

St. John the Apostle
Roman Catholic Community
Linden, New Jersey



Altar Server's Manual

Altar Server Check List of Tasks for Mass at St. John the Apostle

1. Arrive in the Msgr. Price room for assigned Mass 15 minutes before it starts and sign-in on the posted schedule.
2. Vest in Alb and Cincture (cord) – Alb length should be to ankles – switch with an Alb in the closet or ask for a new one if yours is too short or long
3. Check at the Altar that candles are lit. (light the candles if you are allowed to handle matches using the “lighter” – the long wooden pole, hanging on the door in the sacristy, with a wick and snuffer bell – if you are not allowed to light candles ask someone who can)
4. If there are three servers present two are to remove altar candles for procession (be sure to lift the out straight up so the do not get stuck). The third server will carry the Cross during the procession – in and out.
5. After a prayer in the Msgr. Price room – form up in the back of church for announcements and the Crucifer (cross barer) starts slowly walking after the singing begins.
6. All process to the Altar – no bowing or genuflecting if you are carrying cross or candles. If you are not carrying something, bow to the altar and go to your seat.
7. The crucifer then places the cross in the stand next to the wall.
8. The crucifer then goes behind the wall to get the Sacramentary (Missal) red book and waits for father to motion for him to bring the book to him. Other servers present go and sit in the front row with the lector and extraordinary ministers.
9. After the opening prayers are finished the Crucifer returns the book to the shelf behind the wall and goes to sit by way of the sacristy.
10. After the creed and intercessions the servers set-up the altar by placing the Corporal (the square white cloth) in the middle of the altar (red embroidered cross goes to the edge of the altar), then two chalices (gold cups), two purificators (rectangular wiping cloths with a cross on them) to the right side of the altar and the crystal cruet (small glass bottle of water) is placed next to the cups. The Sacramentary is placed on the Altar to the left of the Corporal on the brass stand – in reading position. Note: When choir is present three chalices are used.
11. Two servers then go the the foot of the altar to receive the gifts of bread and wine and help to carry them to the altar. The hosts are handed to father at the altar and the wine is handed to the deacon, if present. If there is no deacon present place the wine on the altar next to the chalices.
12. Server(s) then go behind the wall and get the small cloth finger towel (no cross on it), brass water holder and small brass bowl and proceed to the altar and pour the water over father’s hands the way he tells you.
13. Servers replace hand washing materials and cruets to the shelf behind the wall and return to their seats.
14. After the Lord’s Prayer (Our Father) all servers return to the altar to share a sign of peace with father and the deacon and bring any empty ciborium (gold bowl) from the shelf behind the wall, to the altar.
15. Servers return to their seats and after father’s communion they line up in the front of the altar to receive communion and then return to their seats.

16. After communion, the crucifer goes up the sacristy stairs and takes the Sacramentary book from the altar and he stands behind the wall and waits for father's signal to bring the book to him for the final prayer.
17. After the final blessing the procession forms up to leave – all bow to the altar, with father and the deacon (the Crucifer does not bow), the Crucifer goes first down the aisle, no candles.

Special Notes:

- a. While walking around the altar area, walk slowly and reverently. Hands folded in a prayerful posture.
- b. During Mass reverence the Altar rather than the Tabernacle
- c. Dress code – black shoes no sneakers or sandals. Boys wear pants (no shorts) and girls are to wear skirts (avoid, if you can, shirts, dresses and blouses with heavy stripes or checks as they will show through the Alb)
- d. Please, pay careful attention to father during Mass. He may call you for a task and do not talk to one another except about serving related things.
- e. Incense: servers handling incense will need separate additional instruction
 1. Incense (symbolizing our prayers rising to the Lord as does the smoke from the Thurible - the gold bowl on a chain where the incense burns). Incense is used at Funerals, special Masses at Christmas, Easter, Pentecost and at Confirmation.
 2. When incense is used at Mass the Thurifer leads the procession – in and out.
 3. The incense coals need to be lit 15 minutes before use.
 4. For use at Mass - Thurible is brought to father before Mass and he is handed the “boat” (a container for the incense particles) so he can bless the incense as he “imposes” (places incense in the Thurible) the incense.
 5. The Thurifer (the server carrying the incense) leads the procession in and out.
 6. The priest may “incense” the altar at the beginning of Mass and after the offertory (“preparation of the gifts”). If this is the case, the servers wait for the hand washing) (#12), until after the incensing is finished.
 7. Incense may also be used before the gospel reading – in this case the Thurifer brings the Thurible to the priest to impose the incense immediately as the second reading is finished and the congregation stands, the Thurifer kneels in front of the priest or bishop. The Thurifer then wait behind the Ambo (lectern) in front of the wall and wait for the deacon to say “The Lord be with you.....A reading from the Holy Gospel according to.....” The deacon will turn around toward the server and bowing will take the Thurible and incenses the gospel book and then turns around and returns the Thurible to the servers who return to their seats after placing the Thurible and boat on the stand.

