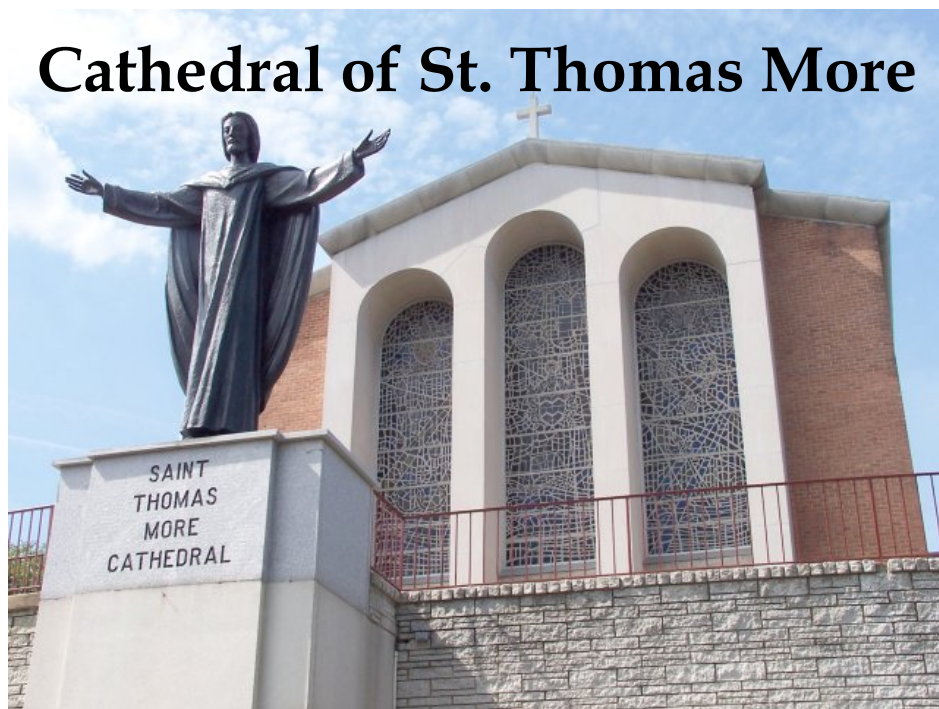


Cathedral of St. Thomas More



Altar Server Handbook

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WELCOME!

By now you have already had some training regarding the privilege and responsibility of serving at the Altar. This handbook is intended to be a reference and guide should you have any questions in the course of your service. Of course, don't hesitate to ask one of the priests or other altar servers if you have questions.

BACKGROUND

At Mass, the one Sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the Cross is made present on the Altar. The very same Sacrifice is offered to God through the hands of the priest for the salvation of the world. The Mass is the highest prayer of the Church, and the most powerful. In fact, St. Padre Pio once said of the Mass, "The world could sooner exist without the sun than it could without the Mass."

In the Holy Eucharist, Jesus Christ is made truly present on the Altar. The Mass culminates in the consecration of the bread and wine, when they are transformed into the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus.

The priest, whose hands were consecrated by the Bishop at his ordination, is given the awesome responsibility of celebrating the Sacred Mysteries with reverence and devotion. At his side are the altar servers, whose role is to aid and enhance the worship offered to God at Holy Mass.

QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

The Cathedral of St. Thomas More maintains the long-standing tradition of boys serving at the Altar at Mass. Any boy between 4th and 12th grade who has received his First Communion is eligible to serve.

Training for new servers will occur normally once/year in the Fall with one of our priests. Once a server reaches high school age, he will be considered for a Master of Ceremonies (MC) position, in which he will take on some leadership responsibility during Mass. They can also expect to serve Masses with the Bishop. Training for new MCs will occur each May.

Those who are interested may email Father at altarservers@cathedralstm.org. This email address may be used for all altar server related correspondence.

SCHEDULING

The Cathedral uses an online scheduling program called Ministry Scheduler Pro (www.ministryschedulerpro.com), MSP. You and your son will receive an email reminder when he has a scheduled Sunday or weekday Mass, or Wedding, Funeral, or Holy Hour.

Each **Sunday**, the 9:30 and 11:00 AM Masses will have 1 MC and 3 servers. The other Masses will have 1 MC and 2 servers. All can expect to serve twice/month, and on occasion three times.

Weekday Masses normally have 1 server. Boys at STM school will serve the 7:00 AM and 12:05 PM weekday Masses. They can expect to serve these Masses at least twice/month.

Boys who are not students at STM school will serve the 9:00 AM Mass on **Saturday mornings**. There will be one or two servers scheduled each Saturday.

Two servers will be scheduled for **Weddings and Funerals**. There is often a small stipend associated with these liturgies.

Bishop Burbidge often has special Masses at the Cathedral as well. Normally, MCs will be asked to serve these Masses, with a

contingent of middle school servers as well. Depending on the Mass, these Masses require 5-7 servers.

Regarding the initial monthly scheduling, I am happy to schedule your son around vacation or weekends when he will be away for one reason or another. I cannot, however, schedule your son around your or his other weekend activities. Serving at the altar of God is a responsibility I ask the boys to take seriously, and it would be a disservice to God and to them for me not to maintain that standard.

Families in Arlington are involved in many different (and good) activities, which means that sometimes your son will be unavailable for a scheduled Mass. MSP offers a feature that allows you to request subs for your scheduled Masses and includes the ability to make trades.

As always, if you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me via email – altarservers@cathedralstm.org. You may also call the parish office to leave a message for me: (703) 525-1300.

DRESS CODE

Boys must wear dress pants (e.g. Dockers) with dark socks and black (preferred) or brown shoes. **Absolutely no jeans, shorts, sneakers, flip flops, etc. School gym uniform is OK for weekday Mass ONLY.** They should also wear a polo or button-down shirt and belt. If you are not dressed appropriately, do not vest.

