

Church of St. Mary

Altar Server Ministry

Guidelines as of February 2009.

Before Mass

1. If you cannot be present on a particular weekend, consult the list of altar servers and call a replacement. Questions about scheduling can be directed to the Director of Music and Liturgy at the Church of St Mary or the volunteer coordinator.
2. Please dress in nice Sunday clothing and shoes. No flip flops. We realize some of you do not own a pair of dress shoes and only have tennis shoes. Tennis shoes are fine if you do not have dress shoes. Please do find the nicest pair of shoes that are easy for you to walk in to wear.
3. Arrive to church no later than twenty minutes before Mass is to begin.
4. Check off your name in the ministry room and let the sacristan know that you have arrived.
5. Find an alb that is long enough for you. The bottom of the alb should touch the top of your shoe and should be no shorter. Decide on which medallion to wear. Tie your cincture around your waist.
6. Decide while you are still in the sacristy who is going to carry the processional cross. The server who is not carrying the cross is asked to carry a songbook in the procession and to use it to sing. Another songbook can be found where you are sitting for the server who is carrying the cross. It is extremely important that you use the songbooks and participate fully in all of the singing and responses of the Mass.

During Mass-Opening Rites

1. The procession in starts from the back of the church. The cross bearer goes first followed by the other server followed by the lector and then the priest. The cross bearer should not start the procession until the priest directs you to start going. Hold the cross up as high as you can. Leave about 3 or 4 pews between each of you when processing in and remember to take your time and walk slowly.
2. When you get to the front of church, the cross bearer continues on to place the cross in its stand (behind the wall). The cross bearer then goes to his or her chair. The other server bows and moves to his or her chair. If you are moving during the liturgy and do not have anything in your hands, fold your hands.
3. When the priest says, "Let us pray", the server who is responsible for the Sacramentary (the red book), brings it to the priest for the opening prayer.

During Mass-Offertory and Communion Rite

1. As the collection is being taken up, one server brings the tray of communion cups and Chalice to the altar. Another server brings up the Sacramentary and places in the lower center portion of the Corporal. The server who brought up the Sacramentary removes the cups from the trays and places them on the far right side of the corporal. There will be one cup for each little red cross. The Chalice is placed in the top center portion of the Corporal. The server not carrying the tray removes the stand that was used to hold the Gospel Book and places it on the back table. The tray is returned to the credence table. Return to your seats.
2. When the priest is ready, two servers will go and receive the gifts. One server will receive the money offering. This will be placed on the steps of the sanctuary. If there is a money counter present, hand the offering basket to them. One server will receive the wine. This server will go stand by the altar and wait for the other server to bring the water, bowl, and towel. The towel should be placed on your arm. After the priest is finished with the wine decanter, wait for the other server, and then return the decanter to the credence table and return to your chair. The priest will take the water and place some in the chalice and hand it back to the server. Then the server holding the water, bowl and towel will wash the priest's hands, return these items to the credence table, and go back to your chair.
3. All servers will kneel during the Eucharistic Prayer.
4. During the sign of peace, one server takes the ciborium and purificators from the credence table and places them on the altar and removes the Sacramentary (the red book).
5. The servers come forward to receive communion. After receiving, any extra dishes are removed from the altar. The corporal and ciborium containing the reserved Eucharist are left on the altar.
6. The priest may signal you after communion to pick up other things from the altar.

During Mass-Closing Rites

1. After communion when the priest says, "Let us Pray" bring the Sacramentary. When the prayer is finished the server returns to their chair.
2. When the music begins, the cross bearer goes to get the cross and stands in the center aisle in front of the altar. The other server stands on the side of the cross bearer with the hymnal in hand singing. When the priest is ready, bow, and then leave in the same order you came in.