

# **ALTAR SERVER TRAINING**

## **2015**



Fr. Tim Nondorf, Pastor  
Fr. Lawrence Kithinji, Parochial Vicar

# Welcome to the St. Clare Altar Server Ministry

We are blessed to have you join us and look forward to sharing our beautiful liturgy with you. Know that what you do as an Altar Server is very important. Your presence enriches our liturgy.

Flexibility is crucial to becoming a great Altar Server. Often times we have special activities (incense, holy water, special blessings, the Bishop presiding) that are not part of our regular liturgy. We will meet with you right before Mass to go over those changes. If necessary we will have a separate training session - typically only needed for the Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday & Easter Vigil).

We have put together this training manual to use as a reference. Use this manual to become familiar with the names of things and places around our church. We don't expect you to know everything right away. Don't worry if you're not sure what to do during Mass. The other servers, priests and deacons will show you what to do.

Most importantly, ENJOY being a special part of the liturgy. Don't sit up on the sanctuary with a stern face, SMILE and show that you are enjoying what you do. Sing the songs, say the prayers, show enthusiasm.

If you ever have any questions we are available to help.

Blessings,

Julee Accacian & Amy Bello  
Altar Server Ministry Coordinators

Email: [scaltarservers@gmail.com](mailto:scaltarservers@gmail.com)

## **SERVING at MASS**

### **Before Mass:**

Arrive in the St. Clare Room at least 15 minutes before Mass. Look on closet door and sign up for your duty (cross, candle, book) and communion station (refer to the map on the door). Put on alb, cincture (check with Fr. for the correct color) and cross medallion. 10 minutes before Mass, light altar and ambo candles (and Easter candle if it is out). Retrieve processional cross and candles. Participate in the blessing prayer with other ministers and Father in the narthex, then line up.

Please be aware that if you arrive less than 15 minutes before Mass starts, you risk losing your spot and may not be able to serve if someone else has already filled in.

### **Processional:**

If you are not carrying anything, keep your hands folded prayerfully in front of you at all times. After leading processional, continue to the left side of the altar (do not stop) and place cross and candles in holders. Stand by the steps and wait for the other liturgical ministers and Father to arrive. Bow when Father does. Walk up the steps to your chair. The server who will be holding the Missal should get the book from the table and set it by their chair. They should be sitting on the end closest to the priest.

### **Opening Prayer:**

Pay close attention during the opening prayer. As the last refrain of the Gloria begins (or when Father says "Let us Pray"), pick up the Missal, open it to the page with the RED ribbon, take the book to Father and hold it. Present the book to Father in such a way that he is ready to start the prayer; he does not have to turn the book around. When Father is done, return the book to the credence table.

### **Preparation of Gifts:**

After the Intentions (Prayers of the Faithful), the cross bearer should walk down the steps and pick up the cross. They should then take the cross and carry it up the main aisle. Wait in front of the baptismal font until Father begins to walk to the front steps and then lead the gift bearers to the altar. Continue to the left side and put the cross in the holder again. Walk back up the steps to the altar. Help set the altar if needed. If not, stand by your chair.

When the cross bearer leaves to get the cross, the other servers should begin setting the Altar for the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Bring the priest's chalice, cups and ciborium to the altar and set them up appropriately. Bring the water cruet to the altar as well. Three corporals should already be on the altar. Set the chalice in the center of the corporal. Remove the pall, paten with host and purificator. The paten is set next to the chalice. Bring the Missal up to the altar. (If Fr. Martin is presiding - bring the brown wood book stand from beneath the credence table and set the Missal on top - no need to open up the book.) Also, take the clear holder (for the gospel book) off of the altar and set it below the credence table.

When the altar is set, stand by the side until Father stands up. Go to the front of the altar with Father to help him receive the gifts. Let Father go first and then follow him. Depending on the number of servers, there should be 1 server on either side of Father and on the same level. The other servers should be stationed on the steps and be prepared to receive the gifts from the servers in front. Once the gifts are received, the servers should allow Father to walk up first and then set the gifts on the altar.

During November only: One server will get the Book of the Dead from the small table and set it (keep it open) on the altar.