On the altar, the boys will wear black cassocks and white surplice. The MCs only will wear the more ornate surplice. On special feasts (e.g. Christmas, Easter, etc.), they will wear red cassocks.

THE DIGNITY OF THE ALTAR

Any activity that we engage in demands a corresponding type of behavior. The playground invites just that – play. The sports field calls for skill, knowledge, and intensity. The Altar expects from us awe, reverence, and devotion.

If we imagine what it would be like to stand next to Mary and St. John at the foot of the Cross, we can get a sense of how to approach the Altar. The priest, when he celebrates Mass, acts *in persona Christi* – in the person of Christ – offering Jesus' Sacrifice to God. That means that what Jesus did on the Cross 2,000 years ago is made present in the Holy Eucharist on the Altar at every Mass. So, when we approach the Altar, we approach the Cross.

We would be ignoring Christ's love for us if we were to goof around at the foot of the Cross. It would be like pretending that His sacrifice doesn't mean anything and doesn't matter.

Servers at the Cathedral of St. Thomas More are expected to acknowledge the dignity of the Altar by their dress, words, actions, and behavior, and to set an example for those who are attending Mass each day.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS

To put it simply, we can't do it without you! Parents are the primary educators of their children, and we rely on your support, encouragement, and example for your boys to be on time, maintain appropriate dress, and have a sense of reverence for the Mass. You are certainly welcome to correct any mistakes / errors that you see when they serve as well.

PATRON SAINTS OF ALTAR BOYS

SAINT JOHN BERGHMANS

Born at Diest in Brabant, Belgium 13 March, 1599; died at Rome, 13 August, 1621. He was naturally kind, gentle, and affectionate towards them, a favorite with his playmates, brave and open, attractive in manner, and with a bright, joyful disposition. Yet he was also, by natural disposition, impetuous and fickle. Still, when John was but seven years of age, his parish priest, already remarked with pleasure that the Lord would work wonders in the soul of the child.

What distinguished him most from his companions was his piety. When he was hardly seven years old, he was accustomed to rise early and serve two or three Masses with the greatest fervor. He attended religious instructions and listened to Sunday sermons with the deepest recollection, and made pilgrimages to the sanctuary of Montaignu, a few miles from Diest, reciting the rosary as he went, or absorbed in meditation.

As soon as he entered the Jesuit college at Mechlin, he was enrolled in the Society of the Blessed Virgin, and made a resolution to recite her Office daily. He would, moreover, ask the director of the sodality every month to prescribe for him some special acts of devotion to Mary. On Fridays, at nightfall, he would go out barefooted and make the Stations of the Cross in the town. Such fervent, filial piety won for him the grace of a religious vocation. Towards the end of his rhetoric course, he felt a distinct call to the Society of Jesus. His family was decidedly opposed to this, but on 24 September, 1616, he was received into the novitiate. Eventually, he set out for Rome, where he was to continue his studies. After journeying three hundred leagues on foot, he arrived at the Roman College, he studied for two years.

One day early in August 1621 he was selected by the prefect of studies to take part in a philosophical disputation at the Greek College, at that time under the charge of the Dominicans. He opened the discussion with great perspicuity and erudition, but, on returning to his own college, he was seized with a violent fever of which he died, on 13 August, at the age of twenty-two years and five months.

St. Aloysius of Gonzaga had been his spiritual model, and he was influenced as well by the example of the Jesuit English martyrs. It was his realistic appreciation for the value of ordinary things, a characteristic of the Flemish mystical tradition, that constituted his holiness. Numerous miracles were attributed to him at the time of his funeral. He was beatified by Pope Pius IX in 1865 and canonized by Pope Leo XIII in 1888.

SAINT TARCISIUS

From Pope Damasus: "just as Stephen was stoned by the people of Judea so Tarsicius, carrying the Blessed Sacrament, was attacked by a heathen rabble, and he suffered death rather 'than surrender the Sacred Body [of Christ] to the raging dogs'."

Tarcisus was a twelve-year-old acolyte during one of the fierce Roman persecutions of the third century, probably during that of Valerian. Each day, from a secret meeting place in the catacombs where Christians gathered for Mass, a deacon would be sent to the prisons to carry the Eucharist to those Christians condemned to die. At one point, there was no deacon to send and so St. Tarcisus, an acolyte, was sent carrying the "Holy Mysteries" to those in prison.

On the way, he was stopped by boys his own age who were not Christians but knew him as a playmate and lover of games. He was asked to join their games, but this time he refused, and the

crowd of boys noticed that he was carrying something. Somehow, he was also recognized as a Christian, and the small gang of boys, anxious to view the Christian "Mysteries," became a mob and turned upon Tarcisius with fury. He went down under the blows, but when the boys searched him to find out what he was carrying, they found nothing. It is believed that a fellow Christian drove off the mob and rescued the young acolyte.

The mangled body of Tarcisius was carried back to the catacombs, but the boy died on the way from his injuries. He was buried in the cemetery of St. Callistus, and his relics are claimed by the church of San Silvestro in Capite. Tarcisius has always been an example of youthful courage and devotion, and his story was one that was told again and again to urge others to a like heroism in suffering for their faith.

From EWTN and the Catholic Encyclopedia (www.newadvent.org)

PRAYERS FOR ALTAR SERVERS

Prayer Before Mass

Open my mouth, O Lord, to bless Your Holy Name. Cleanse my heart from all evil and distracting thoughts. Enlighten my understanding and inflame my will that I may serve more worthily at Your holy altar.

O Mary, Mother of Christ the High Priest, obtain for me the most important grace of knowing my vocation in life. Grant me a true spirit of faith and humble obedience so that I may ever behold the priest as a representative of God and willingly follow him in the Way, the Truth, and the Life of Christ. Amen.

