

Nativity of the Lord Jesus

Catholic Church

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GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR MASS SERVERS

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Before Mass:

- Arrive at least 15 minutes before Mass PLEASE!
- Say a prayer that you may serve God well.
- Make sure you have an alb that is the proper size.
- Light the altar candles & processional candles. (During the Easter Season, light the Easter Candle.)
- Make sure a Missalette & a Journeysongs Hymnal is on your chair. Mark all hymns being used at Mass from Journeysongs with a ribbon. If the processional hymn is from the Missalette, have it opened to that hymn so you can sing the hymn when you get to your chair.
- Take your processional candle; go to the church doors. Make sure to hold the candle straight so no wax goes on the floor or burns you.
- Be prepared to pray all the prayers & to sing whenever you are not doing something else that would prevent this.

When Mass begins:

- Walk next to the cross bearer. When you reach the foot of the altar, go directly to the candle stands & place them in the stand. Do NOT go toward the tabernacle; do NOT genuflect.
- Then go to your chairs...the 2 on the far ends of the row of chairs. The server closest to the credence table should go behind the chairs to get to their chair. Remain standing.
- If the priest asks the congregation to welcome one another, greet the priest & the other ministers near you.
- The server closest to the credence table should then get the Sacramentary (book) & bring it to the priest. Hold it open at a reasonable height. When the priest closes the book, return it to the table (unless there is no Gloria – Sundays when purple is worn).
- When the Gloria is almost complete (when we start to sing the words, “With the Holy Spirit, in the glory of...”) the same server gets the Sacramentary & brings it to the priest. At the end of the prayer, return it to the credence table, return to your chair & sit down.
- IF there is a Liturgy of the Word for Children (11:00 Mass during the school year) the server closest to the candle stands goes to the stands, picks up the taper, lights it, & proceeds to the foot of the altar. Then, lead the catechist & children to the classroom. Light the candle

- in the classroom from the taper, blow out the taper, & return to the church. Put the taper back where it had been, & be seated.
- When the priest stands for the “Alleluia”, stand & get the processional candles. Take them & stand on either side of the altar, facing the deacon or priest. When the deacon or priest begins to go to the ambo, move with him & stand on either side of the ambo, facing the deacon or priest. When the gospel is finished, put your processional candles back in their stands after the gospel book is placed on the stand & return to your seats.
 - Sit during the homily – look at the homilist while they preach.
 - Stand for the Creed & General Intercessions (petitions).
 - At the completion of the General Intercessions do NOT sit down. Go directly to the credence table. It does not matter which server brings which of the following items. BUT, it IS important that the items come in the following order for deacon or priest to set the altar:
 - 1 large corporal
 - 4 purificators
 - 3 GOLD bowls
 - chalice & 3 GOLD cups. NOTE: the cups are filled with wine. BE CAREFUL NOT TO SPILL ANY WINE.
 - Sacramentary
 - Both servers return to their seats & sing the offertory hymn until the priest stands. When the priest (& deacon) goes down the steps to receive the gifts, both servers stand & go down the steps, on the side of the altar they are on, & stand one to the priest’s left & one to his (deacon’s) right. The priest will hand the water & wine to the servers (or to the deacon who will give these to the servers). Take what you have received & both servers go to the altar, organ side..
 - Take the lids off of the wine & water cruets. Do NOT go to the credence table. Turn the cruets so the priest or deacon can take them by their handles.
 - When the priest or deacon is finished with the cruets, both servers move together, taking the cruets to the credence table.
 - The server carrying the empty wine cruet should set it down & put the lid on it. This server then picks up the towel & OPENS IT UP FULLY, holding it with both hands. The server carrying the water cruet picks up the small bowl for washing the priest’s hands. This server should have BOTH the water cruet (with the lid off) & the bowl. Both servers go together to wash the priest’s hands. Then return together to the credence table, set down the towel, bowl & water cruet, put the lid on the water cruet, & return to your chairs.
 - After returning to your chairs, remain standing. Do not cross in front of the deacon or any concelebrating priest. If necessary, go behind the chairs to get to your place.
 - After the “Holy, Holy, Holy” is sung, each server goes to the back corner & kneels on the top step. The server by the credence table

kneels next to the credence table; the server by the organ is immediately next to the cross & candle stands.

