

# **St. John the Baptist Catholic Church**

307 Montrose Drive, Folsom, CA 95630

## **ALTAR SERVERS MANUAL**



Revised June 5, 2016

Thank you for being an altar server. It is a privilege to serve at the altar of God.

It helps you to grow deeper in your relationship with God.

It gives you an opportunity to serve the people of God.

Please serve reverently with love and passion.

## Altar Server Ministry Contacts

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Coordinator: Barbara Bowden, (916) 984-9476, [barbarabowden@pacbell.net](mailto:barbarabowden@pacbell.net)

Altar Server Mass Coaches:

Saturday, 5:00pm Mass		
Myrah Empleo	(661) 993-4721	<a href="mailto:myrahg@gmail.com">myrahg@gmail.com</a>
Maria Estipona	(408) 933-8330	<a href="mailto:dr.g_estipona@comcast.net">dr.g_estipona@comcast.net</a>
Sunday, 7:30am Mass		
Orlando & Rohani Consuelo	(916) 358-6230	<a href="mailto:rohanikgb@yahoo.com">rohanikgb@yahoo.com</a>
Sunday, 9:00am Mass		
Melody Hernandez	(916) 307-2829	<a href="mailto:denga_18@yahoo.com">denga_18@yahoo.com</a>
Teresa Leung & Jim Leong	(925) 297-7873	<a href="mailto:takshui@yahoo.com">takshui@yahoo.com</a> <a href="mailto:jyleong2@yahoo.com">jyleong2@yahoo.com</a>
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Chris & Lily Wood	(916) 467-7505	<a href="mailto:Kainoa07@sbcglobal.net">Kainoa07@sbcglobal.net</a>
Sunday, 11:30am Mass		
Marcie Le	(916) 983-3544	<a href="mailto:Babes_le@yahoo.com">Babes_le@yahoo.com</a>
Julie Leininger	(916) 296-4328	<a href="mailto:jelein@pacbell.net">jelein@pacbell.net</a>
Sunday, 1:30pm Filipino Mass		
Venice Pajarin	(916) 850 5573	<a href="mailto:venice_pajarin@yahoo.com">venice_pajarin@yahoo.com</a>
Sunday, 1:30pm Spanish Mass		
Luis Guerra	(916) 524-1013	<a href="mailto:luiguerra95@att.net">luiguerra95@att.net</a>
Sunday, 6:00pm Mass		
Karis Crain	(610) 554-8840	<a href="mailto:kacrain13@gmail.com">kacrain13@gmail.com</a>
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The Altar Server Ministry Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the coaches, communicating the needs of the Pastor, providing training for the coaches, communication with the Mass Coordinators, etc.

The Altar Server Mass Coaches are responsible for working with the team of Altar Servers for his/her Mass time. The coaches will provide training for the team, be available before Mass to answer questions, insure there are enough servers and assist with any issues like finding the right length alb, going over the server jobs, etc., and provide both positive and constructive feedback after Mass.

## General Guidelines

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### Parent Responsibilities

- Please check the Altar Server website (<http://www.mycatholicplace.org/altarservers/>) for your child's **schedule**, updating contact information, etc.
- Please have your child to church **20 minutes before** the start of Mass. The altar servers need time to change into an alb, figure out the job assignments and receive any special instructions from the coach or Mass coordinator. If your child does not arrive by 10 minutes before Mass, it will be considered **A NO SHOW** and an **unscheduled substitute** will be considered.
- If you know that your child cannot make their scheduled Mass time, it is **your and your child's responsibility** to find a **replacement**. Please follow the instructions on the website to request a substitute via email. Please email the Mass coach(es) when you find a replacement.

### Altar Server Responsibilities

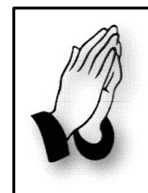
#### **Attire:**

- **Dress** in your **"Sunday Best"**. Think about what you would wear to meet a king, and remember that during the Mass you meet the King of Kings!
- Shoes should be clean and quiet. Squeaky shoes or hard heels can disturb everyone at Mass. Some shoes call too much attention to themselves (for example, yellow tennis shoes with blue stars all over) and should not be worn for serving.
- **Please come to Mass with your hair combed, face and hands washed.**

#### **Conduct & Demeanor:**

- Be **present** and **attentive**. Stay focused on the events of the Mass. Help the Mass go **smoothly and flawlessly. Respond** to the prayers and sing along.
- **WORK AS A TEAM!** If you know that another server needs to do a particular task and forgets - REMIND THE SERVER QUIETLY AND RESPECTFULLY!! Help each other.
- Let all your **movements be graceful and reverent.**
- After giving Father something, always **gently bow** your head as a nod of respect.

