

# St. John Fisher Parish

## Altar Server Manual



*Love God. Love all people. Make Disciples*

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## **To Parents and Servers**

Your help is always needed in the Altar Server Ministry. If all parents would help their own child with positive reinforcement of what they do well on the altar and gentle notations of what they may have missed or done incorrectly, this would help the priests and sacristans so much! Please save and review these guidelines with your child:

1. ARRIVE AT LEAST 15 MINUTES BEFORE MASS.
2. Be well groomed: Clean hair (long hair clipped or tied back); clean Sunday-best clothing (the albs are a bit see-thru) and clean, solid color shoes if possible. NO SANDALS. Hands and face washed!
3. Keep your eyes and ears open to the priest at all times.
4. NO "VISITING" or laughing during Mass with the other servers. Help each other out, but no socializing.
5. Use the bathroom before Mass.
6. PARTICIPATE in the Mass by saying all the congregations' responses and prayers. Stand and sit STRAIGHT. Hold hands in a folded and prayerful position at all times!
7. Hang up robes after Mass. Don't leave any on the floor.
8. Review all schedules given to you and transfer all dates you are scheduled to serve to the Family's main calendar. Teach responsibility!
9. ALWAYS find a sub if you cannot serve their scheduled Mass.
10. When you attend Mass, ALWAYS check in the Sacristy to see if a server is needed.
11. Above all, instill in each other the awesomeness of the presence of God at Mass, in our hearts and in our lives.

## **Dress Code**

Altar Servers must wear dress shoes or tennis shoes that are all black. No multi color shoes of any kind. No sandals or open toe shoes of any kind.

Altar Servers must wear long pants such as khakis or jeans that do not have frayed edges. Girls may wear dresses of an appropriate length. Short skirts and shorts are discouraged.

## **General Decorum**

Know what you are to do while serving Mass and when you are to do it. Look as though you CAN do it. Don't look as if serving Mass is the worst punishment or the most unpleasant thing

you can think of. Don't be afraid to smile as you serve Mass. An ancient prayer in this Bible says, "May I come to the altar of God, to God my joy, my delight." (Ps. 43:4).

As you do what you are supposed to be doing, be aware of what you need to do next. This will eliminate undesirable and awkward gaps during the liturgy.

Don't fidget nervously or slither around the sanctuary. Be relaxed and comfortable. Be yourself. Remember to listen, sing, and pray with the other people who have gathered to worship God. Remember what an important service you are giving to God and God's People. And do your best at all times.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF POSTURE

1. Posture contributes to an environment, which fosters prayer and expresses the spiritual attitude of those taking part.
2. Posture allows us to pray with our entire body.
3. Our uniformity in standing, kneeling, or sitting is a sign of community and the unity of those assembled.
4. Uniformity of posture is a sign that we are no longer individuals but have become the gathered Body of Christ, so when we come together to worship, those who are physically able are expected to put aside their personal preference and conform to the posture of the community.

## POSTURE AT MASS

A posture is how you are using the parts of your body at a particular time. A server has to carry out a number of different actions at Mass, and so there are a number of different postures.

### WALKING

We do a lot of walking every day, and sometimes we get sloppy as we do it. Walk with your back straight and your head held high.

### BOWING

When you bow to someone or something at Mass, it should be smooth, forward inclining of your head and shoulders. When you bow to the altar, bow deeply at the waist and bring yourself slowly to your full height. Don't walk and bow at the same time, stop before bowing.

### KNEELING

When you kneel, your body should be upright and your hands should be in front of your chest.

### STANDING

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

### SITTING

Sit down on your chair carefully and gracefully. And once you are seated, sit tall and don't

slouch. Place your hands in your lap in a relaxed manner. Watch how the priest holds his hands, and do as he does.

## HANDS

- If you are standing with empty hands, your hands should be kept joined in front of your chest, locked together, palm-to-palm, fingers pointing upward. When in doubt, hold your hands the way the priest does. Keep your hands high up on your chest.
- 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 the altar. When the reader is reading the Scriptures, you should be looking at the reader. When you talk to someone, you want that person to look at you, right? The same is true at Mass. Look at the priest and the other ministers as they speak and act in the sanctuary, and even look at the people in the pews. This tells the other people in church that you know they are there.