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, and always act accordingly, as a privileged altar server. May I ever seek You and find You; may I always follow You; may Your priestly spirit be my guide, and Your service of love be my example. May Your Holy Name always be on my lips, and may every work of mine be done for Your praise and glory.

Ever ready in Your service, may I always know and do Your Holy Will in all things. May I remain pure and blameless and be found worthy to be Your servant, and by Your grace may I persevere to the end. Amen.

Vesting Prayers (to be said while vesting before Mass)

Cassock

Dominus, pars hereditatis meae et calicis mei, tu es qui restitues hereditatem meam.

O Lord, the portion of my inheritance and my Chalice, You are He who will restore my inheritance.

Surplice

Indue me, Domine, novum hominem, qui secundum Deum creatus est in iustitia et sanctitate veritatis. Amen.

Invest me, O Lord, as a new man, who was created by God in justice and the holiness of truth. Amen.

THE BASICS

All servers must know and follow these rules!

1. Be on time! Your goal is to arrive 15 minutes before Mass begins, but no later than 10 minutes prior.
2. You must keep the Eucharistic fast 1 hour before receiving Communion. This includes gum!
3. There is absolutely no horseplay in the Church building.
4. There is no reason to run in the Church. Please walk.
5. You must be appropriately dressed to serve. Period.
6. When you are serving Mass, you *must* audibly say or sing all prayers and responses in a reverent manner.
7. When standing, keep your hands folded unless you are holding something.
8. When sitting, keep your feet flat on the floor and your hands flat on your knees unless you are holding something.
9. During Mass, the MC has the final say. Do not argue with him or with the other boys about jobs at Mass. In the event that there is no MC, the oldest Server will be in charge.
10. If you have a problem with one of the other Servers, speak to the MC *privately*. It is his job to correct the mistakes of the other Servers. If you have a problem with the MC, speak to Father *privately*. There is absolutely no room for uncharitable public criticism and complaining.

POSTURES AND GESTURES

Folding of hands in prayer Fingers and thumbs together, palm on palm, right thumb over left thumb with hands resting on chest.



Making a large sign of the Cross

Place left hand on your sternum, place fingers of right hand on forehead, then just above the left hand, then the left shoulder, then the right, and finally return your hand to the folded position. (Your palm should always remain facing your body.)



Making a small sign of the Cross

Fingers together, use thumb to trace the sign of the cross (on your forehead, for example), keeping the palm of your hand open and facing you.



Position of hands when holding something

Place free hand on sternum, with your thumb apart from your fingers facing up toward your chin.



Striking your breast

Place your left hand on your sternum as above and lightly tap your chest with your right hand held in a slightly cupped manner.



Giving and receiving

When you give something to Father, try to use your right hand. When you receive something from Father, try to use your left hand. (Remember to place your free hand on your sternum.)

Position of hands during procession

Folded in prayer.



Position when kneeling

Back straight, head held up, hands folded in prayer.



Bowing your head

At the name of Jesus or Mary you make a bow with your head.

Bowing to Father after completing a task for him

After you complete a task for Father, you should reverently make a **simple bow** to him with your head and shoulders. **Wait for Father to initiate the bow.**



NOTE: Bowing is not a race. Carefully and purposefully execute a bow. If you are completing a task with another server, bow together.

Reverencing the Altar

After you complete a task at the Altar, you should make a **profound bow** to the Altar by bending at your waist.



Turning

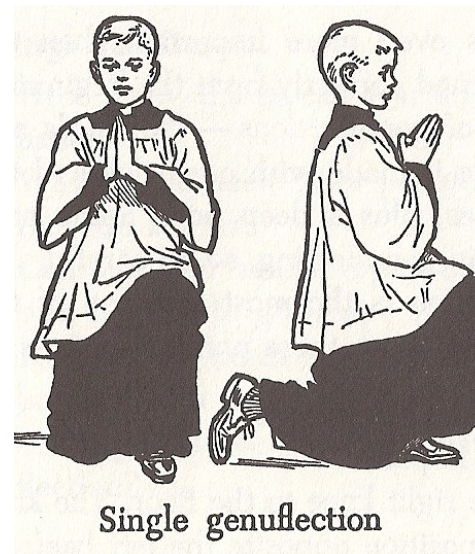
When turning you should do so slowly. When there are two Altar Boys turning together, you should always turn in toward each other.

SERVING TIP: Never do two things at once, i.e. bowing and turning. Do each separately and deliberately.

Genuflecting to the Tabernacle

When you cross in front of the Tabernacle you should stop and genuflect by bringing your right knee down to the floor close to your left foot. Remember to keep your back and head straight! Note: when Jesus is being adored on the Altar you should go down on both knees *and* make a profound bow.

TIP: If you are completing a task at the Altar and then bow to Father or reverence the Altar, you do not also have to genuflect to the Tabernacle.



Sitting

Sit with feet flat on floor, back straight and palms down flat, resting on your legs.



HOW TO SERVE MASS

SUNDAY MASS

Setup

MC Responsibilities:

- Ask who is celebrating Mass and if there is anything special or different about today's liturgy.
- Know who your servers are. When they arrive, ensure they are properly vested (e.g. cassock fits, surplice is straight).
- Assign jobs for servers.
- Ensure that all sacred vessels and other items needed for Mass are set out in their proper place.

