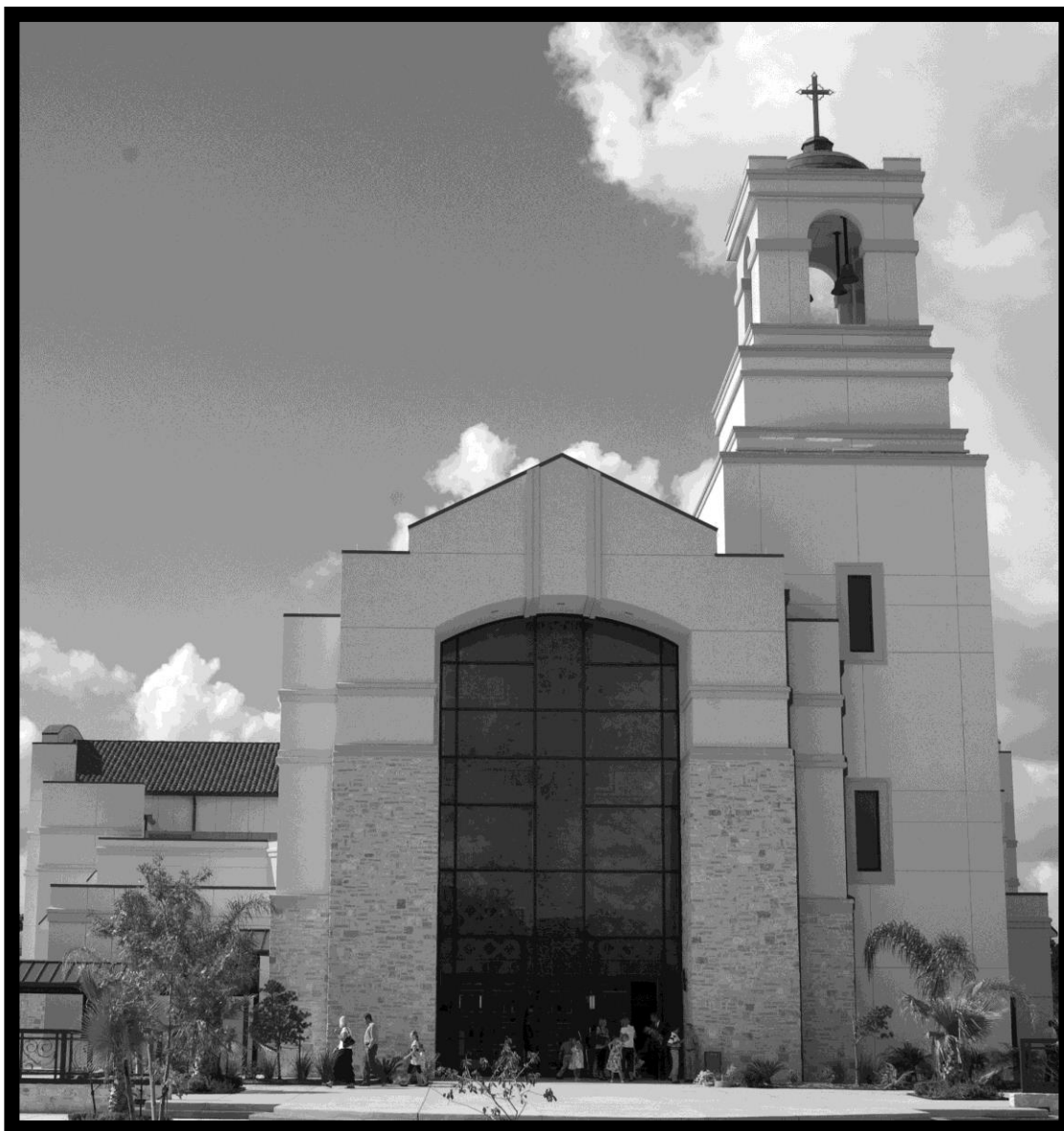


# Christ the Redeemer Catholic Church



## **Ministry of Altar Servers Guidance and Instruction Manual**

Liturgy and Leadership for Catholic Youth through Prayer and Service

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# Introduction

Welcome to the Ministry of Altar Servers. Fr. Sean and the faithful at Christ the Redeemer Catholic Church are grateful for your commitment to be an altar server. Your service and dedication are important to our community.

The place of the altar server in liturgical celebrations is one of distinction requiring evidence of reverence, faithfulness, attentiveness, and maturity. As you have chosen this special way to serve at the altar, you will need to learn about matters concerning liturgical worship and strive to understand their spiritual meaning as well as the importance of timing and unspoken communication.

The altar server retains a genuine and vital role in the liturgical assembly. Your role, through your actions and conduct, is to fully participate in all aspects of the mass and to anticipate and assist at the altar. Altar Servers also have a responsibility to model for the assembly how to participate. You have a place of honor at mass because you assist the priests and deacons in many ways. Your behavior and accomplishment are signs of your faith and your love of God and respect for all who come to worship in our church.

Altar servers are chosen from those members of Christ the Redeemer who display a desire to participate in a more intimate way during Mass. In the presence of Our Lord it will be necessary for you to perform all assigned duties with attention, dignity and reverence. It is also important that you be able to complete these actions as part of a team. Therefore, it is imperative that all servers do their assigned tasks in the prescribed form and manner.