### **Washing of the Hands:**

After the gifts are placed on the altar, 2 servers need to bring the finger bowl and towel (draped over your arm) and stand by the right side of the altar. A 3rd server will take the water cruet. Any one of the other servers (#4 or #5) should stand to the right of the altar to take the empty wine cruet and ciborium lid and return them to the credence table. When Father is ready to cleanse his hands, pour water from the cruet over his hands. Give him the towel.

After Father finishes washing his hands, all servers should bow to him before returning the items to the credence table.

### **Holy Eucharist:**

After everything is returned to the credence table, walk to the side steps on either side of the altar and remain standing. This is where you will be kneeling when it is time to do so. You should walk to the side of the altar that you signed up for before Mass (choir side or ambo side).

For the Lord's Prayer, stand up and move behind the altar and hold hands with Father and/or the Deacon and other servers.

After the Sign of Peace, stand by the LEFT side of the altar to receive Communion. After the Eucharistic Ministers leave the altar, each server should stand close to one of the stations and be ready in case your help is needed. Please be sure to stand with your hands folded and show respect. Do not wiggle and squirm.

The person standing at the station by the credence table should take the water cruet from the table and place it on the altar first then stand at your station for communion.

Your job during communion is to be an observer. If you see someone NOT consume (eat) the Host right after receiving it (if they put it in their pocket or walk back to their seat with it still in their hand, etc) leave your station immediately, find an usher and tell them what you saw. They will handle it from there. You then return to your station for the remainder of communion. Sometimes a Eucharistic Minister might need your help to get a purificator (in case any Precious Blood spills) or to go ask another EM for more Hosts, etc. Just be observant and ready to help if needed.

### **After Communion:**

Once your communion line is finished stand on the LEFT side of the altar (where you stood before communion) and wait for the other servers to join you. As the remaining Eucharist is taken back to the tabernacle, turn and face the tabernacle (just as the Eucharistic Ministers do) - it doesn't matter if Father is still cleaning the vessels at the Altar. However, be prepared to take any item Father may hand you and take it to the credence table. Return to the line by the altar until everything has been cleared away.

After Father has finished cleaning the chalice, etc. and sits down, clear everything from the altar. When removing the corporal, NEVER lift it off the altar until it has been folded again. Fold it FIRST and then take it to the credence table. The purpose of the corporal is to catch any bits of Holy Eucharist that may fall. If you take the corporal off and "shake it out" in order to fold it more easily, you are possibly letting pieces of Jesus fall to the floor.

Be sure to place the Missal back by the server's chair. After the altar has been cleared, sit down. (During November, place the Book of the Dead back on the small table in front). When Father stands and says "Let us pray" bring the Missal to him and hold it for the final prayers.

### **Closing Prayer:**

When Father says, "The Mass is ended ... " go back down the steps to retrieve the cross and candles. Walk to the center aisle and stop. Turn and face the altar. Wait for Father to leave the altar. After Father genuflects or bows in front of the altar, turn around start walking out slowly. Be sure to keep a few feet of space between each row of servers. Remember the recessional is also part of the prayer and should not be seen as a race to get out of the church the quickest.

### **After Mass:**

One server will need to return to the sanctuary immediately to extinguish the candles. Please be sure to hang all albs up on the appropriate hanger (match the size on the hanger with the size of the alb) to make it easier for the next server.

### **NOTES:**

When you are not performing any specific duty be sure to sit, stand or kneel the same as the congregation is doing.

Keep your hands folded in front of you whenever you are not holding something. Don't whisper to each other or fidget. Watch Father at all times and be ready to help out if needed.

Always try your best but don't worry if you forget something or make a mistake. No one is perfect and no one will get mad at you.

You are helping with one of the most important parts of being a Catholic and I am sure God is very happy that you are there. I know that WE are glad you're there!

# GLOSSARY

## I. Sacred Vessels



**Aspergillum** The liturgical instrument used to sprinkle people and objects with holy water. A bucket is used to dip the aspergillum in to fill it with holy water.



**Chalice** A cup that Father will use to consecrate the wine into the Blood of Christ. The chalice the priest uses is usually decorated.



**Ciborium** A cup, which looks similar to a chalice, but is used to store consecrated hosts in the Tabernacle. A Ciborium has a lid where as a chalice does not.