Preparation:

- **Presentation Ciborium** and **Wine** to the Gifts Table by the entrance of the Church
- **Chalice** to Credence Table after it is veiled
- Extra **Ciboria** to Credence Table when filled (unless otherwise specified)
- **Water Cruet** to Credence Table. If it is not filled, fill with cold water.
- Fill Pitcher with warm water. Empty Bowl if needed.
- **Pitcher/Bowl/Towel** to Credence Table.
- 4 **Patens** to Credence Table
- **Excerpts from the Roman Missal** book to server chair
- Candles lit 5 minutes before Mass

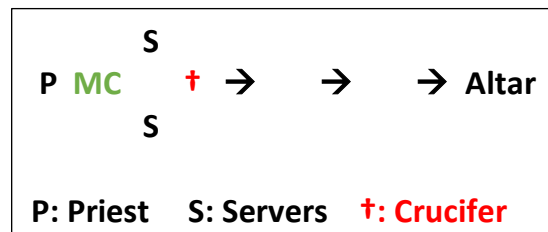
If Incense is used:

- Ten (10) minutes before Mass, light **1 charcoal** using candle-lighter and tongs
- Ensure **boat** is filled with incense.
- Place **thurible stand** in the altar server sacristy.

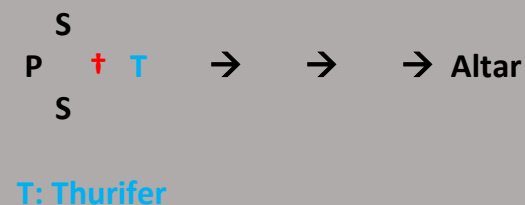
Procession

When setup is completed and Father is vested for Mass, he will say a prayer with the servers, and all will go either outside or downstairs through Burke Hall (if it is raining) to the entrance of the Cathedral to begin Mass.

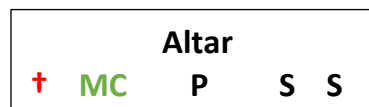
Upon arriving at the entrance of the Cathedral, the servers should line up at the top of the center aisle in the order indicated below.



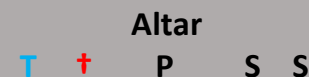
If Incense is used:



Upon reaching the sanctuary, all line up on the front edge of the carpet, closest to the altar, in the order shown below:



If Incense is used:



All genuflect together (**Crucifer** bows). Father ascends the altar to the right, and the **Servers** all turn left to go to stand at their seats. **Crucifer** puts the crucifix in the stand and goes to stand at his seat.

If Incense is used:

Thurifer bows with the **Crucifer** and ascends the altar to the left and waits at the left edge of the carpet behind the altar. After Father kisses the altar, he will approach the **Thurifer**. The **Thurifer** will hand the boat to Father (or to the Deacon, if he is there), lift the top of the thurible while lifting thurible itself high enough for Father to put 3 scoops of incense into it. When Father blesses the incense, the **Thurifer** closes the thurible, takes the boat from Father (or Deacon), and hands the thurible to Father (or Deacon, if he is there). Father will then incense the altar, while the **Thurifer** waits in place. When Father finishes, he will hand the thurible to the **Thurifer** (or to the Deacon if he is there, who will give it to the **Thurifer**). The **Thurifer** returns the thurible and boat to the thurible stand in the altar server sacristy, and then goes to his chair.

Introductory Rites and Liturgy of the Word

The **MC's** first action is based on who is celebrating Mass.

For Father Rippy: At the end of the Gloria, at the words “With the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father”, the **MC** should open the *Excerpts* to the page with the red ribbon, give it to the **Book Bearer**, and send him to Father with the open book. He should arrive in front of Father as the people are singing “Amen.”

- In Lent and Advent, there is no Gloria, so the above actions should be done as “Lord, have mercy” is sung.

For Father Christensen: As soon as Father is at the bench, the **MC** immediately takes the *Excerpts from the Roman Missal* and opens it to the page with the red ribbon. He gives it, open, to the **Book Bearer** and sends him to stand in front of Father.

- Father will send the **Server** back to his chair when the Gloria begins. At the end of the Gloria, as above, the **MC** should open the *Excerpts* to the page with the red ribbon, give it to the **Book Bearer**, and send him to Father with the open book.

For Father Isenberg: The **MC** immediately takes the *Excerpts from the Roman Missal* and opens it to the first red tab. This tab has the page with the Introductory Rites of Mass. The **MC** should give the *Excerpts* to the **Book Bearer** and send him to Father with the open book.

If Incense is used: The **Book Bearer** will take his cue from the priest. The **MC** will be unavailable at that moment, as he is putting away the incense.

After the Collect (opening prayer), the **MC** should walk up to the **Server** with the book and motion with his finger to return to his chair. All sit for the readings. At the Alleluia, all stand with Father.

If Incense is used: The **Thurifer** should go retrieve the thurible and boat during the second reading. He waits, standing by the Credence Table. He approaches Father immediately when the Alleluia starts. He hands the boat to Father or Deacon as at the beginning of Mass, and Father imposes incense as before. After Father blesses the incense, the **Thurifer** walks to the edge of the top step by the entrance to the pulpit, faces the pulpit, and waits for Father or Deacon.

After Father or Deacon says, “A reading from the Holy Gospel according to N.”, he will take the thurible from the **Thurifer** and incense the Lectionary/Book of the Gospels. He hands the thurible back to the **Thurifer**, who waits in place, swinging the thurible gently until Father/Deacon finishes reading the Gospel.

Then, the **Thurifer** returns the thurible to the altar server sacristy, places another charcoal on top of the one already burning, and returns to his chair.

When Father or Deacon enters the pulpit, **all Servers** turn towards the pulpit.

When Father/Deacon finishes reading the Gospel, **all Servers** sit.

After the homily, Father or Deacon will return to his chair. At this time, the **MC** and the **Book Bearer** should stand. The **MC** opens the *Excerpts* to the second tab (it is the uppermost tab) and gives the open book to the **Book Bearer**. They wait at their chairs.