This manual is designed to give you guidance for participation as an altar server at Christ the Redeemer Catholic Church. Questions are always welcome and can be asked of any of the priests, deacons, sacristans, the liturgy director or the altar server coordinators. Thank you for your help as an altar server during a time of great need in the church. Altar servers share the ministry of Christ who taught us how to serve and how to love one another.

With gratitude and God's blessing,

*Christ the Redeemer Liturgy Department*

# Altar Server's Prayer Before Mass

Loving Father, Creator of the Universe,  
You call your people to worship,  
To be with You and one another at Mass.

I thank You for having called me  
To assist others in their prayer to You.  
May I be worthy of the trust placed in me  
And through my example and service  
Bring others closer to You.

I ask this in the name of Jesus Christ,  
Who is Lord forever and ever.

Amen

# General Requirements

## 1. Who May Serve

All registered parishioners who have completed fourth grade, who have received First Holy Communion, are participating in religious education and are at a maturity level appropriate for serving at the Altar of Our Lord are eligible to serve. Servers are encouraged to participate through their senior year of high school and are welcome to return to assist during college breaks. All candidates must have attended two formations/trainings and be willing to commit to ongoing formation before beginning as a novice, and have the commitment and ability to perform this role with reverence. A server must want to serve. The individual decision to serve, with parental support, is always the main motivating factor.

Parents/servers must provide: 1.) a current email address to the ministry coordinator(s) and be willing to communicate via email. 2.) a current telephone number where you can be reached by others in the ministry and be willing to serve as a substitute when asked.

Parents/servers must find and confirm an appropriate replacement when unable to serve as assigned. Send an email to the ministry coordinators and to your replacement to confirm the arrangements.

Servers must arrive at least thirty (30) minutes prior to the beginning of mass.

Servers must attend at least two (2) formation sessions annually.

Servers must maintain proper appearance.

## 2. Proper Dress

Altar servers show respect by wearing proper attire. Here are some basic rules to remember:

**Clothing:**

Black Dress Pants/Slacks with Dress shirts/blouses (or for ladies – Knee-length dress skirts or dresses)

- No T-Shirts, shorts, or jeans

**Footwear:**

Black Dress Shoes ONLY (Heels are to be no higher than 1 inch)

- No Sneakers, sandals, or athletic socks

**Jewelry:**

If worn, necklaces are to be covered by cassocks. Watches are permissible.

- No large rings, bracelets(including the rubber or string types), No dangle earrings (no earrings at all for males), No visible tattoos

**Hair / Makeup:**

Hair should have a neat and clean look - out of the way of the eyes

- Hair color and makeup, if any, must be minimal
- Long hair is to be tied up and away from the face
- If you wear a headband, clip, etc., it must be as close to your hair color as possible

**\*\*\* Look neat and presentable when you serve. \*\*\***

**3. Conduct/Demeanor:**

On and off of the altar, the altar server is recognized as a member of our church community and therefore conduct and demeanor should be respectful at all times. Servers must realize that their behavior sets an example to others both inside and outside of the church. A reluctant or disinterested server is a distraction for others during mass.

Altar servers must attend every mass they are scheduled. The altar servers are responsible for arranging replacements, when needed.

# General Information and Contacts for the Altar Server Ministry

## The Schedule:

The schedule is created quarterly (or otherwise as required) by Ofelia Carrasco, the **Liturgy Assistant**. Copies are placed on the table in the parlor and are available online at **ctrcc.com** on the altar server ministry web page. Any schedule change requests should be communicated to her at [ofelia.carrasco@ctrcc.com](mailto:ofelia.carrasco@ctrcc.com) or by calling the office at 281-469-5533 x 6543.

NOTE: As the schedule is completed quarterly, all requests must be submitted well in advance to the ministry coordinator(s) and the Director of Liturgy. We will do our best to accommodate change requests.

## Formation:

The formation sessions are scheduled as needed and for special observances throughout the year. Typically they are held on Saturday mornings and Sunday afternoons depending on the availability of the church. All servers must attend two formation sessions annually.

## Contacts List:

Our **Liturgy Director** is **Deacon Jeff Willard** ([jeff.willard@ctrcc.com](mailto:jeff.willard@ctrcc.com)) or 281-469-5533 x 5402 and the **Liturgy Assistant** is **Ofelia Carrasco** ([ofelia.carrasco@ctrcc.com](mailto:ofelia.carrasco@ctrcc.com)) or 281-469-5533 x 6543.

A master schedule of Altar Servers as well as a database of names, contact numbers, email addresses is maintained for this ministry. We will be emailing or printing this information so that it is accessible to others in this ministry. It is not intentionally shared with any outside parties, and we ask you to help us minimize any further distribution that is not connected with CTR. Please keep your information current by contacting us by phone or by email to update your information. Updates are to be sent to Anita Ellison and Deacon Jeff Willard (preferably to all via email).

The **Altar Server Coordinator** is **Anita Ellison** ([aellison@mdanderson.org](mailto:aellison@mdanderson.org)). She will be contacting you via email with reminders and updates about the ministry. Please send any suggestions for social events for our servers or for improving this ministry to her attention by email or by phone at 713-898-4620.

**Substitutes:**

When you are not able to serve due to scheduling conflicts, illness or other emergency we ask that **you please contact other servers to find a substitute.** If you are asked, and are able to participate as a substitute, please remember to sign in as a "SUB" and note whose place you are filling for the day on the sign-in sheet.