## Before Mass Begins

### ***Important!***

***Altar Servers must arrive at least 15 minutes before the time Mass is to begin!***

***Anyone not present at this time can be replaced by a volunteer!***

## When you arrive

1. The general sacristy where the servers check in is in the hallway to the left as you come into the narthex (the gathering area in the front of the church). The sacristy is past the restrooms, on your right, almost to the end of the hall.
2. Sign in on the sheet on the bulletin board in the general sacristy.
3. Put on an alb (white robe) and the proper colored cincture (rope). You may find the color for the day on the calendar in the sacristy. For more information on the liturgical seasons, please see the section, "Appendix A: Liturgical Seasons".

## Saturday Evening Mass/ Sunday Masses

### WHAT TO DO BEFORE MASS STARTS

Note: (The Sacristan will do this, but remember you must always check to make sure each item listed below has been done).

Fill one cruet with water. Place the following on the Servers' table: cruet with water, finger bowl, finger towel, chalice (with paten, pall, and purificator). The small Missal should be where the Altar Servers sit. The large Missal should be on the clear plastic stand on the servers' table.

**If needed, insure that holy water, incense, or anything else is ready and in place at least 10 minutes before Mass begins.**

Light the candles about 3-5 minutes before Mass begins. A server uses the candle lighter to light the candles at the Altar. If there are baptisms at Mass, the Paschal Candle is also lit in its usual place at the baptismal font. From Easter Sunday through Pentecost Sunday, the Easter (Paschal) candle will be near the ambo and need to be lit.

Be sure a songbook or worship aid is available at your place. Insure that a songbook is at the celebrant's chair. Open it to the first song, and then place it face down on the table adjacent to his chair.

### When Mass Begins

Servers and other ministers wait outside of the main doors near the baptismal font to prepare for the procession.

Take your place in the correct order. The cross bearer comes first, followed a half step behind by the Candle Bearers. *Please note: a single candle is not brought in procession. If there is just one additional server, that server comes behind the cross bearer, with hands folded, palms together.*

***Note: When servers are standing, hands are to be folded, palms together, above the waist except when the server is carrying something.***

### Procession

This is the gathering when we come together to worship God and receive Christ in the Eucharist. This time is often celebrated with a song.

1. The procession starts when the first words of the opening song are sung. The cross bearer enters first, the candle bearers are a half step behind. The cross bearer goes to the right around the baptismal font. The candle bearer on the left goes to the left; the one on the right, to the right. When they meet, they walk together behind the processional cross to the altar.
2. Remember to process in **slowly** with the ministers and the priest.
3. When the serves reach the front of the altar at the foot of the steps, they stop long enough for all the servers to bow. **The cross bearer does not bow.** Take care when bowing with the candles that you don't spill the wax. A head bow is sufficient. The candle bearers follow the

cross bearer up the ramp. The cross bearer places the processional cross in its stand, and the candle bearers place them onto the candle holders on each side of the altar. Any other servers go directly to their places in the pew.

4. The candle bearers and cross bearer then join the other servers.

### **Penitential Rite**

Before we listen to the Word of God, we say a prayer to confess our sins and ask the Lord's mercy. (I confess...) The Penitential Rite is followed by the Gloria (Glory to the highest...)

The Gloria comes to the end with the words, "For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord..."

The cross bearer brings the Missal to the priest **before** the priest says: "Let us pray." The Missal is brought up to the priest closed and opened by the server only once the server is in front of the priest. The priest then says, "Let us pray." Prepare for a pause while he gives the people time to pray before reading the Collect. When the priest finishes the Collect, the server closes the Missal and the server returns it to the book shelf in the kneeler. Make sure the book is closed with the ribbon in place before you return it.

*Note: During Lent and Advent, there is no Gloria so the Missal is brought immediately to the priest as he concludes the Penitential Rite.*

### **Liturgy of the Word**

Be attentive to the readings. Respond with the assembly to the sung and spoken responses. Place your hands on your knees when seated; fold them in a prayer position when standing.