When Father stands, the **MC** sends the **Book Bearer** to him with open book. After the General Intercessions (Prayers of the Faithful), the **MC** should walk up to the **Server** with the book and motion to him with his finger to return to his chair. All sit.

Preparation of the Altar and Liturgy of the Eucharist

The **Crucifer** immediately takes the crucifix and goes to the back of the Church down the side aisle.

The **MC** and **both Servers** go to the Credence Table. The **MC** directs the **Servers** regarding the items that need to be brought to the altar. The **MC** does not bring any items to the altar. When bringing items to the altar, the **Servers** should walk directly from the Credence Table to the altar. There is no need to run or to rush. After placing an item on the altar, the **Server** should bow slightly with his head and return to the Credence Table. These items should be taken to the altar in this order:

- **Book Stand with Roman Missal** – placed slightly left of center on the altar at an angle so Father can read it
- **Chalice** – placed *slightly* right of center on the altar
- **Any filled Ciboria** – placed to the right of the chalice, but close to the chalice

NOTE: You do not need to walk military-style up to the altar. Simply walk from the Credence Table directly to the altar. You may step onto the top step in order to place items on the altar.

Once these items are on the altar, Father will open the Missal, unfold the corporal and place the paten on top of it and the chalice near it. When he is done, he will go to the front of the altar to receive the gifts. The **two Servers** go with him and stand on either side of him.

If Incense is used: The **Thurifer** at this time should retrieve the thurible and boat, and wait by the Credence Table.

When the **Crucifer** sees Father and the **Servers** coming to the front of the altar, he should begin walking, ensuring that the gift bearers are behind him. When he arrives at the front of the main aisle, the **Crucifer** stops and bows his head. He then begins walking again, turns left and puts the crucifix back in its stand. He waits by the Credence Table.

Father will receive the gifts from the gift bearers and give the Presentation Ciborium to one **Server** and the wine cruet to the other **Server**. The **Server** with the Ciborium follows Father up to the altar, and the **Server** with the wine returns to the Credence Table. Father will take the Ciborium and give the top to the **Server** who returns it to the Credence Table.

At the Credence Table, the **MC** removes the stoppers from the water and wine cruets and gives the water cruet to the **Server** (not the **Crucifer**).

If Incense is used: The **Crucifer** removes the stoppers from the cruets.

The 2 **Servers** walk directly to Father shoulder to shoulder, stopping at the top step, carrying the cruets in their right hands with the handles outward so Father can take them easily. After Father pours the wine and a little water into the Chalice, he bows his head and returns the cruets to the **Servers**, who bow their heads to Father and return the cruets to the Credence Table.

The **MC** gives the pitcher and bowl to the **Crucifer** and the towel to one of the **Servers**. As Father bows towards the altar after offering the wine, the **Servers** with the pitcher, bowl, and towel should walk up to the altar and wait at the top step at the edge of the altar. When Father walks over to them, the **Crucifer** pours water over Father's hands into the bowl, being careful not to

splash much. As Father dries his hands, the **Server** with the towel should hold his hands folded with his thumbs raised a little so Father can place the used towel between his thumbs and forefingers. Father bows his head to the **Servers**, who return the bow and then return the items to the Credence Table. All **Servers** then go to their chairs.

If Incense is used: When the **Servers** return to the Credence Table with the water and wine, the **Thurifer** walks to the corner of the altar. Father/Deacon will impose incense as before. The **Thurifer** will hand the thurible to Father (or Deacon if he is there), return the boat to the Credence Table, and return to the corner of the altar. Father will incense the bread and wine and then the altar. When he finishes incensing the altar, he will give the thurible to **Thurifer** (or to the Deacon if he is there). The **Thurifer** (or Deacon) will bow to Father, who will also bow, and will then incense Father with 3 swings of the thurible. Then, the Deacon or **Thurifer** will go to the center of the carpet in front of the altar. If there is a Deacon, the **Thurifer** waits at the corner of the altar.

As the **Thurifer** or Deacon incenses Father, the **Crucifer** hands the towel to one of the **Servers** and takes the pitcher and bowl. When the **Thurifer** or Deacon goes to the front of the altar, the **Crucifer** and **Server** walk to Father to wash his hands. After returning the items to the Credence Table, all **Servers** go to their chairs.

Once he is at the carpet, the **Thurifer** (or Deacon) motions for the congregation to stand, bows to them, and incenses them with 3 swings of the thurible. The first swing is towards the center. He then turns left, facing the left transept for the second swing. He then turns around towards the right transept for the third swing. After incensing the people, the **Thurifer** returns the thurible to the altar server sacristy. (The Deacon returns the thurible to the **Thurifer**, who then goes to the altar server sacristy.)

After the Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy), all **Servers** kneel on the kneepad in front of their chairs.

At the Epiclesis, the moment in the Eucharistic Prayer when Father places both of his hands flat over the gifts, the **Crucifer** rings the bells once. He does not ring them for a long time, only for a very short duration.

At the consecration of the bread and wine, **Crucifer** will ring the bells three times at each elevation. Each of the three rings is also for a very short duration, not for a long time. It is OK if Father leaves the host or chalice elevated after the **Crucifer** has finished ringing the bells. After the Great Amen, all **Servers** stand.

At the Sign of Peace, the **Servers**, led by the **MC**, come up the steps in a line to shake Father's hand, and then return to their chairs. At the Lamb of God, the **MC** retrieves the patens and gives them to the **Servers**. After the Lamb of God, all **Servers** kneel in front of their chairs. They stand when Father approaches them with Holy Communion.

The **Servers** hold the patens for themselves and then for one of the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. After Communion, the **Crucifer** waits near the Tabernacle for the patens to be cleaned and handed to him. He brings them back to the Credence Table and places them in their covers. He then returns to his chair and prays.