The front of the church

Here is our altar. It is inside the Sanctuary (the carpeted area at the front of the church).

The candles must be lit before Mass begins.

Light the candles on either side of the altar and on either side of the tabernacle.



↩ There is a candle inside a blue stained glass box that is attached to the right-hand wall of the sanctuary. If you notice that this candle is out, please let Father or one of the deacons know immediately. This candle must stay lit if there is Eucharist in the tabernacle.



Lighting the altar candles

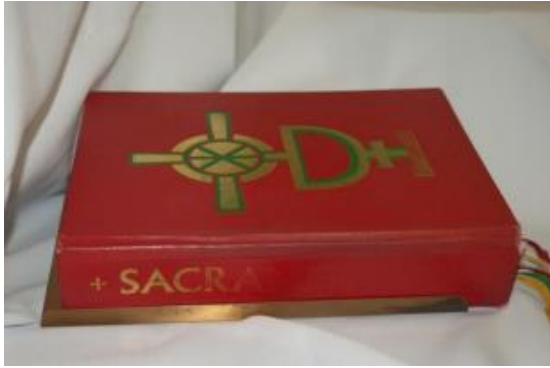


These candle lighters are hanging on the closet doors in the Sacristy. One side has a small candle wick inside which you need to slide out so about an inch of wick is outside of the brass tube. Light the wick and use it to light the candles next to the altar and next to the tabernacle. Blow out the flame before you slide the wick back down.



The other side of the lighter has a bell. This bell is called a snuffer. When it is time to put the candles out, you will place the snuffer over the flame and leave it there until the candle flame goes out.

The Sacramentary



This book is called the Sacramentary. It has all of the prayers Father says during Mass inside of it

Altar Linens



This is a corporal folded up (left) and unfolded (right). It is a square, white piece of cloth folded into 9 squares with a red cross embroidered onto the middle square at the bottom.



⇨ This is a pall. It covers the chalice during Mass.

This is a hand towel. ⇨
You will not use this every Sunday.



This is a purificator. ⇨
Father uses it to clean the chalices.



Vessels



A **ciborium** (SIB-or-ee-um) holds the Eucharist when it is being reserved. The plural of ciborium is **ciboria** (SIB-or-ee-uh). These are the three different kinds of ciboria we have at St. John's.



A **chalice** (CHAL-iss) holds the wine that becomes Jesus' Precious Blood when Father consecrates it at Mass. These are two different kinds of chalices that we have at St. John's.

These vessels are called monstrances.

A **monstrance** (MON-strince) holds the Eucharist for adoration.



Vessels (continued)



This large crystal *cruet* (CROO-it) holds the wine that the parishioners bring up during the offertory.

This brass *cruet* and *lavabo* (LAH- vah-bo) and the small finger towel are what you bring to Father after the offertory when it is time for him to wash his hands. Father uses the small crystal water cruet to pour a small amount of water into the chalice with the wine before the consecration.



This holy water bucket and *asperges* (uh-SPER-jes) are what Father uses to sprinkle the people with holy water.

How to get the Thurible ready

The vessel on the left is a thurible (THUR-ih-bull).

It holds a lit charcoal and burning incense.

The small round container next to it is called a boat.

The boat holds unlit grains of incense.

If you are carrying the thurible, you are called the Thurifer.



Lift off the top of the thurible. Then get this box of self-lite charcoal out of the bottom of the large cabinet on the far wall of the sacristy.

Take out one charcoal circle and place it in the tongs that are next to the box. Then, making sure you've got a good grip on the charcoal, use the lighter to light the charcoal (See bottom right) and place it inside the bottom part of the thurible. Close the thurible.

Father will place the grains of incense inside the thurible when he is ready.



Credence table set up to start Mass
Behind wall to right of the altar, near the
sacristy



2 Ciboria

2 Chalices
and
purificators

crystal
water
cruet

pall
and
corporal

brass
cruet with
lavabo
and
finger
towel

Sacramentary
and stand

How the altar should be set up after the Offertory



altar candles
would be lit for
Mass

sacramentary
and stand
ready for
Father to
open it,
placed on the
top left
corner of the
corporal

microphone

pall
slightly
overlapping
corporal

two
chalices

water
cruet

Corporal in the middle of
the altar, unfolded so the
bottom edge of the corporal
is at the bottom edge of
the altar. The red cross
must be at the bottom.

two
purificators one
on top of the
other next to
corporal, red
crosses at top