The first reading comes from the Old Testament, the Acts of the Apostles, or the Book of Revelation. The second reading comes from one of the New Testament Epistles. Everyone sits and listens during these readings.

### **Gospel Reading**

Note: All stand and listen to the Gospel.

During the Gospel Proclamation (Alleluia most of the time, except during Lent), the candle bearers go to the altar when the priest stands. The priest picks up the Book of the Gospels from the altar and raises it for the people to see. When he turns around and faces the Crucifix, the candle bearers walk half step behind the priest to the Ambo (lectern) and stand on his right and left. When the priest says "The Gospel of the Lord," the candle bearers walk together to the altar, put the candles back on the stands, bow to the altar, and return to their seats together.

*During the Easter season because the Paschal Candle is already next to the ambo, the servers do not carry candles for the proclamation of the Gospel.*

### **Homily**

After the Gospel reading, the priest talks about the Scriptures and encourages us to put God's Word into practice. Servers are attentive during the homily and sit with their hands folded in their laps.

### **Profession of Faith**

We stand to profess our faith. If you don't have it memorized, use the card in the pew.

### **Prayer of the Faithful**

We pray for the needs of the Church, our community and the world.

### **Liturgy of the Eucharist**

This section of the Mass includes the Offertory, the Preparation of the Gifts, the Lord's Prayer, the Breaking of the Bread and distribution of Holy Communion.

Contributions for the church are collected from those assembled. The collection for the church and the bread and wine are brought to the altar.

#### **As the collection is being taken:**

1. **Cross bearer:** When the ushers are about halfway through taking up the collection, retrieve the processional cross and go to the foot of the altar by way of the ramp. The candle bearers should follow you. **Stand, facing the altar, along with the candle bearers.**
2. **Candle bearers:** Prepare the altar during the preparation of the gifts.
  - a. Place the Missal on the left side of the altar or where the celebrant finds it easiest to use.
  - b. Place the chalice, paten, purificator and pall in the right on top of the corporal.
  - c. Together, take up the altar candles and follow the cross bearer down the ramp to the foot of the altar.

*Cross bearer and candles bearers, process slowly down the main aisle to the baptismal font. The candle bearers should be a half step behind the cross bearer. The candle bearers split to go around the baptismal font as they did in procession. Once the gift bearers are in position, and the celebrant is at the foot of the altar, process slowly up the main aisle in the same manner. Stop in front of the celebrant together. No one needs to bow. The cross bearer then returns the cross to its place in the Sacristy. The candle bearers together return the altar candles to their stands.*

3. **If there is a fourth server:** When the celebrant moves to the front of the altar, rise, walk slowly, and join him there. After the celebrant receives the basket, the server takes it from the celebrant and places it in front of the altar.

#### **During the presentation of the gifts:**

1. While the priest is elevating the bread, a server comes up to give him the cruet of water.
2. After placing a few drops of water in the flagon, priest hands the cruet back to the server.
3. A second server joins the first server with a finger bowl and towel.
4. The server pours the water from the cruet over the fingers of the priest.
5. The priest dries his fingers with the towel and returns it to the server.
6. The servers return the cruet, towel, and finger bowl to the side and return to their places.

### **Sanctus ("Holy, Holy, Holy,...)**

Now we join with the angels and saints giving praise to God. (Holy, holy, holy Lord...) Altar Servers stand with the community and then kneel in place at our pew.

### **Eucharistic Prayer**

This is the center of the celebration of the Mass. We give thanks to God and ask His blessing on the gifts of bread and wine. The priest consecrates the bread and wine, and Christ is present



under the appearances of bread and wine. The servers remain still, kneeling through the entire Eucharistic Prayer

### **Communion Rite**

Together all stand as we pray the Lord's Prayer and exchange a sign of peace.

### **Breaking of the Bread**

The priest breaks the host over the ciborium or paten and places a small piece in the chalice. We pray, "Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world..." The EMHC assists the priest in preparing the communion cups and trays.

### **Communion**

We say or sing words of humility and hope as our final preparation before meeting Christ in the Eucharist. The priest says, "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."