**Cruet** The little pitcher that hold either water or wine for use during the Mass.



**Flagon or Flask** (Also referred to as a Carafe)  
The large glass decanter that holds the wine at Mass.



**Paten** A small dish or bowl that holds the bread that will be used during Mass. The paten is placed on the Priest's chalice when the altar is set and when it is later cleared.



### Pall

Square cardboard covered by linen which is used to cover the Paten and the Chalice.



### Thurible

A metal vessel for the ceremonial burning of incense. The thurible is also known as a censer. The **Boat** is the small liturgical vessel containing the incense that will be used with the thurible.



**Lunette or Lunula** A round glass or half moon shape case with which is placed a large Sacred Host for insertion into the center of the monstrance, consecrated and used for Benediction and Eucharistic Adoration.

### Monstrance

Sacred vessel which holds the Lunula and Sacred Host for Benediction and Adoration.



### Tabernacle

The locked and secured shrine or receptacle for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament for the sick or dispensation “for just cause” to those who cannot attend Mass



### Pyx

Small round container within which are held Sacred Hosts to be taken to the sick or homebound; carried in **Burse** with cord around neck.

## II. Sacred Vestments



**Alb**

The white gown that you will wear just as the priest and deacons do.

**Cassock (Soutane)**

A long, close-fitting, ankle-length robe worn by clerics.

Ecclesiastical garb of all clerics.

Sometimes worn with a **Surplice** – a white large-sleeved loose-fitting garment worn over the cassock and reaching almost to the knees, usually made of linen or cotton and sometimes decorated with lace used by clerics and acolytes during liturgical services.



**Chasuble**

Vestment used by the priests during liturgical celebrations. It is a symbol of charity



**Stole**

Narrow strip cloth worn over the shoulder hanging on the chest during the celebration of the Sacraments. It is also the symbol of the yoke of Jesus.



**Dalmatic**

A loose vestment worn by deacons.



### Cincture

A belt made out of cloth worn around your waist; it acts like a belt.



### Cope

A vestment worn over the alb during the procession of the Blessed Sacrament and other liturgical services (Liturgy of the Hours and Blessings).



### Humeral Veil

A vestment worn over the shoulder during Benediction.



### Corporal

A square cloth or linen that sits on top of the altar where Father places the chalice, paten, and flagon. Its purpose is to catch any small crumbs of the Blessed Sacrament that may fall onto the altar.



### Purificators

The small towels that are used to clean the chalices during the distribution of the Precious Blood at communion.



### Finger Towel

A towel that Father will use to dry his hands.

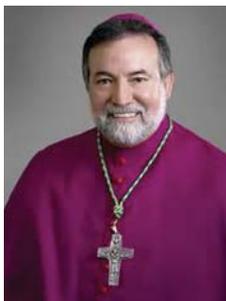


**Miter**

Latin: mitra, crown. A head dress worn by a bishop to symbolize his office.



**Crosier (Pastoral staff)** Carried by a bishop as a symbol of authority and jurisdiction as a shepherd or pastor of the diocese



**Pectoral Cross** A pontifical insignia or ornament worn over their alb by the Bishop during liturgical functions.



**Zucchetto**

The small, round skullcap of the bishop, cardinal and pope.

### III. Sacred Things



**Credence Table** The table that has the chalices, Communion bowls or patens, finger bowl, water cruet and finger towel.



**Candle**

A symbol of Christ, the Light. A **Paschal Candle** is used at Easter.



**Statues/ Images** To recall the person or thing depicted. Just as it helps to remember one's mother by looking at her photograph, so it helps to recall the example of the saints by looking at pictures of them. Catholics also use statues as teaching tools. In the early Church they were especially useful for the instruction of the illiterate. Many Protestants have pictures of Jesus and other Bible pictures in Sunday school for teaching children. Catholics also use statues to commemorate certain people and events, much as Protestant churches have three-dimensional nativity scenes at Christmas.



**Processional Cross** The Cross or Crucifix that is carried along the procession. The difference between a cross and a crucifix is that a crucifix has the image of Jesus and a cross does not.



## Incense

Incense, with its sweet-smelling perfume and high-ascending smoke, is typical of the good Christian's prayer, which, enkindled in the heart by the fire of God's love and exhaling the odor of Christ, rises up a pleasing offering in His sight (cf. Amalarius, "De eccles. officiis" in P.L., CV).



