



Purpose of Ministry

Serving at the Altar is a special privilege. Altar Servers are close to the altar as they serve the Priest; they carry the cross, they carry the light of Christ as the Gospel is proclaimed, they hold the book of the prayers (the Roman Missal). Our altar servers wear the robe of baptism (the alb), which is a sign of their position in the community as baptized people.

"Serving at the altar is a privileged way to draw closer to Jesus, which in turn "enables you to open yourselves to others, to journey together, to set demanding goals and to find the strength to achieve them."

Pope Francis 8/4/15

Qualities of Altar Server

- Be of superior character, pure of heart and soul. He or she should have a special love for Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, and should show this love in a practical way by receiving our Lord frequently in Holy Communion.
- He or she must know and understand the movements around the altar and perform these actions without any hesitancy.
- An altar server must be trustworthy and reliable. When a server scheduled to serve Mass, he or she must arrive 15 minutes before mass.
- An altar server should always present himself in a neat and clean appearance when performing his/her duties. While you are seated in the Sanctuary you should do your job with dignity and a prayerful attitude.

Requirements/Expectations

- The Altar Server program is opened to those who have received the Sacraments of Holy Eucharist and Reconciliation. Fourth graders are trained as candle bearers; fifth grade (and older) are trained for cross and book.
- Altar Servers are required to attend training sessions. They should be familiar with the Items used within the Mass.

Schedule:

Karen Otto, our Volunteer Scheduler, will provide a schedule (up to 3 months) along with a roster with contact information for each liturgical ministry. Communication will be provided via email from VolunteerCoordinator@MQPCatholic.org, else via US Postal Service.

- Please inform the volunteer coordinator via email if you need a sub, or have found a sub for your ministry. This information will be passed on to Father so he is aware of who will be serving



Before the Liturgy

- Arrive at least 15 minutes before Mass
- Light the altar candles (on holy days, light candles on back altar as well)
- Decide among the servers who will be doing what job from the following list:
 - Carry the processional cross
 - Candle Bearers (2) (Only at the St. Martin High Mass)
- Assist in finding other Altar Servers if needed
- After the Priest leads the prayer, the Priest/Deacon and altar servers will go to the back of church to line up for the procession. At the time in the processional when you reach the front of the church, bow your head and go to your place (cross bearer puts the cross in the sacristy).

During the Liturgy

- When the Priest/Deacon goes to their chair, the book bearer stands next to the Priest. The cross bearer goes to his/her chair after putting the cross away. The candle bearers places the candles on the high altar and then to their chairs.
- At the time of the **collection**, the candle bearers get their candles and process down the center aisle to the back of the church to accompany the gift bearers. The cross bearer brings the chalice and ciborium from the credence table to the altar and then joins the Priest/Deacon at the bottom of the stairs to receive the gifts.
- Once the server receive the gifts from the Priest/Deacon, return to your place on the edge of the carpet near the altar. Hold the cruets with your right hand underneath with handles pointing out and take the tops off with your left hands. The Priest/Deacon will approach you and pour wine and a small amount of water into the chalice saying the accompanying prayer quietly. After the Priest/Deacon is finished with the water and wine cruets, the servers return them to the credence table. The cross bearer should take the bowl and the water pitcher and the book bearer will fold the towel over his folded hands and proceed back to the side of the altar. The Priest washes his hands and says the accompanying prayer quietly. The cross bearer pours water over the Priest's hands and the book bearer gives him the finger towel to dry his hands. Then they return the bowl, pitcher and towel to the credence table and go to stand behind the kneeler near the consecration bells.
- During the Eucharistic Prayer, the cross bearer and book bearer lean over to get the bells at two different times when they hear the following words "***This is my Body***" and "***Memory***". Then they ring the bells when the Priest elevates the host and when he elevates the chalice after the words of consecration.
- After Holy Communion, both server brings up the water cruet to the Priest/Deacon to purify the chalice. When the Priest/Deacon is finished with the water cruet, return the water to the credence table. Continue to help clear the altar.



- The Priest will stand for the closing prayer. The book bearer gets the Sacramentary when the Priest says, "Let us Pray". At that time the cross bearer goes into the sacristy to get the cross. When the Priest approaches the altar to reverence it at the end of Mass, the candle bearers get their candles and go to their bow points. The recessional is just the reverse of the entrance procession (line up), but it occurs up in the sanctuary in front of the tabernacle.
- When the Priest/Deacon finish genuflecting, everyone turns and begins to leave the Sanctuary.

After the Liturgy

- Remove from credence table and put in the sacristy: cruets, chalice, ciborium.
- Please remember to hang up your server robe and be sure to button the collar so it won't fall off the hanger.