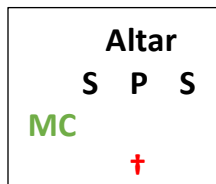
After their patens are taken, the **Servers** return to their chairs to pray. The **MC** removes the Book Stand and Roman Missal from the altar and returns to the Credence Table. There, he removes the stopper from the water cruet, and hands it to one of the **Servers**. After the Tabernacle is closed, the **Server** brings it directly to Father at the edge of the altar. The **Server** pours the

water over Father's fingers into the Chalice until Father tells him to stop. He then returns the cruet to the Credence Table and goes back to the altar to wait for Father to finish purifying the chalice and ciboria. The **Server** returns each ciborium and finally the chalice to the Credence Table as Father finishes purifying them.

When the altar is clear, the **MC** and **Book Bearer** stand, the **MC** opens the *Excerpts* book to the page with the red ribbon and hands it open to the **Book Bearer**. When Father stands after Communion, the **MC** sends the **Book Bearer** to him with the open book. After the Prayer after Communion, the **MC** walks up to the **Server** with the book and motions with his finger to return to his chair, unless there is a solemn blessing. If there is a solemn blessing, the **MC** walks up to the **Server** after the blessing. (The **MC** should ask Father before Mass if there will be a solemn blessing.)

If Incense is used: The **Thurifer** should retrieve the incense after he sends the **Book Bearer** to Father for the Prayer after Communion. He waits by the Credence Table. Father will direct the **Book Bearer** in this case.

After the Dismissal, the **Servers** should line up as follows for the exit Procession:



The **Crucifer** stands directly behind Father at the back edge of the carpet.

The **Thurifer** stands on the edge of the first step of the sanctuary.

Altar
S P S

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All genuflect (except the **Crucifer** and **Thurifer**, who bow), turn and exit in the same order as the Entrance Procession.

After exiting, the **Servers** line up inside the main exterior doors of the Cathedral:

Server **Crucifer** **Server** **MC/Thurifer**

When Father reaches the exit, he will bow to the Cross and say, "Prosit" ("May it be beneficial"). The **Servers** respond, "Pro omnibus et singulis" ("for all and for one").

Cleanup

All **Servers** return to the sacristy. **Immediately, the Altar Server Prayer After Mass is said together, audibly, led by the MC.**

After the prayer, everything is put away:

- **Chalice, Water and Wine Cruets, Pitcher and Bowl,** and the **Top to the Presentation Ciborium** should be brought to the sacristy.
- The **Pitcher** and **Bowl** are emptied.
- The **Water Cruet** is refilled with cold water.
- The **Patens** and the **Hand Towel** may be left at the Credence Table.
- The candles are extinguished.
- **Vestments are hung up in the altar server sacristy.**

If Incense is used: The thurible is emptied (using the tongs) into the black box in the sacristy. **Be sure to close the top of the black box. This cuts off air flow and puts out the burning charcoals.** The incense stand and boat are returned to the main sacristy. The boat is refilled if necessary.

When all these items have been completed, the **MC** dismisses the **Servers**. **No Server may leave until the MC has dismissed him.**

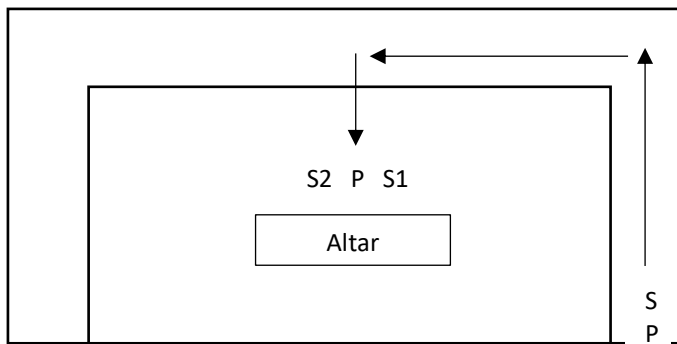
WEEKDAY AND SATURDAY MASS

Preparation:

- **Wine and Water Cruets** to the Credence Table. Fill water cruet with cold water if necessary. If wine cruet is low, ask Father to fill it.
- **Chalice** to Credence Table after it is veiled.
- Extra **Ciboria** to Credence Table when filled (unless otherwise specified)
- Fill Pitcher with warm water. Empty Bowl if needed. **Pitcher/Bowl/Towel** to Credence Table.
- 1 **Patén** to Credence Table, 2 **Patens** for 12:05 PM Mass if there are 2 Servers
- Candles lit 5 minutes before Mass

Procession

When setup is completed and Father is vested for Mass, he will say a prayer with the **Server**, and all will go to the passage behind the altar and wait by the Credence Table. When the Lector begins announcing the Mass of the day, the **Server** (shoulder to shoulder, if more than one) begins leading Father around the sanctuary on the main floor to front step in front of the altar. At the front of the carpet in front of the altar, the **Server** will go to the left front corner. If there is a second **Server**, he will go to the right front corner of the carpet.



When Father genuflects, the **Server** also genuflects. He goes to his chair and remains standing as Father goes to the altar. He continues to stand during the Introductory Rites. After the Collect (Opening Prayer), Father returns to his bench. When Father sits, the **Server** sits.

When Father stands for the Gospel, the **Server** also stands. When he enters the pulpit, the **Server** turns and faces towards the pulpit, and remains that way until the Gospel is finished. When Father finishes the Gospel, the **Server** sits. If Father does not preach a homily, the **Server** immediately begins preparing the altar. If Father does preach a homily, the **Server** listens reverently with his hands on his knees.

Preparation of the Altar and Liturgy of the Eucharist

After the homily, the **Server** go to the Credence Table and immediately brings the Chalice to the altar. It is placed slightly to the right of center on the altar. Any filled ciboria may be brought out after the Chalice.