## Bells

Used during the Consecration (not used in all parishes).



## Sanctuary Lamp

**(Tabernacle Lamp)** Light usually suspended by a chain or affixed to the wall, adjacent to the location of Tabernacle, when lit, indicates the presence of the reserved Blessed Sacrament in the Tabernacle.



## Holy Oils

[SC, OI, OC] Consecrated by the bishop on Holy Thursday or at the Chrism Mass



## Holy Water

Used to remind us of our Baptism.



## Cathedra

The Bishop's Chair. A symbol of the Bishop's teaching authority in the Catholic church.

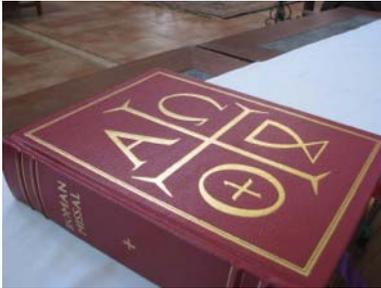
### III. Sacred Places

<b>Altar</b>	A table used for offering the Sacrifice of the Eucharist.
<b>Ambo or Lectern</b>	Where the lector stands to read the Scripture readings and the priest or deacon proclaims the Gospel. The Liturgy of the Word is proclaimed.
<b>Vestibule</b>	The gathering place for those in procession
<b>Nave</b>	Derived from Latin, ship. The main body of the Church reserved for worshippers.
<b>Sacristy</b>	The portion of the Church building where the priests, deacons, servers, and lectors meet to vest and prepare themselves for Mass. It is also where vestments, sacred vessels and other furnishings are kept.
<b>Sanctuary</b>	The area of the Church that contains the Altar and the Ambo.
<b>Confessional</b>	A place where the Sacrament of Reconciliation takes place; where the penitent confesses his sins and the priest giving him the absolution
<b>Baptistry</b>	A place where the Sacrament of Baptism is administered.
<b>Baptismal Font</b>	It looks like a pool or a big bowl where one is baptized.
<b>Vestry</b>	A sacred place or room where all the ministers wear their vestments.
<b>Narthex</b>	The “lobby” area of the church, where you first walk in.

## IV. Sacred Books

**Lectionary (Book)** A liturgical book that contains the Scriptural Readings; a large red book that contains the Scripture readings.

**Book of the Gospels** A liturgical book that contains only the Gospel readings.



**Roman Missal** The large red liturgical book from which Father prays during Mass. It contains the presidential prayers. This is the red book held by the altar servers for the priest.

### **Book of the Prayers of the Faithful**

A book that contains the prayers of the faithful (General Intercession)

**Book of Blessings** A book that contains the rite of blessings of all occasions

# The Order of Mass

## Introductory Rites

[stand]

- Entrance
- Greeting (Priest: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit)
- Penitential Act (this is omitted if there is Rite of Blessing & sprinkling of Holy Water - usually during Easter)
- Glory to God
- Collect (Opening prayer - Priest: Let us pray ...)

## Liturgy of the Word

- First Reading (from the Old Testament) [sit]
- Responsorial Psalm
- Second Reading (from the New Testament)
- Gospel Acclamation (Alleluia) [stand]
- Gospel
- Homily [sit]
- Profession of Faith (Nicene Creed or Apostles' Creed) [stand]
- Universal Prayer (General Intercessions/Prayer of the Faithful - [Lord, hear our prayer ...])

## Liturgy of the Eucharist

- Presentation of the Gifts and Preparation of the Altar (Priest washes his hands) [sit]
- Prayer over the Offerings [stand]
- Eucharistic Prayer
  - Preface (Priest: The Lord be with you. All: And with your spirit.)
  - Holy, Holy, Holy (Sanctus)
  - First half of prayer, including Consecration (Memorial Acclamation) [kneel]
  - Mystery of Faith
  - Second half of prayer, ending with Doxology (Priest: Through Him, with Him and in Him ...) and ending with Great Amen
- The Lord's Prayer [stand]
- Sign of Peace
- Lamb of God (Breaking of the Bread)
- Communion
- Prayer after Communion