- At the consecration, the server closest to the organ picks up the bells & rings them clearly when the priest elevates the host, & again when the priest elevates the chalice. Then place the bells back on the floor.
- After the Great AMEN, stand & return to stand in front of your chair.
- At the Sign of Peace, exchange it with the other server & any priest or deacon who comes to extend the sign with you. Make sure your voice is clear & sincere in wishing “Peace be with you” to each person.
- After the priest receives his host, both servers should go & stand behind the chairs, next to the credence table.. You will be offered the cup. If you do not want to receive the Precious Blood, simply bow your head when it is offered to you. Then, get the patens. The server closest to the organ should then assist the priest during distribution of Communion. This server should stand to the priest’s left. The other server should assist whoever distributes hosts to priest’s left. Stand to the right of this person (immediately to the left of the other server).
- After communion, the priest or deacon will take the patens from the servers. Each server should wait until the paten is cleaned & returned to them. Then return the patens to the credence table.
- After the priest or deacon takes the remaining Eucharist to the tabernacle, the servers should then return to the altar & take the bowls, cups and corporals from the deacon or priest & place them on the credence table, neatly & carefully. All gold items should be on the small corporal. The cruets, finger bowl and towel do NOT go on this corporal. Make sure there is room to set the Sacramentary after the closing prayer.
- The server removing the Sacramentary from the altar should set it on the chair of the server closest to the credence table.
- Return to your chairs (without going in front of the priest – go behind the chairs if the priest is already at his seat) and sit.
- When the priest stands for the closing prayers, both servers stand & the server with the Sacramentary holds it for the priest until the blessing. Both servers make the sign of the cross during the blessing. The server with the Sacramentary returns it to the credence table after the blessing. (This server should be facing the priest during the blessing.)
- Both servers pick up their hymnal or Missalette (hand one to the priest if he does not have it in his hands) & sing the recessional hymn.
- After the priest (& deacon) kisses the altar, take your hymnal or Missalette & go to the bottom of the steps. The servers should be closest to the altar; the priest (& deacon) will be behind you. All will genuflect to the tabernacle. Then the servers should go around (not between) the priest & deacon & lead the procession out. Do NOT rush, but you do not need to be quite as slow as you were during the entrance procession.

After Mass:

- Take the hymnals or missalettes, including the priest's & deacon's, & return them to the sacristy. Unless you are serving 11:00 Sunday Mass, put them on the servers' chairs (& deacon's) for the next Mass. **DO NOT PUT THE PRIEST'S ON HIS CHAIR. PUT IT ON THE SHELF IN THE SACRISTY.** If you are serving at 11:00 Mass, put ALL hymnals or missalettes on the shelf in the sacristy.
- Hang your alb carefully & neatly in size order on the hangers that match the alb size to the left of the hanging mesh bag. Also, use the hangers from that side of the rack; please do not take hangers from the deacon's side. Check to see if any other albs have fallen to the floor & hang them if needed.
- Make sure the candles have been extinguished. (If there is a Baptism at Mass or it is the Easter Season, make sure the Easter Candle is also extinguished.)

General Notes:

- Get your own substitute if you cannot be at an assigned Mass.
 - It is not fair to the priest (or anyone else) to find someone minutes before Mass when they are preparing themselves for Mass.
 - If you cannot find your own substitute, please call the parish office as soon as possible. However, we have found that when the office calls for a substitute, many of the servers who can fill in have NOT been contacted by the server in need of a substitute.
- Pay attention – be open to requests to do something differently. (Sometimes there are special things happening.)
- Be prayerful in your disposition –
 - e.g. fold your hands when not holding something;
 - stand up straight,
 - move relatively slowly & reverently. If you make a “mistake”, do not hurry to correct it; rather move slowly & few people will notice there was a “mistake”.
- Look awake...direct your gaze toward what is happening at each part of the Mass...e.g. the homily – look at the priest or deacon.

Please be aware that if you are asked to serve for a special occasion that will require more specific instructions (e.g. Holy Week services / Confirmation. etc.) you will probably be asked to come to a practice sometime prior to the special occasion. Note: this applies to all servers. Experienced servers need to share their commitment & expertise with newer servers.

Thank you for your gift of service to the Lord and Nativity of the Lord Jesus parish.

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