Then the **Server** removes the stoppers from the water and wine cruets and, taking one in each hand, walks directly to Father, holding the handles outward. After Father pours the wine and a little water into the Chalice, he returns the cruets to the **Server** and bows with his head. The **Server** bows in return and returns to the Credence Table.

The **Server** replaces the tops on the cruets and then drapes the towel over one arm. As Father bows towards the altar after offering the wine, the **Server** walks up to the altar with the pitcher in one hand, the bowl in the other, and the towel draped over his arm. When Father walks over to him, the **Server** pours water over Father's hands into the bowl, being careful not to splash much.

He will make a head bow again to the **Server**, who bows in return and places the items back on the Credence Table. The **Server** then goes to his chair and stands. After the Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy), the **Server** kneels by his chair in front of the bells.

At the Epiclesis, the moment in the Eucharistic Prayer when Father places both of his hands flat over the gifts, the **Server** rings the bells once. He does not ring them for a long time, only for a very short duration.

At the consecration of the bread and wine, the **Server** will ring the bells three times at each elevation. Each of the three rings is also for a very short duration, not for a long time. It is OK if Father leaves the host or chalice elevated after the **Server** has finished ringing the bells. After the Great Amen, the **Server** stands.

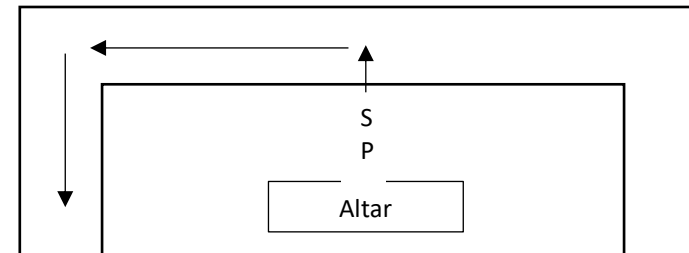
At the Sign of Peace, the **Server** comes up the steps to shake Father's hand, and then returns to his chairs. At the Lamb of God, he retrieves the paten. After the Lamb of God, the **Server** kneels in front of his chairs. He stands when Father approaches with Holy Communion.

The **Server** holds the paten for himself and then for Father. After Communion, he waits near the Tabernacle for the paten to be cleaned and handed to him. He brings it back to the Credence Table and places it in its cover. He then takes the stopper off of the water cruet and goes to the right side of the altar, waiting for Father.

When Father brings him the chalice, the **Server** pours the water over Father's fingers into the chalice until Father tells him to stop. He then returns the cruet to the Credence Table and goes back to the altar to wait for Father to finish purifying the chalice and

ciboria. The **Server** returns each ciborium and finally the chalice to the Credence Table as Father finishes purifying them.

Once the chalice is back on the Credence Table, the **Server** returns to his chair to sit and pray. He stands when Father says, "Let us pray." After the final blessing, the **Server** walks around the pulpit to the front corner of the carpet where he stood at the entrance procession. He genuflects with Father and then leads him out, turning left to go out after exiting the sanctuary.



When the procession reaches the sacristy, Father will bow to the Cross and say, "Prosit" ("May it be beneficial"). The **Server** responds, "Pro omnibus et singulis" ("for all and for one").

Cleanup

Immediately, the Altar Server Prayer After Mass is said together, audibly, led by Father. After the prayer, everything is put away:

- **Chalice, Water and Wine Cruets, Pitcher and Bowl**, and the should be brought to the sacristy.
- The **Pitcher** and **Bowl** are emptied.
- The **Water Cruet** is refilled with cold water.
- The **Paten** and the **Hand Towel** may be left at the Credence Table.
- The candles are extinguished.
- Vestments are hung up in the altar server sacristy.

After all of this is completed, the **Server** may leave.

BENEDICTION (THURSDAY NIGHTS)

General

Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament is the concluding rite for Eucharistic Adoration. Please arrive no later than 8 PM. This is necessary for setup. Benediction begins at 8:20 PM.

Setup

Light **incense**. Place the **incense stand** to the right of the carpet in front of the altar, but keep the **thurible** and **incense boat** with you. Place one of the **altar server chairs** to the left of the carpet in front of the altar. Hang the **humeral veil** over the back of the chair. The **humeral veil** can be found in the long slender drawer (close to the ground) labeled “Humeral Veils”. Place the **altar bells and pad** on the second step towards the left side of the carpet. **If there is only 1 server**, omit the bells. At 8:20 PM, knock on the door of Father’s confessional to let him know it is time to begin. Father will finish his current confession and then begin. If there are others in line waiting for confession, please tell them that Father will hear their confessions after Benediction. Wait by the credence table (where we start daily Mass).

Benediction

Process (**Thurifer**, **Server**, Father) from the credence table to the altar as at daily Mass. The **Thurifer** will go to the right corner of the carpet, Father to the center, and the **Server** to the left corner. All genuflect (**Thurifer** bows). The **Server** on the left will kneel, while Father and the **Thurifer** stand. Father will impose incense, begin singing the *Tantum Ergo*, and kneel. The **Thurifer** will hand the thurible to Father, then place the incense boat on the stand, and then kneel. Father will incense the Blessed Sacrament during the hymn and return the thurible to the **Thurifer**. The **Thurifer** will hang the thurible from the stand.

Father will sing: “You have given them bread from Heaven. (Alleluia).” The congregation responds: “Having within it all delight. (Alleluia).” Father will stand and sing “Let us pray.” When he stands, the **Server** on the left will also stand and get the humeral veil ready. After Father finishes the prayer, he will kneel, and the **Server** with the humeral veil will place it over Father’s shoulders. Father will take the humeral veil, clasp it, and go up to the altar. The **Server** will return to his place and kneel.