## Concluding Rites

- Optional announcements
- Greeting (Priest: The Lord be with you.) [stand]
- Blessing
- Dismissal
- Recessional/Closing Song

# Liturgical Colors



*light  
innocence  
purity  
joy  
triumph  
glory*

## White

- Season of Christmas
- Season of Easter
- Feasts of the Lord, other than of His passion
- Feasts of Mary, the angels, and saints who were not martyrs
- All Saints (1 November)
- Feasts of the Apostles
- Nuptial Masses
- Masses for the dead (Requiem Masses) when the deceased is a baptized child who died before the age of reason

*Note: White is the color of Popes' non-liturgical dress. White can be replaced by Silver.*



*the  
Passion  
blood  
fire  
God's  
Love  
martyrdom*

## Red

- Feasts of the Lord's passion, Blood, and Cross
- Feasts of the martyrs
- Palm Sunday
- Pentecost

*Note: Red is the color of Cardinals' non-liturgical dress*



*the Holy  
Ghost  
life  
eternal  
hope*

## Green

- Time After Epiphany
- Time After Pentecost



## Violet (purple)

*penance*  
*humility*  
*melancholy*

- Season of Advent
- Season of Septuagesima
- Season of Lent
- Rogation Days
- Ember Days (except for Pentecost Ember Days)
- Vigils except for Ascension and Pentecost
- Good Friday

*Note: Violet, literally "amaranth red," is the color of Bishops', Archbishops', and Patriarchs' non-liturgical dress*



## Black

*mourning*  
*sorrow*

- All Souls Day
- Masses for the dead (Requiem Masses), except for baptized children who've died before the age of reason



## Rose

*joy*

- Gaudete Sunday (Third Sunday of Advent)
- Laetare Sunday (Fourth Sunday of Lent)



## Gold

*joy*

- Gold can replace white, red, or green (but not violet or black)

# POSTURES AT MASS

Posture is how you are using the parts of the body at a particular time.

## 1. Walking

Walk with your back straight and your head held high.

## 2. Bowing

When you bow to someone or something at Mass, it should be a 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. When you bow to the priest, bow your head slowly and gracefully. Don't walk and bow at the same time: stop before bowing.

## 3. Genuflecting

When you genuflect, keep your hands in front of your chest while you go down on your right knee. Keep your body upright. Don't wobble back and forth, or you may look like a newborn lamb trying to walk. Be sure that your cassock/alb isn't going to trip you on the way down or up.

## 4. Kneeling

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

## 5. 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.

## 6. Sitting

Sit down on your stool or chair carefully and gracefully. And once you are seated, sit tall and don't slouch. Place your hands in your lap or flat on your thighs in a relaxed manner. Watch how the priest holds his hands, and do as he does.

## 7. Hands

Unless you are sitting down or carrying something (like a candle), your hands should be kept joined in front of your chest: either locked together, or palm to palm, fingers pointing upward. 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 on your chest.

## 8. Eyes

During Mass, always look towards the place where the action is happening: the celebrant's chair, the lectern, 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.

## 9. General Appearance

Know what you are to do while serving at Mass, and when you are to do it. And 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. And ancient prayer in the Bible says, "I will go to the Altar of God, to God who gives joy to my youths."

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 his people, and do your best.

## WHEN TO STAND, SIT AND KNEEL AT MASS

During the:

You should

### INTRODUCTORY RITES:

Sign of the Cross	}	<b>STAND</b>
Greeting		
IntroductionStand		
Penitential Rite or Sprinkling		
Gloria		
Opening Prayer		

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading	}	<b>SIT</b>
Responsorial Psalm		
Second Reading		
Gospel Acclamation	}	<b>STAND</b>
Gospel Reading		
Homily	}	<b>SIT</b>
Profession of Faith	}	<b>STAND</b>
Prayer of the Faithful		

## LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Preparation of the Gifts Prayer over the Gifts Preface	}	STAND
Eucharistic Prayer (Consecration)	}	KNEEL/STAND
Lord's Prayer Sign of Peace Lamb of God	}	STAND
Communion	}	KNEEL/STAND/SIT
Prayer after Communion	}	STAND

## CONCLUDING RITES

Final Blessing Dismissal	}	STAND
-----------------------------	---	-------