an altar server proclaims his/her respect for God's Presence in the Blessed Sacrament and for the community of believers. Simply wear "Sunday Best" attire. **Dress shoes are strongly encouraged!!! (No flip flops.)**

Need Help?

If you are having problems finding a replacement, then please email your fellow servers or contact the parish office at 905-878-6535 before the weekend. If you have any questions regarding the procedures performed during the mass, then please contact our Director of Altar Servers.

b.) **PREPARATION: Immediately prior to the Mass**

- Arrival at the Church
- Prayer before procession
- What if I see someone missing?
- Setting up the sanctuary

Arrival at the Church

All altar servers are asked to arrive at **least 10 minutes** prior to the start of Mass. This will give you time to dress yourself for the mass, to set out any vessels, or light candles, and for the priest to know that you are present.

What if I see someone missing?

If you find yourself at Sunday Mass and you are not scheduled but would like to see if another altar server is needed, then please ask the mass coordinator to inquire.

NOTE: Anyone who is scheduled to serve at a particular mass should not be replaced by another server who is not scheduled.

Setting Up The Sanctuary

Please check to see if the altar candles are lit 10 minutes prior to mass.

The sacristan may ask you to bring out various vessels needed for the celebration of mass.

The Cross Bearer should make sure he/she has the cross ready and the procession candles lit.

SECTION II

THE SUNDAY LITURGY

Liturgical actions done well express both faith and reverence during the Sunday Liturgy. Altar Servers need to know how to do certain ritual actions well.

After the Eucharistic Ministers have received communion and gone to their stations, the altar servers will then receive communion together with the congregation. Once you have received communion, the **Cross Bearer** retrieves the Red Missal and Stand from the altar and returns it to the credence table and then returns to their chair. **Servers 1 & 2** immediately return to their chairs and kneel down for a time of prayer.

After the priest has finished giving out communion and returns to the altar, **Server 1** immediately goes to the credence table and receives the water cruet and brings it to the priest.

When the priest is finished with the water he will give it back and bow. Bow at the same time then return to the credence table and wait.

When the priest is finished cleaning the chalice, he will place it at the centre of the altar.

Server 1 takes the chalice from the altar, BOWS to the priest, and then returns the chalice to the credence table. Once done, **Server 1** returns to his or her chair.

Once done, **Servers 1 & 2** return to their Chairs.

DURING THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER:

Servers participate with the congregation. Stand and kneel at the appropriate times. Put your heart into the prayers.

REMEMBER: NO TALKING DURING THE PRAYERS!!

vii.) **Communion Rite**

SIGN OF PEACE:

All Servers offer the sign of peace to their fellow servers.

After the "Lamb of God", **All Servers** kneel with the congregation.

i.) **Prayer Before Procession**

Before getting into position for the procession, the priest will lead all the ministers in a prayer. This is to help us become spiritually centered on what we are about to do. It is important to be attentive. When the prayer is finished the altar servers will lead the ministers and priest(s) to the main entrance of the church. The Cross Bearer will lead.

ii.) **The Entrance Procession**

All masses begin with an entrance procession. The order is as follows:

Procession:

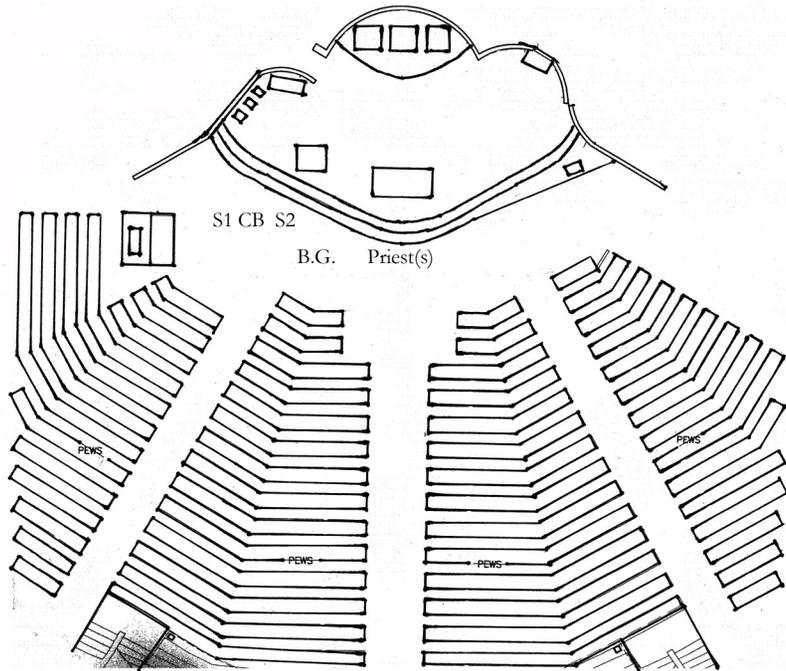
Starting Position is just past the balcony above:

Cross Bearer	
Server 1 ---- Server 2	Server 1 & 2 are holding candles
Deacon	
Lectors	
Priest	

Cross Bearer leads the procession at a steady but respectful pace, **no racing** and **no "baby steps"**.