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

All remain standing until each has received the Precious Body and the Precious Blood. After receiving communion, the Acolyte takes the Missal and places it on the credence table.

Once the last person has received Communion, the celebrant will be seated, and all do the same. Following a brief time of silence or song, the priest will stand. All stand.

After Communion, bring the Missal to the priest as he stands. The priest will let you know if he needs you to remain there with the book for the final blessing. If not, return to your seat. Make sure the book is closed with the ribbon in place before you return it to the servers' table.

### **Dismissal**

The cross bearer remains in place until the final blessing ends with the sign of the cross. When the closing song begins, the cross bearer removes the cross from where it was placed, and the candle bearers go together to the altar and retrieve the candles. Then with the cross bearer leading, they proceed down the ramp and stand in the center aisle far enough back to allow the priest to come to the foot of the sanctuary and the lectors to stand behind him. All bow together (except the cross bearer).

All process slowly out in the same manner as they came into the church.

The candle bearers place the processional candles in the torch stand near the statue of St. Joseph. **At no time are they carried into the narthex.**

### **D. Things to do after Mass**

1. Return to the sacristy.
2. Place your vestments neatly back into the closet. Remember to fasten the snap or button.
3. Bring back to the sacristy everything you placed out at the beginning of Mass, or if there is a Mass following, be sure it is ready for the next Mass.

4. Snuff out all candles using the candle snuffer. (If the paschal candle is burning, and there is another Mass following, you may be instructed to let it burn.) *After 5:00 p.m Saturday, 12:30, and 5:00 p.m. Sunday Masses:* after the wax has had a chance to set (about 5 minutes), the candles are returned to the stands on either side of the altar. (The candle may stay in the torch stand between Sunday morning Masses.

## **Altar Server Duties: Weekday 8 AM & 5:15 PM Mass**

### **WHAT TO DO BEFORE MASS STARTS**

Note: (The sacristan will do this, but remember you must always check to make sure each item listed below has been done).

Fill one cruet with water. Place the following on the Servers' table: cruet with water, finger bowl, finger towel, chalice (with paten, pall, and purificator). The small Missal should be where the Altar Servers sit. The large Missal should be on the clear plastic stand on the servers' table.

Light the candles about 3-5 minutes before Mass begins. A server uses the candle lighter to light the candles at the Altar. From Easter Sunday through Pentecost Sunday, the Easter (Paschal) candle will be near the ambo and needs to be lit.

### **When Mass Begins**

Servers wait outside of the main doors near the baptismal font to prepare for the procession.

**Note: When servers are standing, hands are to be folded, palms together, above the waist except when the server is carrying something.**

### **Procession**

If an opening song is sung, the procession starts with the first words of the song. Otherwise, it begins as the lector leads the people in the entrance antiphon. The procession follows the Sunday Mass procedures.

### **Penitential Rite**

On Solemnities, the Penitential Rite is followed by the Gloria. Otherwise, the Gloria is omitted at weekday Mass. The Collect (Opening Prayer) then follows.

The cross bearer brings the Missal to the priest when he says "Let us pray." The Collect is then prayed.

### **Liturgy of the Word**

At weekday Mass, there is usually only one reading before the responsorial psalm.

### **Gospel Reading**

Note: All stand and listen to the Gospel.

If there are two servers, the candles are brought to the ambo during the Gospel Acclamation as for a Sunday Mass. *During the Easter season because the Paschal Candle is already next to the ambo, the servers do not carry candles for the proclamation of the Gospel.*

### **Homily**

### **Profession of Faith**

The Creed is not said during a weekday Mass unless it is a Solemnity

## **Prayer of the Faithful**

## **Liturgy of the Eucharist**

This section of the Mass includes the Offertory, the Preparation of the Gifts, the Lord's Prayer, the Breaking of the Bread and distribution of Holy Communion.

### **There is normally no collection taken at a weekday Mass.**

Prepare the altar during the preparation of the gifts.

- a. Place the Missal on the left side of the altar or where the celebrant finds it easiest to use.
- b. Place the chalice, paten, Purificator and pall in the center of the corporal.
- c. The other server stands behind the priest, who give him or her the prayer intention book.