**Cassock and Surplice Care:**

After mass, re-hang all cassocks and surplices neatly in matched pairs in the closet by color/size so that they can be worn again without requiring ironing. These vestments must be treated with care and you are expected to handle them responsibly. Our linens volunteers appreciate your attention to these requirements. The sacristan and lead servers will be monitoring the condition of these vestments and may ask you to assist by correcting any improperly hung items on behalf of the team.



# The Mass

For Catholics, nothing is more important than the Mass because we are fed and empowered to be disciples of Christ. Due to this importance, the Church places an obligation on all of its members to take part in mass each Sunday and Holy Day.

The Mass is a sacred meal called Eucharist (from Greek meaning “thanksgiving”). In the Mass, we give thanks for all that God has done for us, and we all eat the same food – “the bread of life and the cup of eternal salvation.”

The Mass is a memorial of the Last Supper when Jesus instituted the Eucharist and said to His followers “Do this in memory of me.” The way in which mass is celebrated has developed over two thousand years. Despite its development, two elements have always been the same: the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

The following is the basic outline of the Order of Mass, the Sanctuary, the Books used at Mass, and the Ministers at Mass – all of which you should learn well to get a basic understanding of the Mass.

# The Order of Mass (Summary)

## INTRODUCTORY RITE

Entrance Procession

Greeting

Penitential Rite

or

Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling Holy Water *[This rite is commonly celebrated during the Easter Season, but may also be used at other times. When used, the Penitential Rite is omitted.]*

Gloria *[This ancient hymn of praise is used on all Sundays and Solemnities outside of Advent and Lent]*

Opening Prayer

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading

Responsorial Psalm

Second Reading: *[This is a second reading on Sundays and Solemnities, but not for most weekdays]*

Alleluia / Gospel Acclamation *[The Gospel Acclamation is a small verse of Scripture or hymn]*

Gospel *[This is always proclaimed only by the Bishop, priest or a deacon]*

Homily *[The priest or deacon then speaks to the people]*

Profession of Faith *[The Creed]*

General Intercessions *[Prayer of the Faithful]*

## LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Presentation of the Gifts / Preparation of the Altar

Prayer over the Gifts

Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy)

Eucharistic Prayer

Memorial Acclamation *[One option is "Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again"]*

Great Amen

## COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer (Our Father)

Sign of Peace

Communion

Prayer after Communion

## CONCLUDING RITE

Greeting

Blessing & Dismissal

Recessional and Closing Song

# The Ministers at Mass

Many people become active in the sanctuary during celebration of the Mass. “To minister” means “to serve” and all of the people holding these roles serve our celebration at mass.

**Presider/Celebrant** – This is the priest who presides over the celebration of the Mass. Sometimes, at what is called a concelebrated mass, there may be more than one priest. The one who presides, the presider, is the one you will watch closely,

**Deacon** – When present, the deacon usually proclaims the Gospel, preaches, prepares the gifts for Eucharist, helps to distribute communion, and gives direction to the people.

**Altar Servers** – This is your role as you assist at the altar.

**Lector** – This is the person(s) who proclaims the first two readings.

**Cantor** – This person leads the hymns, acclamations, and the responsorial psalms.

**Ushers/Greeters** – These people greet the community as they arrive for mass, take up the collection, keep communion lines orderly, and distribute the bulletins after mass.

**Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EMHCs)**– These ministers assist the clergy with distribution of Holy Communion.

**Choir Members and Musicians** – These people support music in the liturgy by leading our songs and playing the various instruments that accompany the music.

**Music Director** – This person manages the music in the parish. Usually, this person is also the choir director.

**Sacristan** – This person works before and after mass, making sure that everything that is needed is where it belongs. You will be asked to assist in these duties.

# Postures at Mass

Posture is how you are using the parts of your body at a particular time. An altar server has to carry out a number of different actions at mass, and so there are a number of different postures. You will learn what you are to do while serving, and when you are to do it. If you make a mistake, don't get flustered – simply move on.

- **Hands** – Unless you are sitting down or carrying something (like a candle), your hands should be kept joined in front of your chest; palm-to palm, fingers pointing upward (praying hands). Keep your hands high up on your chest. If you are carrying something in one hand hold the other hand over your heart.

- **Bowing** – When you bow to someone or something at mass, it should be a smooth forward inclining of your head and shoulders. Never walk and bow at the same time: stop before bowing. There are two types of bowing, the bow of the head and the bow of the body as described below:

- **Bow of the Head** – This bow is a slow nod of the head, made:  
Just before reception of Sacred Bread and Precious Blood  
The name of Jesus is mentioned  
Leaving the priest after an action (i.e. water and wine etc)

- **Bow of the Body** – This bow is made from the waist with hands folded. It should be made slowly and reverently when:
  - In front of the altar if the Blessed Sacrament is not present
  - At the Creed at the words “by the power of the Holy Spirit, He was born of the Virgin Mary and became man.”

- **Genuflecting** – When you genuflect, keep your hands in front of your chest while you go down on your right knee. Keep your body straight, bow your head briefly, and rise to the standing position. Be sure that your cassock/alb does not trip you on the way down or up.