Start as soon as the singing begins.

All walking at the same pace as the Cross Bearer, everyone arrives at the front of the sanctuary and form the following formation:



P = Priest B.G. = Book of Gospel S1 = Server 1 S2 = Server 2 CB = Cross Bearer

Once everyone is standing in their correct positions, wait for the priest to arrive. The priest will bow. **Servers do not need to bow.** The Book of the Gospels leads and is placed on the altar, **Altar Servers will follow behind.**

The **Cross Bearer** will then enter the Sanctuary and place the cross in its stand, **facing Jesus towards the congregation**, while **Server 1** and **Server 2** go and place their candles on the sanctuary step.

Note: *If there are only two servers, then the **Cross Bearer** will act as **Server 2**.*

Water and Wine

Meanwhile, **Server 1** holds the Wine and **Server 2** holds the water cruet, and they come forward and stand immediately beside the altar - side by side.

First, the wine is handed to the priest and then the water. Remain standing there until all is done then bow together in respect to the priest. Return the cruets to the credence table.

Note: Please make sure the tops are off the cruets and the handles are pointed toward the priest when presenting them.

Water Pitcher and Basin and Towel

Servers 1 & 2 then come forward. One carries the basin and pitcher, and the other, the white towel.

Again, come forward and stand immediately beside the altar-side by side. First, the priest will wash his hands with the water and then the towel is presented to him to dry his hands. Remain standing there until all is done then bow together in respect to the priest. Return the bowl and towel to the credence table.

Servers 1 & 2 and Cross Bearer follow the priest to the centre of the sanctuary to receive the gifts.

Servers 1 & 2 stand to the right of the priest and **Cross Bearer** to left of the priest. Wait until a gift is handed to you. **Do Not Move until the priest begins to walk back to the altar himself.**

Bring the wine to the credence table.

Bring the ciboria to the altar.

iii.) Where to Sit

Altar servers are to sit in the three chairs beside the credence table.

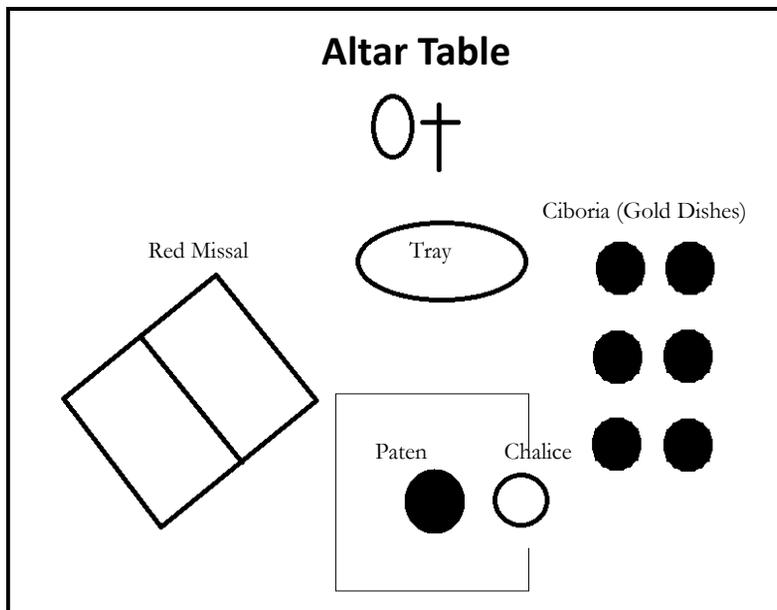
When all have arrived at their chairs, all remain standing.

iv.) Penitential Rite

During the Penitential Rite, the congregation celebrates three parts:

- a) **Opening Greeting** “In the name of the Father and the Son, and the Holy Spirit...”
- b) **“Lord have mercy”** this may be preceded by the prayer **“I confess to almighty God....”**
- c) **Glory to God** (spoken or sung or omitted)

After the **Opening Prayer** and everyone says “Amen” altar serves are to be seated together with the congregation.



v.) Liturgy of the Word

The Mass continues with the proclamation of the first reading, the responsorial psalm, the second reading, the gospel acclamation, the gospel, and the homily.

- a.) As soon as the music for the gospel acclamation begins, **Servers 1 & 2** go and pick up their candles from the stairs and go and stand on either side of the Ambo.
- b.) When the gospel is complete, **Servers 1 & 2** place their candles back on the steps and then return to their seats.

Please pay attention to the Word of God proclaimed and to the homily. It is for your spiritual benefit.

vi.) Preparation of the Altar

When the music begins to play:

The **Cross Bearer** places the **RED MISSAL** and Stand onto the altar (on an angel left of the microphone.)

And then returns to their chair.

- a) **Server 1** and **Server 2** go to the credence table and:

- i.) Place the chalice in the centre of the altar.

- ii.) Place the tray of pyxes onto the altar.

Note: Only if it happens to be present.

- iii.) Place the small ciborium for gluten-free hosts onto the altar.

Note: Only if it happens to be present.