### **Sanctus ("Holy, Holy, Holy,...)**

Now we join with the angels and saints giving praise to God. (Holy, holy, holy Lord...) Altar Servers stand with the community and then kneel at their pew.

### **Eucharistic Prayer**

This is the center of the celebration of the Mass. We give thanks to God and ask His blessing on the gifts of bread and wine. The priest consecrates the bread and wine and Christ is present under the appearances of bread and wine. The servers remain still, kneeling through the entire Eucharistic Prayer

### **Communion Rite**

To prepare to receive the body and blood of Christ, we pray for forgiveness and exchange a sign of peace with each other. Together all stand as we pray the Lord's Prayer and exchange a sign of peace.

### **Breaking of the Bread**

The priest breaks the host over the ciborium and places a small piece in the chalice. We pray, "Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world..." The EMHC assists the priest in preparing the communion cups and trays.

### **Communion**

The priest says, "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."

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

All remain standing until each has received the Precious Body and the Precious Blood.

After receiving communion, a server takes the Missal and places it on the credence table.

Following a brief time of silence, the priest will stand. All stand.

After Communion, bring the Missal to the priest as he stands. The priest will let you know if he needs you to remain there with the book for the final blessing. If not, return to your seat. Make sure the book is closed with the ribbon in place before you return it to the servers' table.

## **Dismissal**

"Go in peace..." We have heard God's Word and eaten the Body of Christ. Now it is time for us to leave, to do good works, to praise and bless the Lord in our daily lives.

The cross bearer remains in place until the final blessing ends with the sign of the cross. Then he/she removes the cross from where it was placed and proceeds to stand in front of the altar.

When the closing song begins, the candle bearers go together to the altar and retrieve the candles. They, along with any other servers and acolytes, join the cross bearer and wait for the priest. When the priest goes to the front of the altar, bow with the priest unless carrying the cross or candles, and process slowly out in the same manner as you came into the church.

## **D. Things to do after Mass**

1. Return to the sacristy.
2. Place your vestments neatly back into the closet. Remember to fasten the snap or button.
3. Bring back to the sacristy everything you placed out at the beginning of Mass, or if there is a Mass following, be sure it is ready for the next Mass.
4. Snuff out all candles using the candle snuffer.

## **Please Remember**

- Sign in at the bulletin board in the sacristy at least fifteen minutes before Mass begins.
- Get a substitute when you cannot serve at Mass as assigned on the schedule.
- Check the schedule on the parish website if you are not sure if you are scheduled to serve: <http://www.sjf.org/content/altar-servers>.
- You may volunteer to serve for a no-show beginning ten minutes before Mass begins.

## **Appendix A: Liturgical Seasons**

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. The colors used are:

**WHITE** — Used in Masses of the Easter and Christmas seasons; on feasts and memorials of the Lord Jesus, other than on the Passion; on feasts and memorials of Mary, the angels, saints who are not martyrs. All Saints (November 1), John the Baptist (June 24), John the Apostle (December 27), Chair of Peter (February 22), and Conversion of Paul (January 25). White is used on festive occasions (such as marriage and baptism) and may be used for Masses of the dead. White is a sign of joy.

**RED** — Used on Passion Sunday and Good Friday, Pentecost, Mass of the Holy Spirit, celebration of the Passion, birthday feasts of the Apostles and Evangelists, and feasts of martyrs. Red symbolizes both the blood of Christ and martyrs and the Holy Spirit.

**GREEN** — Used on the Sundays and weekdays of ordinary time. This color symbolizes growth and hope.

**PURPLE/VIOLET** — Used in Advent and Lent. It is a symbol of penance.

**ROSE** — A color indicating joy. It is used on Gaudete Sunday (Third Sunday of Advent) and Laetare Sunday (Fourth Sunday of Lent).

**GOLD** — Substitutes for other colors and may be used on special feasts and occasions.

On days when Votive Masses are permitted a color suited to the Mass itself or to the color of the day or season may be used. Masses for various occasions use color of the day or season.

