

The Catholic Parish
of Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall
Arlington, Virginia

1. PURPOSE. To describe Altar Server procedures
2. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS: Altar Servers perform an important ministry at Mass. They should:
 - a. Dress properly.
 - b. Be sharp and attentive during Mass. Know the prayers and responses of the Mass.
 - c. Know what to do and when to do according to these instructions. If instructions from the priest (or other adults) are different than these instructions, then follow the instructions of those people.
 - d. Fold their hands in front of their chests when they are standing. Fold their hands in their laps when they are sitting. Stand, move, sit, and bow together. Always turn towards each other when turning around.
3. PREPARING FOR MASS.
 - a. Arrive at least ten minutes before Mass.
 - b. Put on their vestments before doing anything else.
 - c. Check that the chalice assembly is ready on the credence table & that the sacramentary is next to the server's chair
 - d. Ensure the candles are lit ten minutes before Mass begins.
4. SERVING AT MASS.
 - a. Appendix B describes how to carry items during Mass.
 - b. Appendix C describes what to do for a normal Mass with three Servers.
 - c. Appendix D describes what to do for a normal Mass with two Servers.
 - d. Appendix E describes what to do for a normal Mass with one Server.
5. AFTER MASS. Servers should:
 - a. Put out the candles.
 - b. Return the sacramentary to the sacristy & the processional cross to the storage area.
 - c. Hang their vestments neatly in their proper place in the sacristy.

APPENDIX A
LOCATION OF ALTAR ITEMS

Left and right are determined by facing congregation from the sanctuary.

ITEM	LOCATION
Sacramentary	at the server's chair
Chalice Assembly	chalice, pacificator, paten, large host, corporal & pall
Finger Bowl	on the credence Table
Paten	on top of chalice purificator
Corporal	on top of the paten
Pall	on top of the corporal
Chalice Purificator	on top of the chalice
Pacificators	to the right of Communion cups on the credence table
Water Cruet	on the credence Table

APPENDIX B
HOW TO CARRY ITEMS DURING MASS

Never carry more than one item in each hand. When carrying one item with one hand, hold the item in your right hand and place your left hand on your chest.

ITEM	HOW TO CARRY
Sacramentary	Carry upright and facing away from the body.
Chalice Assembly	Carry by the stem. Use both hands if you are not carrying anything else. Second hand goes on top of the pall to keep the chalice assembly together.
Finger Bowl	Carry with hand underneath
Finger Towel	Carry opened up with both hands holding corners unless also carrying the finger bowl. If carrying the finger bowl, drape the finger towel over the left arm before picking up the finger bowl.
Purificators	Carry folded up.
Cruet	Carry with handle facing away from server's body when presenting it to the priest.

APPENDIX C
NORMAL MASS WITH THREE SERVERS

1. INTRODUCTORY RITES.

a. PROCESSION. The Mass begins with a procession from the back of the church. The processional cross leads the way. Two servers walk together behind the processional cross. They walk shoulder to shoulder with their eyes up and looking straight ahead. They walk slowly and reverently. The priest/deacon follows the servers. When the procession arrives at the altar, the servers separate right and left to let the priest/deacon stand between them. Servers face forward and watch the priest out of the corner of their eyes. Servers bow when the priest/deacon bow. Then the servers go to their chairs. Upon reaching the sanctuary, the cross bearer goes directly to the cross stand and puts the processional cross in its place, then joins the other servers at their chairs. The server who will present the sacramentary for the Opening Prayer, picks up the sacramentary and holds it. The servers remain standing for the Opening Prayer.

b. GREETING. Servers remain standing and respond with the people.

c. PENITENTIAL RITE. Servers remain standing and pray with the people.

d. KYRIE (LORD HAVE MERCY). Servers remain standing and respond with the people.

e. GLORIA. Servers remain standing and pray with the people.

f. OPENING PRAYER. The priest spreads his hands and says, "Let us pray." The server with the sacramentary goes to stand just left of and in front of the priest. The priest opens the sacramentary. The server holds the sacramentary steady for the priest. After the prayer, the priest closes the sacramentary, and the server places it on the stand next to the server's chair. All the servers sit when the priest sits.

2. LITURGY OF THE WORD

a. FIRST /SECOND READINGS & RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Servers remain seated and look at the lector.

b. GOSPEL ACCLAMATION. Where there are three servers, the candle bearers go to the altar, take the candles to the front of the altar, and await the priest/deacon to bring the Gospel book. They then lead the priest/deacon to the pulpit, and remain standing on both sides until the Gospel is finished. Then they return their candles to the altar and take their seats.

c. HOMILY: Servers remain seated and listen to the homily.

d. PROFESSION OF FAITH: Servers stand when the people stand and pray with the people.

e. GENERAL INTERCESSIONS: Servers remain standing and respond with the people.

3. LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST.

a. PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS. The priest sits down after the general intercessions.

1) SETTING THE ALTAR. When the collection begins, the server with the sacramentary brings it to the altar and sets it on the left side of the altar. Then this server joins the other two servers at the credence table. They bring the chalice assembly and communion cups with purifications from the credence table to the altar. Place the chalice assembly on the right side of the altar. Remove the pall and set it temporarily on the right side of the altar. Remove the corporal, open it and place it at the center of the altar.

Place the corporal six inches from the front edge of the altar.

NOTE: If a deacon is present, he will arrange the items on the altar in their proper place. The servers bring the items to him at the right side of the altar.

The server carrying the sacramentary now places it on the corporal. The bottom edge of the sacramentary is even with front edge of the altar. The chalice goes in the center of the corporal. It's purificator is placed on the right corner of the corporal. The paten goes on the left side of the corporal. The Communion cups go to the right of the chalice.