As a rule, if the Blessed Sacrament is reposed in the tabernacle, a genuflection is made before and after mass, and outside of mass whenever passing in front of the tabernacle. *Exception: The cross-bearer when carrying the processional cross does not genuflect.*

- **Walking** – Always walk with your back straight and your head held straight and high. The pace should not be rushed but deliberate. The cross-bearer always sets the pace in processions. When walking in pairs, act in unison, remember you are a team.
- **Kneeling** – When you kneel, your body should be upright and your hands should be in front of your chest, well above your waist. We always kneel until the Blessed Sacrament is replaced in the Tabernacle.
- **Standing** – Always stand up straight with both feet firmly on the floor six to eight inches apart. This will give you balance and comfort at the same time. Do not lean against the furniture or against the walls.
- **Sitting** – Sit down on your pew carefully. Once you are seated, sit tall and do not slouch. Place both feet firmly on the floor. Place your hands on your lap or flat on your thighs in a relaxed manner.
- **Eyes** – During mass always look towards the place where the action is happening: the celebrant's chair, the ambo or the altar. When a lector is proclaiming the scriptures, you should be looking at him/her. Keep your attention on the presider in case he is need of your assistance. Try to anticipate your next action.

# Altar Server Mass Procedures

These procedures are now in effect and are subject to revision with changes in the liturgical calendar or as needed. Participation of altar servers in the liturgy is to aid the presider, deacon and the assembly in the most reverent and appropriate manner, and requires full participation in preparation and training activities as well as during the celebration of the Mass.

## **Before Coming to Church:**

- Make sure you get a good night sleep, and that you are in a reverent frame of mind. Pray the Servers Prayer.

## **When You Come to Church:**

- Arrive at the church thirty minutes before mass begins
- Write your name on the sign in sheet - now kept in the sacristy.
- Check with the sacristan or mentor for any special requirements
- Choose the appropriate cassock and surplice remembering to match the color of the hanger and the size number with the tag in the surplice. Replace NEATLY on the proper hanger at the end of mass. See the color chart on the wall in the closet for assistance.
- Treat these vestments with care, and check that the cassock/alb is not too short or too long. The cassock should just barely touch the top of your shoes. Note where you got your vestment and the hanger color so you can put it back in the proper location in the closet. Re-hang with care so it will not be wrinkled for the next wearer.
- Review the white board in the Sacristy for any special instructions, i.e. Children's Liturgy – candles will need to be lit and extinguished in the Chapel.
- Make sure the candles around the altar are lit, including the Paschal candle if present. If they are not lit, light them ten minutes before mass begins. Lighting the candles tells the people that mass is about to begin. When lighting the candles, be careful for the safety of the church and all who are in it, including yourself. Keep the flame away from your vestments.

- Check Credence Table
  - water pitcher contains water, and that the bowl and finger towel are on the on the credence table.
  - Chalice, cruet, and two purificators are on the credence table
  - Ciboria/purificators/cups are on the credence table. If they are not present, alert the Sacristan.
- Make sure Roman Missal is in the servers seating area.
- Make sure the pedestal stand for the processional cross in place outside the Reconciliation Rooms
- Check with the sacristan or the large Sacristy whiteboard to see if servers are needed to hold the doors for Children's Liturgy of the Word dismissal.
- After all of the above items are checked and completed, all the altar servers will meet near the entry door to prepare for the procession. Make final decisions about roles and responsibilities as determined by the mentor, lead server or the priest/deacon. Remain quiet and reverent as you form the processional.
- When handling sacred objects remember that these are blessed, the cross being the sign of our faith. Handle knowing it is holy and sacred.

**Full and active participation in all prayers and responses is required at all times. Refer often to your Altar Server Mass Procedures.** If there are any questions about roles and responsibilities, please contact a member of the clergy, the deacons, sacristans, director of Liturgy or the altar server coordinators.

### **Altar Server Mass Roles**

Servers meet and agree on roles and responsibilities before mass.

- 1. Processional cross:**
- 2. Book:** (Roman Missal – entire mass one server. This is the lead server or designate.)
- 3. Dressing the altar:**
  - a. Book server brings Roman Missal to altar
  - b. Server brings cruet to altar
  - c. Server brings chalice and purificator to altar
- 4. Receiving the gifts:** Three servers to proceed to front of altar, one server to the right of the presider and two to the left. If there is no item for third server, return to your seat.

5. **Hand Washing:** Two servers bring bowl/towel and pitcher to altar using the rear ramp
6. **Retrieving the reserve from the tabernacle to the Altar:** One server open and hold door for sacristan as he/she brings the Holy Eucharist (reserve) from the tabernacle to the Altar
7. **Repose of the Blessed Sacrament:** Two servers open and hold doors for deacon as he brings the Holy Eucharist to the tabernacle.
8. **Recessional cross:** Server retrieves cross from stand and proceeds to center aisle facing the sanctuary. As the presider turns to exit, cross bearer leads.
9. **Final Duties**
  - a. Extinguish candles with the snuffer.
  - b. Assist the sacristan as needed.
  - c. Re-hang cassock and surplice on the proper hanger in the proper manner to avoid wrinkles.
  - d. Request dismissal from lead server or sacristan.



# The Order of the Mass

## INTRODUCTORY RITES

### **Entrance Procession:**

Cross-bearer leads procession to the right of the baptismal font  
Other servers walk 2 x 2 together to right side of the font to the center aisle and proceed.

Hands are flat together in front of chest.

Cross bearer proceeds to cross holder/stand without bowing.