## Appendix B: Prayers

### Prayer before Serving

Father in heaven,  
Your Son, Jesus Christ,  
Showed his love for you  
By serving his needy  
brothers and sisters.  
I now ask you to give me 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 to do it well.

Help me to serve reverently at your holy altar,  
And so give you praise and glory, now and forever. Amen

### Prayer after Serving

Lord Jesus Christ,  
You are the eternal High Priest.  
You lead all your saints in heaven.  
And your people on earth  
In praising God, our Father.

Thank you, Lord Jesus,  
For letting me come before your altar,  
So that, with your help,  
I can praise my Father in heaven as his server.

Help me find joy in serving at your altar.  
Help me find gladness  
In knowing and doing your will in all things.

Glory to you, Lord Jesus,  
And to the Father and to the Holy Spirit,  
As it was in the beginning, is now  
And will be forever,

Amen

## Appendix C: Glossary

**Ablution:** The cleaning of the chalice and paten after Communion. Also, the cleansing of the celebrant's fingers to remove any particles from the consecrated hosts. Our parish usually does this in the sacristy after Mass.

**Advent Wreath:** A Festive wreath of greens arranged to hold four candles. The candles are lighted on the Sunday of Advent. The candles stand for the light of Christ, which gets brighter as we approach Christmas.

**Alb:** A long, white garment, which covers the entire body. This is always worn by the celebrant. In some parishes, the servers also wear albs. This was the ancient garb of a Roman citizen.

**Altar:** The place where the sacrifice of Jesus is offered to the Father and made present to us is also known as the Lord's Table, where the Eucharist is celebrated. It is treated with respect. It also represents Christ, who is the center of our parish life. Servers show respect to the altar by bowing when passing in front of it. The priest usually kisses the altar at the beginning and end of Mass in reverence for the relics of martyrs that are sealed there.

**Altar Cloth:** The white cloth that covers the top of the altar. It is like a tablecloth on a dining room table.

**Ambo:** The lectern where the scripture readings are done.

**Ambry:** A special box in the wall of the church where the holy oils are kept safe.

**Antependium:** A large, decorative cloth that is sometimes hung in front of the altar.

**Benediction:** A service of special devotion to the Eucharist. This is different from a Mass.

**Boat:** A small container that holds the incense, this is usually carried by the server in the right hand.

**Cantor's stand:** The place from which the person leads the singing, the general intercessions are read, and the announcements are made.

**Celebrant's Chair:** The central chair, which is used by the celebrant during Mass. It is usually just in back of the altar. It can also be called the Presidential Chair.

**Chalice:** The cup used by the celebrant when he consecrates the wine into the Blood of Christ. It is usually made of gold or silver, but can be made of other precious materials.

**Chasuble:** A long, flowing robe that goes over the celebrant's head. This is the vestment that people see; it is the color of the year.

**Ciborium:** A container used to hold the consecrated host for the distribution of Communion. The ciborium may also be kept in the tabernacle to store any consecrated not used at Communion.

**Cincture:** A knotted rope, tied around the waist over the alb. When a parish uses albs for the servers, a cincture is also worn.

**Concelebration:** The celebration of one Mass by more than one priest. This usually happens during Holy Week, at Confirmation, and on other special occasions.



**Cope:** A long cape that is worn by the celebrant during some ceremonies. It is open in the front, and held together by a clasp. It is often the color of the Church season.

**Corporal:** A square piece of white cloth, which is spread over the altar cloth. It is put on the altar where the celebrant will say Mass. The chalice and paten are placed on it.

**Credence Table:** A side table in the sanctuary where all objects used for Mass is put before and after they are used.

**Cruets:** Covered, bottle-like containers that hold the water and wine. They often have a small dish or plate under them.

**Dalmatic:** A coat-like vestment worn by the deacon. It is usually open at the sides, but is the same color as the chasuble. A deacon may wear this or just an alb and stole.

**Flagon:** The large glass pitcher containing the wine that becomes the precious blood after the words of consecration. It is usually poured into chalices at Communion to be distributed to the congregation.

**General Sacristy:** The room in the church where the servers and Eucharistic ministers prepare for Mass. Most of the objects used for Mass are kept in this room.