2) RECEIVING THE GIFTS. The server's stand when the priest or deacon stand and accompany him to the front of the sanctuary to receive the gifts. One server stands to the left of the priest/deacon; the other to his right. The priest or deacon receives the gifts and gives them to the servers to carry to the altar and put them in their proper place. The ciboria go above the paten. The wine is placed on the right corner of the altar.

3) PRESENTING WATER & WASHING OF HANDS. The servers go to the credence table. One picks up the water cruet, one picks up the finger bowl, and one picks up the opened finger towel. The server with the water cruet returns to the right side of the altar; the other two remain at the credence table. The server presents the water to the priest/deacon by offering the cruet, handle out. The priest/deacon adds water to the wine and hands the cruet back to the server. The priest then slightly elevates the chalice. Now the other two servers come to the right side of the altar. When the priest walks over to them, the server with the water cruet gently pours water over the priest's fingers into the finger bowl. The priest takes the finger towel and dries his hands. The priest hands the towel back to the server. This server extends his left arm to receive the finger towel back from the priest. He then picks up the empty wine flask with his right hand. When the priest is finished, the servers do a head bow toward the priest, and return to the credence table. They put the finger bowl, finger towel, water cruet, and wine flask back and return to their chairs.

b. EUCHARISTIC PRAYER. Following the “Holy, Holy, Holy,” the servers kneel on the side sanctuary steps.

c. COMMUNION RITE.

1) At the “Our Father,” the servers stand, return to their seats in the sanctuary, and join the people in prayer.

2) Servers share a sign of peace with the priest/deacon and each other. They remain in the sanctuary during the sign of peace. At the conclusion of the sign of peace, the servers stand at the side of the altar. At the conclusion of the “Lamb of God,” the servers kneel on the side sanctuary steps during the exposition of the Eucharist.

3) The servers join the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to receive Communion. They return to their seats to make a private prayer of thanksgiving after receiving Communion. The server who will present the sacramentary for the prayer after Communion takes the sacramentary with him to his chair. When the priest/deacon return to the altar after giving Communion, the cross bearer returns to the right side of the altar, bringing the water cruet. He gives the cruet to the priest/deacon who adds water to the chalice and then returns the cruet to the server. The server returns the cruet to the credence table, and returns to the altar. When the priest/deacon has prepared the Chalice Assembly, he hands it to the server who returns it to the credence table. The server then takes his seat with the other servers.

d. PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION & BLESSING. Servers stand up when the priest stands up to say the prayer after Communion. The priest spreads his hands and says, “Let us pray.” The server with the sacramentary goes to stand just left of and in front of the priest. The priest opens the sacramentary, completes the prayer, and closes the book. When the priest gives the final blessing, the servers make the sign of the cross with the people. The server with the sacramentary puts the sacramentary on the credence table, and returns to his chair.

4. CONCLUDING RITE. When the priest begins moving toward the altar to kiss it, the cross bearer picks up the cross and all the servers go to the front of the altar with the priest. They bow when the priest/deacon bow. Then they turn and begin walking toward the rear of the church in the same order as they entered. Servers walk with their heads up and eyes straight ahead. They walk slowly and reverently.

APPENDIX D
NORMAL MASS WITH TWO SERVERS

All the procedures are the same except:

1. INTRODUCTORY RITE.

PROCESSION. The procession begins with the processional cross, followed by the remaining server. When the procession arrives at the altar, the servers separate right and left to let the priest between them. The servers bow with the priest, then go to their seat and remains standing.

2. LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST.

PRESENTATION OF WATER & WASHING OF HANDS.

The servers go to the credence table. One picks up the water cruet and finger bowl, and returns to the right side of the altar. The other server waits with the open finger towel at the credence table. The first server hands the water cruet to the priest/deacon, handle facing out, and waits to receive it back. After water is added to the wine, the priest slightly elevates the chalice. Then the other server brings the open finger towel forward and joins the other server at the altar. When the priest walks over to them, the server with the water cruet gently pours water over the priest's fingers into the finger bowl. The priest takes the towel and dries his hands. The server without the finger bowl extends his left arm to receive the finger towel back from the priest. He takes the wine flask with his right hand. When the priest is finished, the servers do a head bow and return to the credence table. They put the finger bowl, finger towel, water cruet, and wine flask back and return to their chairs.

APPENDIX E
NORMAL MASS WITH ONE SERVER

All the procedures are the same except:

1. INTRODUCTORY RITE.

PROCESSIONAL. The procession begins with the processional cross followed by the priest. When they arrive at the front of the altar, the server moves to the right side to allow the priest to stop in the center.

2. LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST.

PRESENTATION OF WATER & WASHING OF HANDS. The server goes to the credence table. The server first drapes the finger towel over the left forearm, and then picks up the finger bowl in the left hand. Next the server picks up the water cruet in the right hand, handle facing outward. The server goes to the altar and gives the water cruet to the priest/deacon, and waits to receive it back. After water is added to the wine, the priest slightly elevates the chalice. When the priest walks over to the server, the server gently pours water over the priest's fingers into the finger bowl. The priest takes the towel from the server's forearm, dries his hands, and returns the towel to the server's arm. When the priest is finished, the server does a head bow toward the priest, and returns to the credence table. The server puts the finger bowl, finger towel, and water cruet back. He returns to the altar and removes the wine flask, and takes it to the credence table. He then returns to his chair.

4. CONCLUDING RITE. When the priest begins moving toward the altar to kiss it, the cross bearer picks up the cross, goes to the front of the sanctuary, and stands next to the priest. When the priest/deacon bow, the server turns and begins walking toward the rear of the church. The server walks with head up and eyes straight ahead, walking slowly and reverently.