Other servers bow reverently together at altar steps. (DO NOT KNEEL or GENUFLECT)

Proceed to Row #1 and enter. Book server remains standing at end of row (at wall side) until all servers are seated. Enter and exit Row #1 from one end only (at wall) except during Communion when servers exit left to Station 1.

[remain standing]

### **Greeting:**

### **Penitential Rite:**

### **Kyrie:**

During Advent and Lent, book server proceeds directly to third step nearest the top of sanctuary. Hold book straight up in front in your chest, ready to open, and watch for the presider to cue you to move to the front of him in time to have the book opened and ready before the presider announces "Let us pray."

### **Gloria:**

(Not said during Advent and Lent.)

### **Opening Prayer:**

Book server proceeds with the Roman Missal directly to third step nearest the top of sanctuary at the last stanza of the Gloria ("*For you alone are the Holy One...*") and waits next to presider's chair. Hold book straight up in front in your chest, ready to open, and step to the front of presider in time to have the book opened and ready before presider announces "Let us pray."

\*If S1 is 5' or taller – S1 will stand to the side of the priest,

\*If S1 is shorter than 5' – S1 will stand in front of the priest

- Keep in mind you never want to block the assembly's view of presider.
- Hold the book open so the priest can read the prayer,
- Keep the pages flat, and fingers out of the text.
- Do not move about while the priest is reading.

When the priest is finished with the Opening prayer, S1 will close the book, make a bow of the head to the priest and return to Row #1 with the book for the upcoming Liturgy of the Word.

**Full and active participation in all prayers and responses is required at all times. Refer often to your Altar Server Mass Procedures.**

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

[sit]

**First Reading:**

**Responsorial Psalm:**

**Second Reading:**

[stand]

**Alleluia or Gospel Acclamation:**

**Gospel:**

[sit]

**Homily:**

[stand]

**Profession of Faith:**

## LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

### Presentation of the Gifts / Preparation of the Altar:

Servers bring cruet, chalice, purificator and Roman Missal to altar and put in place. Return together in single file to Row #1 via the back ramp.

Three servers proceed to front of altar (do not cross in front of presider) and stand on either side of presider. Server receives money basket and proceeds to place it at the rear of the altar at the foot of the credence table. Bread server places bowl of bread on altar and returns to credence table to continue or to row seat to continue - depends on number of servers.

Two other servers from Row #1 go to credence table while gifts are being received to obtain bowl, towel and water pitcher. Proceed immediately to altar via rear ramp and **step forward** to meet and wash the presider's hands. Do not wait. The priest will turn around to wash his hands and **you should be there ready** – close by the priest so that he doesn't have to walk, lean or motion. The bread and money-basket servers assist with hand washing if there are no reserve servers already in place at the credence table.

[stand]

### Prayer over the Gifts:

### Eucharistic Prayer:

## COMMUNION RITE

### Lord's Prayer:

### Sign of Peace:

Servers do not go to the altar. Remain in your row for the Sign of Peace.

[kneel]

### Breaking of the Bread:

### Communion:

Servers receive the Eucharist at Station #1 from Row #1 after a reverent bow of the head.

While Communion is being served, book server proceeds to altar to remove the Roman Missal. Second server reverently removes ciborium from rear credence table and brings it down to side credence table.

### **Communion Song:**

Open your hymnals and sing along.

### **Repose of the Blessed Sacrament:**

After receiving the Eucharist, and as the Communion time is nearing the end, two servers proceed to the double doors to the Tabernacle. Each waits in front of the doors, one on each side (sentry style) and as the deacon proceeds down from the altar with the Blessed Sacrament the servers open the doors and wait, holding the doors open, until the deacon returns. Close door quietly and return to Row #1. Do not lean on doors. Face each other and remain still until the door is to be opened. This action must not distract from what is occurring at this time.

### **Period of Silence**

[stand]

### **Prayer after Communion:**

Book server brings Roman Missal to altar to top of steps while priest is contemplating. As priest begins to rise, move around to front of priest with the Roman Missal.

*Priest:* Let us pray.

## CONCLUDING RITE

[stand]

**Greeting:**

**Blessing:**

**Dismissal:**

**Recessional and Closing Song:**

Recessional server retrieves cross and other servers proceed to recessional formation. Bow with priest and turn to retreat from Sanctuary. Exit pace somewhat faster than opening procession. Return cross to stand in sacristy area.

Extinguish candles using candle snuffer and assist sacristan with removing items from the credence table to be returned to the sacristy. Ask sacristan if other items need to be handled before leaving. Remove cassock and surplice and hang neatly on your hanger as a matched set. Ask sacristan or lead server to be dismissed before leaving.

# Server Roles

**Servers are to rotate roles until each position is learned and all servers are cross-trained. Novice servers will not serve in the Lead-server role.**

## **When 5 to 6 Servers are present:**

Server #1 = Mentor/Lead Server, Manages the Roman Missal and is seated at end of row at wall, dresses the altar with book, removes book from altar during Communion, opens Tabernacle area door after Communion, hold Presider's book if needed.

