

St. Elizabeth Seton 2008 – 2009

Altar Server Instructions

Before Mass

1. Use the ministry schedule that is mailed to you to find out when you are scheduled to serve. Please mark your calendars for all of the days that you are scheduled. You will be assigned to a "team" of ministers, so it should be easy to determine when you'll be scheduled.
2. Arrive at least 15 minutes before mass. If you are not there 10 minutes before mass, another altar server may take your spot and you will not get credit.
3. Once you arrive, go straight to the Sacristy and put on an alb. Your alb should be brushing the tops of your ankles, not longer, not shorter.
4. Make sure that you have all the supplies you need for mass, such as: the pitcher (with water), the bowl, the towel, the chalice, the purificator, the Sacramentary, the Corporal, the candle-snuffer, and the small cruet of water. If you cannot find any of these things, ask the Liturgical Coordinator (or Presider) for them.
5. Ask the Liturgical Coordinator (or Presider) if there is anything special happening at the mass. If there is, ask how you are involved in it, and how you can help.
6. Ask your fellow altar server if they would like to be "book server" or "candle server" and who will be the cross bearer for the procession. "Candle server" should light the candles around the ambo and altar.
7. "Candle Server" should ask the Head Cup Minister if they want help in by bringing the tray(s) of filled chalices to the altar or in clearing the tray(s) just prior to Communion.
8. "Book Server" should ask the Head Host Minister if they want assistance with bringing the tray(s) of ciboria to the altar or in clearing the tray(s) just prior to Communion.
9. Wait in the Sacristy for the Presider to pray with you and the other ministers before mass. The procession assembles in the vestibule at the center door to the right of the baptismal font.

Order of Entrance Procession:

1. Thurifer (carrying boat) and Thurible (special days)
2. Cross bearer
3. Altar Servers (observers)
4. Lectors
5. Concelebrants (if present)
6. Candle bearers (if present)
7. Deacon
8. Presider

Procession:

1. Once the entrance hymn begins, the Thurifer (carrying boat), Thurible (if in use) and the Cross bearer process to the right of the baptismal font and toward the Altar.
2. Imagining that the Altar is a clock, with 12:00 being where the Presider stands during the Eucharistic Prayer, the Thurifer moves to the 3:00 position and waits, while the cross bearer moves to the 6:00 position and waits. Altar servers not carrying anything process in and stand near the Thurifer at the 3:00 position.

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3. The Presider and Deacon will process in and with reverence (kiss) the Altar. When they bow to kiss the Altar, all who are not carrying something bow in unison. They will move to their chairs - Do not follow them (unless instructed to do so before mass). You should process to the reserved altar server pew. Do not attempt to pass your fellow altar server. The "book" should be on the credence table.
4. The Cross bearer hands off the cross to the Children's Liturgy of the Word minister (when present) or places the cross in the stand out side in the vestibule (boat and Thurible if used, are given to the Liturgical Coordinator who will be waiting at the credence table nearest where the altar servers sit).

During Mass

Opening Prayer:

1. During the "Lord Have Mercy" prayer, "book server" should prepare to take the Sacramentary to the Presider. However, do not leave the pew.
2. When the Presider says "Let us pray," leave the pew, bring the Sacramentary to the Presider, while holding open to the correct page (if you don't know the correct page, the Presider will open to the correct page. Make sure to find the correct page before mass by asking the Presider), then return to your seat.

Before Communion

Candle server: (If you are book server, ignore this.)

1. When the music for preparation starts, bring the chalice and purificator to the altar and place them on the altar (Figures A. & B.) to the right of the Corporal.



Figure A



Figure B

2. Assist the Head Cup Minister by bringing the trays of filled chalices to the altar if requested. Placing them to the right side of the altar setup (Figure C).
3. When "book server" hands the small cruet of water to the Presider, put the towel on your left arm, and hold the bowl in your right and wait.
4. Once the "book server" picks up the pitcher of water, proceed with the "book server" to the altar to wash the Presider's hands.
5. Place the bowl and towel on the second shelf of the credence table and return to your seat.

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Book Server: (If you are candle server, ignore this.)

1. When the music for preparation starts, bring the Corporal and Sacramentary to the altar. Place them on the altar as shown above (Figure A & B). The Sacramentary is placed to the left of the Corporal.
2. Assist the Head Host Minister by bringing the trays of ciboria to the altar if requested. Place them to the left side of the altar setup (Figure C).
3. Pick up the small cruet of water and bring it to the Presider (after he turns to you) presenting the handle first.
4. Return to the credence table and pick up the pitcher of water.
5. Proceed with the "candle server" to the altar to wash the Presider's hands.
6. Place the pitcher on the second shelf of the credence table and return to your seat.



Figure C

End of Mass

1. After you have received communion, clear the altar of everything. The Sacramentary should be placed on the Presider's chair, but everything else should go on the bottom shelf of the credence tables. Return to your seat.
2. When the Presider begins reading the announcements, the cross bearer goes to the vestibule and retrieves the processional cross and walks to the front of the Altar (6:00 position) when the Presider sends us forth "in peace" and the final hymn begins. The other altar servers move to the 3:00 position on the Altar. All bow (except for the cross bearer) with the Presider.
3. The Cross bearer turns and slowly leads the procession out of the church going out the door on the right side of the font.
4. Go back to the Sacristy, remove your alb, and **place it on the correct hanger**. Do not throw it on the floor. Cross bearer, please place the cross back in its stand, "Candle server" should snuff the candles with candle-snuffer before leaving (please do not blow the candles out because hot wax will get everywhere and it is very hard to clean up).
5. Assist the Head Eucharist Ministers by carrying any pitchers, cruets, towels, corporals, and purificators to the Sacristy.