When Father goes up to the altar, the **Thurifer** takes the thurible and kneels with it in the center where Father was. When Father blesses the congregation with the Blessed Sacrament (making the Sign of the Cross with it), the **Thurifer** will incense the Blessed Sacrament while the **Server** rings the bells. The **Thurifer** uses three swings of the thurible three times (9 swings total): 3x when the Monstrance is at the top of the cross, 3x when the Monstrance moves right (the first arm of the cross), and 3x when the Monstrance moves left (second arm of the cross). The **Server** will ring the bell 3 times, one long ring for the duration of each set of 3 thurible swings. Then, Father will return to the center of first step and kneel there as the **Thurifer** returns the thurible to the stand. Father will unclasp the humeral veil, so the **Server** can remove it from Father’s shoulders, fold it, and place it back on the chair. Father will begin the Divine Praises (“Blessed be God. Blessed be His Holy Name., etc.). After the Divine Praises, Father will repose the Blessed Sacrament. The **Servers** remain kneeling until Father closes the Tabernacle. Then all stand. When Father returns to the center, all genuflect (**Thurifer** bows), turn, and leave as at daily Mass – **Thurifer**, **Server**, Father.

Cleanup

- Empty **thurible**, extinguish **candles**, put away **humeral veil**
- Return **bells** and **server chair** to their places
- Return **monstrance** and **Tabor stand** to sacristy

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Alb: White robe worn by the priest and deacon

Altar: Table for the Sacrifice of the Mass

Amice: A white cloth with strings worn by the priest and deacon around his neck and tucked into his collar.

Aspergillum: Short wand which the priest uses to sprinkle Holy Water

Aspersorium: Another name for the Holy Water Bucket

Bishop: A man ordained to the third and highest level of Holy Orders. He is appointed by the Holy Father, and is usually the shepherd of a diocese.

Boat: Container which holds the incense

Book of the Gospels: Book which contains only Gospel readings

Burse: Square container placed on top of the chalice. The corporal is placed inside it.

Cantor: Person who leads the people in song during Mass

Cassock: Black robe worn by priests, deacons, and altar servers. May also be red for altar servers.

Cathedral: The Bishop's chair, above which is his crest. Only he may sit there.

Cathedral: The Bishop's Church. It contains his cathedra.

Censor: Another name for the thurible

Chalice: Cup for the Precious Blood

Chalice Veil: Ornate, square cloth that covers the chalice

Chasuble: Outer vestment that the priest wears. Its color reflects the liturgical season.

Ciborium (pl. ciboria): Bowl/container for hosts.

Cincture: Rope-like belt

Concelebrants: Priests who are also celebrating Mass with the Main Celebrant

Cope: The cape that the priest or deacon wears for benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and Baptisms.

Corporal: Small, white, square cloth. The chalice and paten are placed on it during Mass.

Credence Table: Small table on which are placed the vessels used at Mass

Crucifer: Server who carries the cross during the procession

Cruet: small container holding water or wine

Dalmatic: Outer vestment that the deacon wears.

Deacon: A man ordained to the first level of the Sacrament of Holy Orders. Deacons are ordained to service of the priest/bishop at the Altar and to charity.

Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion: Lay person who helps the priest distribute Communion

Finger Towel: Used to dry the priest's hands after he washes them during the Preparation of the Altar

Funeral Pall: Large, white cloth that covers the casket at funerals; it is a reminder of the white garment received at baptism.

Holy Water Bucket (aspersorium): Contains Holy Water that is used to bless people and objects

Humeral Veil: A long ornate veil placed over the priest or deacon's shoulders when he is going to pick up the monstrance containing the Blessed Sacrament.

Lavabo: The bowl into which water is poured when the priest washes his hands at Mass. Also refers to the ritual when the priest washes his hands.

Lectionary: Book containing the readings for Mass

Lector: Person who proclaims the First and Second Readings during the Liturgy of the Word and reads the Prayers of the Faithful and the announcements.

Liturgy of the Eucharist: The part of the Mass when Christ's Sacrifice is made present on the Altar

Liturgy of the Word: The part of the Mass when we hear the Scriptures proclaimed

Main Celebrant: The primary priest celebrating Mass.

Master of Ceremonies: The older Server who is in charge of the younger Servers.

Monstrance: A gold showcase with a circular center into which is placed the Blessed Sacrament during Eucharistic Adoration.

Offertory: The part of the Mass when the gifts of bread and wine are brought to the altar

Paschal Candle: Large, white Easter candle; it is always present at baptisms and funerals.

Paten: Plate used to hold the consecrated hosts, the Body of Christ. Also the plate with a handle that the Servers hold during Communion.

Pulpit: Stand from which the Scriptures are proclaimed and the homily is preached.

Prayers of the Faithful (Petitions/Intercessions): The part of the Mass when we pray for the Church, the world, and one another

Presider: The priest who is the Main Celebrant at Mass

Processional Cross: The cross carried by the Crucifer during the processions at Mass

Purificator: Small, white, rectangular cloth used to purify the chalice at the end of Mass

Pyx: Small container used to hold a consecrated host for the sick or homebound

Roman Missal: Book that contains the prayers used at Mass

Sacristan: the person who takes care of the sacristy

Sacristy: Room for storing items for Mass and where the priests and other ministers vest before Mass

Stole: A long, narrow strip of cloth that is worn over the Priest's shoulders; it is a symbol of his priestly authority

Surplice: White garment worn over cassock

Tabernacle: The large, golden container near the altar where the Blessed Sacrament is kept. It requires a key to open.

Thurible (censor): A small globe-like container at the end of a long chain used to burn incense

Thurifer: Server who handles the thurible and incense boat

THE CATHEDRAL OF
SAINT THOMAS MORE
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