Server #2 = Cross Bearer, Receives money basket with gifts, waits for cruet and wine flagon

Server #3 = Dresses the altar with cruet or chalice and purificator, bears bowl and towel for hands

Server #4 = Dresses the altar with cruet or chalice and purificator, bears water pitcher for hands

Server #5 = Receives bowl of bread with gifts, opens Tabernacle area door

Server #6 = Opens Tabernacle area door (novice)

## **When 4 servers are present:**

Server #1 = Mentor/Lead Server, Manages the Roman Missal and is seated at end of row at wall, dresses the altar with book, receives bowl of bread with gifts, removes book from altar table during Communion, opens Tabernacle area door after Communion,

Server #2 = Cross Bearer, Receives money basket with gifts, waits for cruet and wine flagon

Server #3 = Dresses the altar with cruet or chalice and purificator, bears bowl and towel for hands

Server #4 = Dresses the altar with cruet or chalice and purificator, bears water pitcher for hands, retrieves empty bread bowl from rear of sanctuary, opens Tabernacle area door

## **When 3 servers are present:**

Server #1 = Mentor/Lead Server, Manages the Roman Missal and is seated at end of row at the wall, dresses the altar with book, Receives bowl of bread with gifts, proceeds directly to credence table to bear water pitcher for hand washing, removes book from altar table during Communion, opens Tabernacle door after Communion

Server #2 = Cross Bearer, dresses the altar with cruet, receives Money Basket with gifts, waits for cruet and wine flagon

Server #3 = Dresses the altar with chalice and purificator, proceeds directly to credence table to bear bowl and towel for hands, opens Tabernacle door after Communion

## **When 2 servers are present:**

Server #1 = Mentor/Lead Server, Manages the Roman Missal and is seated at end of row at the wall, dresses the altar with book, chalice and purificator, Receives bowl of bread with gifts, proceeds directly to credence table to bear water pitcher, bowl and towel for hand washing – meets server #2 on rear of altar, removes book from altar table during Communion, opens Tabernacle door area after Communion

Server #2 = Cross Bearer, dresses the altar with cruet, receives Money Basket with gifts, places cruet and wine flagon on rear altar table and assists Server #1 with hand washing

Both servers return to lower credence table bearing hand-washing items and bring wine flagon and cruet at that time. Server #1 returns for empty bread bowl and book while Communion is in process.

## **Altar Server's Prayer After Mass**

O Lord, Jesus Christ, Eternal High Priest, I thank You for the privilege of having served at the holy altar of Your Sacrifice.

Now, as I put aside the garments of that service, I ask that I may at all times think of You. May I ever seek You and find You; may I always follow You; may Your priestly spirit be in my heart and Your Holy Name on my lips; and to Your praise and glory may every work of mine be done.

Ever ready in Your service, may I always know and do Your will in all things and, by Your grace, persevere unto the end.

Amen.

# Altar Server Picture Glossary

## The Sanctuary

The sanctuary is the space at the front of the church where most of the action of mass takes place. Sanctuary means “holy place.” It is often slightly elevated to set apart from the rest of the church.



**Main Altar** – This is the large, high table located in the middle of the sanctuary. Many of the actions of the Liturgy of the Eucharist take place on the main altar. In ancient times, the altar was the place where a *sacrifice* was offered to God; therefore it is at the altar where the *sacrifice* of the Mass takes place.

**Ambo** (Pulpit/Lectern) – This is the place from which the sacred readings and homily are proclaimed. Most of the action of the Liturgy of the Word takes place at the ambo. It is the special place set aside for Sacred Scripture.

**Presider's Chair** – The chair from which presiders lead the prayers and rites of the church. The adjacent chairs are for deacons or concelebrants.



**Tabernacle and Vigil Light** - The tabernacle is the ornate place where the Eucharist is reserved. Sacred Bread is returned to the tabernacle at Communion time. The vigil light is a candle in a red holder that is lit when the Blessed Sacrament is present within the tabernacle. Proper reverence by genuflection is to be given to the tabernacle at all times the vigil light is lit.



**Candles and Candle Lighter/Snuffer** – There are four candles on the main altar. These candles are to be lit before mass by the candle lighter and extinguished after mass with the snuffer.



**Credence Tables** - Small tables on the side or rear of our sanctuary for the purpose of holding the cruets, bowl, chalice, ciboria, and other items required for the celebration of mass. Our TWO credence tables are the Floor Credence Table- right front credence table (near the altar server pew) and the Altar Credence table- rear credence table behind the altar. Both are set up before mass.



**Water Bowl and Finger Towel** – The bowl, water pitcher and towel are used during the Preparation of the Gifts. These will be kept on



the credence table. The water cruet (pictured below) is also used during mass.

**Processional Cross** – This is the crucifix mounted on a long pole that is carried at the head of the entrance procession. Our cross is kept in a stand outside the working sacristy before and after mass, and is kept in a stand near the reconciliation rooms during mass.

**Paschal Candle** – The Paschal candle, lit during mass from the Easter Vigil through Pentecost, is placed at the left forefront of the sanctuary. This candle is to be lit before mass to commemorate the Risen Christ among us. After Pentecost, it remains at the baptismal font, and is not lit during mass unless Baptisms will take place.



## Sacred Vessels and Other Items

All altar vessels are called sacred, since they have been blessed and set apart for a distinctive role in worship. Here are some sacred vessels and other items that you should be able to call by name.

### SACRED VESSELS

**Chalice** – Chalice is Latin for “cup.” This is a consecrated cup made of gold or silver, and if silver, the interior must be of gold. It holds the wine for the Holy Sacrifice.



**Ciborium** – The ciborium is a vessel that contains the small hosts used for Communion. It can look like a chalice with a large top and cover or a bowl with a cover.



