

Richmond Catholic Community

Altar Server Guidelines and Information 2013

St. Andrew

General Information

- Please arrive at church at least 15 minutes before mass begins and check-in in the sacristy.
- Whenever you pass in front of the altar, turn and make a deep bow toward the altar. The altar represents Christ in the Church and is the focus of our Eucharistic celebration. At St. Andrew where the tabernacle is in the sanctuary, the priest (and servers) genuflect or bow toward the tabernacle only at the beginning and end of mass. During mass itself, the focus shifts from the tabernacle to the altar, and so any reverence made should be toward the altar.
- Dress for St. Andrew: since albs are not worn, please dress in Sunday clothes appropriate for service in church. Jeans, Flip Flops, Shorts, Tennis Shoes and T-shirts are not appropriate.

Duties Before Mass

- Light all the candles in the sanctuary area.
- Pick up a song book to be able to join in the singing (unless you are carrying something like candle or cross; if so, make sure there is a song book at your seat).
- The Sacristan will have the bread and wine on the table in the back vestibule prior to the beginning of Mass.

Duties During Mass

Procession/Entrance Rite

- Process in front of the priest to the base of the sanctuary; the order is always: cross, candles, other servers, lector or deacon with Book of the Gospels, priest presider.
- St. Andrew: Carry candles in the procession. When you get to the base of the sanctuary (first step), remain until everyone in the Procession bows, then following the cross, to the left side, go up the steps, put the candles on the ledge by the sacristy, and go to your seats. Bow as you cross the altar table behind the priest.

Liturgy of the Word

- Listen attentively as the scripture readings are proclaimed and the homily is preached.
- At the end of the second reading, get the candles from the ledge by the sacristy and stand behind the altar. When the priest or deacon processes with the Book of the Gospels to the ambo, follow behind him and then stand on either side of him as the gospel is proclaimed. When the gospel is finished, return the candles to the ledge and go to your seats.

Preparation of the Altar

- Altar is pre-set before Mass by the Sacristan. The filled bowls, cups, corporal, and Roman Missal will already be on the altar before Mass begins.
- One server should go with the priest and deacon to receive the gifts from the people; stand on his right side. He will first hand you the collection basket, which you should place on the floor in front of the altar. The Deacon will receive the wine and will pour it into the cups. While the one server is receiving the gifts with the priest, the other server should get the cruet of water and wait off to the side of the altar.
- The priest or deacon will pour some water into the wine and take the decanter of wine. **Both servers should stay standing next to the altar until the priest or deacon returns the empty decanter.** Then, go to the credence table and put down the empty decanter. The server who was carrying the decanter should pick up the towel. The server with the water keeps the water and picks up the lavabo bowl. Both servers return to the altar to wash the priest's hands. Give the water cruet to the priest with the handle facing him.
- After washing the priest's hands, return everything to the credence table and stand by the credence table.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

- During the Eucharistic Prayer, the servers remain standing off to the side of the sanctuary, near the credence table. When the priest genuflects or bows after raising the host and the chalice, the servers should make a deep bow. One of the servers should ring the bells kept on the bottom shelf of the credence table during both times of Elevation. The bells should be rung fairly loudly so everyone in the congregation can hear them.
- For the *Our Father*, remain where you have been standing and join hands, if you wish. The priest will hold his hands open in the *orans* position for the *Our Father* and subsequent prayers.
- Offer the Sign of Peace to each other and the priest.
- As the extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion come up behind the altar, stand directly behind the priest in the same line as the ministers to receive communion. Line up in alignment with the wall. There needs to be enough room for the Extra Ordinary Ministers to make a semi circle around and for the music ministers to stand in this circle as well.
- While communion is being distributed to the assembly, place the trays on the altar table that have been on the credence table, return to your seats.
- When communion is finished, the deacon or B/F will take the remaining consecrated hosts to the tabernacle in the Ciborium. Stand and bow with the deacon.
- After the priest and deacon sit down, the servers need to clear the altar. That is take the trays with the vessels on them to the credence table. Then return to your seats; bowing as you cross the altar table. The Roman Missal on the corporal will remain on the altar.
- When the closing song begins, get the candles from the ledge by the sacristy as the cross bearer gets the cross, and go to the very front of the center aisle. Turn and face the altar, waiting for the priest and deacon to join you. He will genuflect or bow and then turn for the closing procession. Follow the cross down the center aisle.

Duties After Mass

- Extinguish all candles that you lit before mass. The deacon will purify the vessels and the Sacristan will then clean them.
- Thanks for your service!