**Genuflect:** To touch briefly the right knee to the floor. This is done by a server whenever passing in front of the tabernacle in the chapel of the Blessed Sacrament, as a sign of respect for the Eucharist.

**Host:** The round piece of bread made without yeast used for Mass. The celebrant uses a larger host so that everyone in church will be able to see it.

**Humeral Veil:** A long cloth, usually white, which goes over the celebrant's shoulders and covers his arms. This is attached by a clasp in the front. It is used during Benediction or processions with the Blessed Sacrament.

**Incense:** A mixture of resins, bark and other natural material, which give off, a sweet-smelling smoke when burned. This smoke rises and represents our prayers rising to God. The use of incense is always optional in a parish; the celebrant will tell the servers when it will be used.

**Lavabo:** The washing of the celebrant's hands during the Offertory. The servers bring a bowl, the water cruet, and a towel while the celebrant prays for forgiveness.

**Lectern:** See Ambo.

**Lunette:** A clip which is used for holding the host in an upright position when exposed for Eucharistic adoration.

**Monstrance:** A large metal container to display or show the host. It is often gold or silver-colored. Benediction is the ceremony when the monstrance is most often used.

**Oils:** the Bishop and the priests of the diocese bless the holy oils during Holy Week. One is called "Oil of the Sick", used for the sacrament called the Anointing of the sick. Another is called "Oil of Catechumens," used in Baptism. The last one is called "Chrism" used in Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders.

**Pall:** A large white cloth, which is spread over the casket at a funeral. It represents the white garment that a person put on at the time of Baptism. In some parishes, it is also a cloth-covered square that fits over the chalice to prevent foreign objects from flying into the precious blood.

**Paschal Candle:** A large wax candle in a floor candlestick to symbolize the light of the Risen Christ. It is blessed at the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday night. It stays in the sanctuary until the end of Pentecost, and is lighted during every ceremony. After Pentecost, it is placed near the baptismal font, and used during Baptisms and funerals.

**Paten:** A round metal plate, which holds the host used by the celebrant during Mass.

**Presidential Chair:** The central chair, used by the celebrant during Mass. It is usually directly behind the altar. It can also be called the Celebrant's Chair.

**Priest's Sacristy:** The room in the church where the celebrant prepares for Mass.

**Purificator:** A small white cloth used to clean the chalice and paten after Communion.

**Pyx:** A small container used to bring Communion to the sick and housebound. It is sometimes kept in the sacristy.

**Missal:** The large book which contains all the prayers said by the celebrant during Mass. The server at the beginning and end of Mass often holds this book. It is placed on the altar for the Eucharistic prayer.

**Sanctuary:** The area around the altar.

**Stole:** A long band of cloth worn during ceremonies by a Bishop, by priests and by deacons. This is a symbol of the sacrament of holy orders. It is usually of the color of Church season, or special day. A deacon wears a stole over the left shoulder. Priests and Bishops wear their stoles over both shoulders.

**Surplice:** A white garment that is half the length of a cassock. It is worn over the cassock in parishes that use it.

**Tabernacle:** The place where the Eucharist is kept in the chapel of the Blessed Sacrament. As a sign of reverence, a server genuflects whenever passing in front of the tabernacle.

**Tabernacle Lamp:** The candle burning by the tabernacle in the chapel of the Blessed Sacrament to show the presence of the Eucharist. This shows the presence of Christ, the light of the world, in the church. It also represents our watchfulness before Christ.

**Thurible:** The metal container that holds the hot charcoal for the incense. This is carried by the server in the left hand. It can also be called the censer.

**Vigil Lamp:** The candle suspended from the ceiling outside the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament. It indicates to people in the church where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved.

## Appendix D: Serving Funerals

Usually four servers are needed for a funeral Mass when the body is present. They are needed to do the things that are part of every Mass, and there are special tasks at the beginning and end of the funeral Mass. Each parish has a customary way of serving the funeral Mass; so listen carefully to any special instructions that the priest gives you before Mass. Do everything you can to make the funeral mass a beautiful one.

### BEFORE MASS

Light the Easter candle when the altar candles are lit.