**Communion Cups** – These are chalice-like vessels used at Communion when people receive the Precious Blood.



**Patens** – These are similar to a ciborium, but shaped more like metal bowls and hosts are placed in them to be consecrated for Communion.



**Pyx** - The pyx (pronounced “picks”) is a smaller vessel in which the Sacred Host is either preserved or carried. A pyx should have a hinged lid and a small carrying pouch called a “bursa.” It is often used for carrying the Blessed Sacrament to the sick.



**Luna or Lunette** – This is a circular receptacle, usually with glass sides, inserted into a monstrance to show the Sacred Host.



**Monstrance** – The monstrance is a metal vessel, usually gold or silver-plated, with a transparent section in which the Blessed Sacrament is carried in procession or exposed for adoration.



**Purificator** - This is a cloth used for purifying sacred vessels.



**Pall** - This is a square pocket-shaped piece of cloth with a cardboard/plastic inserted in order to stiffen it. It is sometimes placed over the chalice to prevent dust or other matter falling into it.



**Aspersory and Aspergillum** - The aspersory is a container for holding holy water. The Aspergillum, the holy water sprinkler, is a stick-shaped implement with holes in it to dip into the Aspersory and catch the holy water for sprinkling.



**Holy Oils** – There are three kinds: **Sacred Chrism (used in Baptism and Confirmation), Oil of Catechumens, and Oil of the Infirm.** Sacred Chrism contains a mixture of balm or balsam. The other two are pure olive oil. At Christ the Redeemer the Holy Oils are stored near the baptismal font in the ambry.



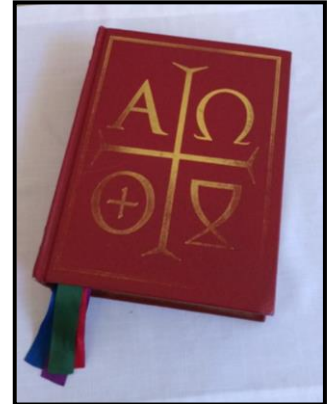
**Thurible & Incense Boat and Stand** – The thurible is a metal vessel in the shape of a vase or cup, with cover suspended by chains. It is used for burning incense. The incense boat is a small metal container that holds the incense to be placed into the thurible. The boat has a cover and a spoon. Both the thurible and the incense boat are placed on their stand.



# The Books of Mass

There are special books used during the liturgy. You should be familiar with each one, and where it is kept:

**Roman Missal (Sacramentary)** – This is a large red book that contains all the words the priest uses during mass, except the readings, hymns and homilies. Our Sacramentary is kept in the altar server's pew.



**Presider's Book (Book of the Chair)** – This book contains prayers from the Sacramentary needed by the priest when he is at his chair. The priest manages this book himself unless it must be held for special blessings. This would be managed by the book server, if needed.



**Lectionary** – This book contains all the sacred scripture readings from mass. It is usually at the ambo before mass.



**Book of the Gospels** – This book contains the Gospel readings. It is usually carried in the entrance procession by the deacon or lector.



**Book of Rites (The Roman Ritual)** – This book is used for the celebration of sacraments. Sometimes each rite has its own special book: for example, the Rite of Marriage or the funeral rites. The priest will carry this book and will advise you when to use it.



**Hymnal** – This book contains the hymns and psalms for mass. This book should be available at your seat so that you may sing during mass.



# Explanation of Vestments

Vestments are special garments worn by the clergy at the celebration of the Mass, administration of the sacraments, in procession, when giving blessings, and in general whenever performing their official duties.

**The Alb** - The alb is a long cloth robe reaching to the feet used to cover the priest's clothing and body. It represents Baptism.



**The Cincture** - The cincture is a cord fastened about the waist to confine the alb and hold everything in place. It represents purity.



**The Stole** - The stole is a long narrow strip in the liturgical color and is used to identify the person a bishop, priest or deacon. It represents the gifts the priest has by virtue of ordination. It has a cross sewn in the middle and the priest kisses the middle cross and places the stole upon his neck. Deacons wear it over one shoulder.



**The Chasuble** - The chasuble is the outer and chief vestment of the priest. Its name means, "little house" and it represents the overshadowing power of Christ. It is exclusively reserved to the priest.



**The Cassock** – The cassock is the principal vestment used by members of the clergy. It is a robe reaching down to the feet, and normally has 33 buttons (representing Christ's earthly years). For priests it is black; for bishops, violet; for cardinals, red; and for the Pope, white.



**The Surplice** – The surplice is a smaller version of the alb, without a cincture, and is occasionally embroidered at hem and sleeves. It is a liturgical garment worn by clergy and altar servers, during processions, and when administering the sacraments. Like the alb it represents the garment given to each of us at our baptism. The photo below represents what altar servers at Christ the Redeemer wear when serving.



**The Cope** – The cope is a cloak, opened in the front and fastened at the breast with a band or clasp, and is used for Benediction, Eucharistic processions, and other occasions outside of mass. It represents the Royalty of Christ, and is reserved for the most special occasions.



**The Humeral Veil** – The humeral veil is a long, wide rectangular fringed cloth that is often ornamented in the middle. It is worn by the priest or deacon when carrying the Blessed Sacrament in procession or giving Benediction. Its purpose is to keep people from being distracted by the hands and arms of the priest/deacon by covering them entirely, freeing the people to just focus on the Eucharist. It is worn around the shoulders like a shawl.





# Liturgical Colors

The liturgical seasons 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 colors. With each change of seasons, we change the color of vestments as a visible sign of our need to change and grow.

**White or Gold:** The symbol of Celebration and triumph, purity and innocence. It is used on all feasts of our Lord's life (e.g. Christmas and Easter), on the feast of our Blessed Mother, on the feasts of angels and of all saints who were not martyrs. White/Gold can always be worn since every mass is a celebration of Christ's Resurrection, and is often worn at funerals to celebrate the life of the deceased and pray for their acceptance into heaven.

**Red:** The symbol of Sacrifice because it is the color of blood, is used on all feasts of our Lord's Cross and Passion, on the feasts of the Apostles and of all martyrs. It is also a symbol of the Holy Spirit when it is used on Pentecost and in masses of the Holy Spirit, in memory of the tongues of fire of the First Pentecost.

**Violet/Purple:** The symbol of Penance and Waiting, it is used during the seasons of Advent and Lent, and on days of fast. It reminds us of preparation. It also may be worn during funerals as an alternative dark color, to show mourning and the preparation of the dead.

**Rose:** The symbol of subdued Joy that we are halfway through our journey towards Easter or Christmas is used only on the Third Sunday of Advent and on the Fourth Sunday of Lent as an alternative to violet.

**Green:** The symbol of Hope and Growth, green is the color of budding and living vegetation. It is used during Ordinary Time, to show that our common state is one of growing in our relationship with God, longing and hoping for eternal life.

**Black:** The symbol of Mourning and Death, it may be used in funerals or a day commemorating the dead or great loss of life, like All Soul's Day. It is rarely used.

# Ministry of Altar Servers Recognition Levels and Leadership Program

## Altar Server Designations and Responsibilities

**Mentor** – Servers enrolled in grades 9-12, who have been serving for at least 4 years, and who pass the mentor assessment.

- Attend training sessions and assist Ministry Coordinators with training activities
- Prepare assignments for roles during mass and oversee execution of duties
- Serve as “Book Server” during mass
- Participate in special liturgies when the Cardinal or Archbishop are Presiding and during Triduum
- Recruit subs before mass when needed to fill in for absent servers
- Inspect cassocks and surplices after mass to ensure proper storage
- Review prayers and postures with other servers when needed
- Assist in preparing other servers for assessments
- Be a role model at all times

**Lead Server** – Servers enrolled in grades 7-12, who have been serving for at least 3 years, and who pass the Lead Server assessment.

- Attend training sessions and model postures and behaviors
- Light altar candles and review inventory of vessels and liturgical items at credence tables before mass time
- Inspect candle lighter/snuffer and replace wick as needed after confirming with Sacristan.
- Book Server for mass when no Mentor is scheduled
- Ensure that all servers have signed in on form before mass

**Novice** – Servers enrolled in grades 5-12. To graduate to Server level you must have served at a minimum of 15 masses for a minimum time frame of 12 months.

- Attend training sessions and participate
- Assist Mentors and Lead Servers when requested

## Liturgy and Leadership Program

Altar Servers will be selected and invited to participate in the Leadership program by the Ministry Coordinator.

### Recognition Levels and Service Awards

An awards presentation will be celebrated at the end of the school year to recognize those altar servers who distinguish themselves with exceptional service.

**Server of the Year Award** – This award is given to the server who has demonstrated **the highest overall level** of leadership, appearance, and service. This server has an exceptional attendance record at both masses and training meetings. He/she frequently volunteers for duties and assignments above and beyond the normal responsibilities.

**Rising Server Award** – This award is given to a server who has demonstrated an exceptionally high level of leadership, appearance and service. He/she has an exceptional attendance record at both masses and formation meetings. This server frequently volunteers for duties and assignments above beyond the normal responsibilities.

**Pastor's Award** – This award is given to a server who has consistently performed duties above and beyond what is normally expected at his/her current level, such as serving daily mass, performing duties around the parish outside of serving, etc.

**Altar Server Award** – This award is given to a server who has demonstrated their commitment to serving through exceptional attendance at trainings and at mass.

**Rookie of the Year Award** – This award is given to a novice (1<sup>st</sup> year altar server) who follows directions, upholds standards, and performs service above and beyond that of other 1<sup>st</sup> year servers.

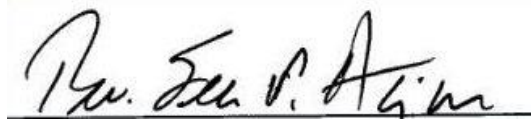
**Team of the Year** – This award is given to the team of altar servers which collectively has an exceptionally high attendance rate at mass, at training meetings, and models exemplary altar server behaviors, while also maintaining a high level of excellence at the altar.

## From Our Pastor

Let me express profound appreciation for your service at Christ the Redeemer in the Ministry of Altar Servers. This is a service which you have performed before Almighty God in the sanctuary of this, our beautiful church. I extend these words of thanks also on behalf of Fr. Ralph, the Deacons, the Liturgy Department, your family and friends, and for the many who have attended the masses at which you have served.

The information in this manual will guide you in this role, and the contents will be useful in the months ahead. Equally as important, in the years to come, I pray that this manual will afford you many special memories of your days as an altar server.

*Yours in Christ,*

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Rev. Sean P. Horrigan", written over a horizontal line.

Rev. Sean P. Horrigan  
Pastor, Christ the Redeemer Catholic Church