If the celebrant prefers **not** to sprinkle the remains directly from the baptismal font, the following procedure should take place:

The holy water container and sprinkler should be ready for use. Check to be sure that there is enough holy water in the container; carry it carefully so that it won't splash out on you. One server will carry the container with the sprinkler in it during the entrance procession.

The censer (the container that holds the lighted charcoal) should also be prepared before Mass. A piece of charcoal should be placed in the opened censer and lit after the prayer of the faithful, so that it will be burning well by the time it is needed. The incense boat (the bowl contained the incense) should be full of incense and should have a small spoon in it. **Do not put incense on the charcoal** unless the priest tells you to do so.

The special funeral pall (a large cloth used to cover the casket) should be ready for use. One server may carry the pall to the back of the church in the entrance procession, or the pall may be placed in the back of the church before Mass begins.

### BEGINNING OF MASS

The servers wait by the baptismal font. The priest stands between the baptismal font and the doors to the narthex to where the people are waiting with the casket.

The priest sprinkles the casket with holy water. Then one of the funeral attendants and some family members spread the pall over the casket. When the priest finished the prayers, he turns toward the altar; the servers turn also and slowly process to the altar.

The servers bow to the altar and then go to their places in the pew. When the casket has arrived in its place in the aisle and the people are in their places, the priest says the opening prayer. A server should hold the book for the priest as usual, however, at a funeral the book may not be the Missal but the Order of Christian Funerals. Check with the priest who might be holding this book already. After this prayer, Mass continues in the usual way.

### END OF MASS

When the priest finishes the prayer after Communion, there is usually a eulogy. After the eulogy, the servers go with him to the front of the casket and stand, one on each side of the priest, facing the people. The cross and candle bearer are on the other side of the casket facing

the altar. If one server is the cross bearer he or she goes down the center aisle and faces the altar standing 4 steps behind the casket.

The priest usually incenses the casket at this time; if so, be ready to present the censer and incense boat. The priest puts a few grains of incense into the thurible before incensing. Once he returns the thurible to the servers, the server takes it outside and returns immediately.

When the priest has finished the prayers, the cross and candle bearers process up the main aisle around the baptismal font to the inner church doors. (Walk slowly and check by looking behind you).

Line up alongside the priest at the church door and wait quietly for the casket to be taken out. A funeral attendant will remove the pall and may give it to one of the servers. When the casket has been taken outside the church, discretely blow out the candles and put them on the stands next to the ambry. The cross bearer returns it to the sacristy. After the wax in the candles have harden and the people leave the church, the servers may return the candles to the altar.

## **Appendix E: Serving Weddings**

A wedding Mass usually begins with a procession of the bride and her attendants; perhaps the groom and his attendants may be part of the procession and maybe the couple's parents as well. The priest and servers also may be part of the procession. If so, you should line up in front of the priest and lead him down the main aisle. One of you may carry the processional cross and lead the procession to the sanctuary.

A wedding Mass is much like any other mass, except a Rite of Marriage book may take the place of the usual missal. After the entrance procession, Mass continues as usual. Listen carefully to the prayers, readings and homily. The wedding ceremony takes place after the homily so be ready to help the priest as he ends his homily.

### **THE WEDDING CEREMONY**

One server joins the priest as he stands facing the bride and groom. In some parishes, it is customary for a server to hold the container of holy water with the sprinkler in it. The priest may also ask a server to hold a small tray on which the wedding rings will be placed while they are blessed.

When the priest finishes the marriage ceremony, help him receive the gifts of bread and wine as usual. Then prepare to wash the priest's hands. After that the Mass continues as usual.

### **AFTER THE LORD'S PRAYER**

When everyone has finished saying the Lord's Prayer, there is a special blessing for the bride and groom. If there is no Mass, the priest may hand you the Rite and ask you to hold it open for him during this blessing. Stand near him and hold this book so that he can reach it and read from it easily.

After Communion, the Mass continues as usual. Hold the Rite or Missal for the priest during the prayer after communion. At the end of Mass lead the priest down the aisle, or lead him to the sacristy if he will not be joining the exit procession of the bride and groom.