- Show your **devotion, reverence and respect** while doing your duties. When you are not doing something or holding anything in your hand, always keep your **hands folded in prayer** with either the fingers pointed straight up or laced in front of your chest in devotion. This is followed whether you are walking or kneeling or standing.



- DO NOT FIDGET AND LOOK AROUND AT THE congregation behind you. Remember to listen, sing, and pray with the other people who have gathered to worship God.

## Altar Server Duties Before Mass

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### Once you Arrive for Altar Serving:

- Remember that you should arrive **20 minutes before** Mass. If you have not arrived by 10 minutes before the start of Mass, please understand that an unscheduled substitute may be located to replace you. Please come check the altar server room to see if you are still needed, but please be understanding if you have been replaced.
- Get dressed in right **length alb** and **color cord** of the day. The alb should come down to your ankle. **Wear the Cross** you are given.
- **Choose your job** consulting with your team members & **sign in** on the clipboard.
  - **Cross-bearer = server 1**
  - **Candle-bearers = servers 2 and 3**
  - **Credence (Book & Bells) = servers 4 and 5**
- Consult with the team to **decide** which **Communion Station** you will each assist at.
- Check the **oil level** in the candles, replace if necessary. **Light** the candles. Be very careful when lighting the candles, as the glass shade around the flame is breakable and very fragile.
- When it is time to line up (usually 5 minutes before Mass): **Cross-bearer** get the processional cross, **candle-bearers** get your candles, then **all altar servers** join the other ministers of the Mass in the vestibule for preparatory prayer.

## Instructions for Serving during the Holy Mass

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### A. Introductory Rites:



#### STEP 1

- **Get positioned** at the main door.
- Stand quietly and prayerfully.
- **Keep a decent distance**, one after another (Cross + Candles + Credence).
- **Cross bearer sets the pace** by **walking slowly** forward as the choir sings the opening song.



#### STEP 2



- As the procession **reaches** the Altar, **cross-bearer** and **candle-bearers go up** to the altar, place the candles on the stands and then return to the bottom of the altar ready to **bow along** with the rest of the procession.
- **Everyone bows** to the altar along with the priest and other ministers.

#### STEP 3



- As the priest kisses the altar, the servers **move to their chairs**.



#### STEP 4



➤ The **book holder** goes to get the Sacramentary (the book) and **stands behind** the first chair of the celebrants and waits. Remember to walk around the altar and/or behind the priest.



Sacramentary



➤ **After the Gloria** (for Advent, Ash Wednesday & Lent this will be after the Lord have Mercy/Kyrie Eleison), as the priest says the words “**Let us pray**”, come to the front and hold the book for the priest.

➤ Once the opening prayer is finished, the **book holder returns the Sacramentary** (book) to the small table next to the altar.



➤ Then exits the altar by walking behind the priest, **goes down** to the foot of the altar and **bows**. Then joins the other Altar Servers that are seated.



## B. Liturgy of the Word:

### STEP 1



- When the choir sings **Alleluia** (or during Lent: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ), the **candle-bearers** go to the altar **to retrieve candles** and **stand face-to-face** as the minister picks up the Book of the Gospel.

### STEP 2



- Then on the priest's lead turn and **proceed** to the ambo and **stand close to the ambo** until the end of the Gospel reading.

### STEP 3



- Once the Gospel Reading is over, begin **walking back** to the candle stands by taking the same path and placing the candles back on the stand.



- Then go down **to the foot of the altar** and **bow together**.
- And **join the other altar servers who are seated** to listen to the homily, pray the creed and respond to the Prayers of the Faithful.

## C. Liturgy of the Eucharist:

### *Preparing to Escort the Gifts & Setting the Altar*



- After the Prayers of the Faithful, **ALL altar servers** proceed **to the credence table**. The **cross-bearer** and the **candle-bearers** should take **two cups** or a **ciborium** to the altar **BEFORE** retrieving the cross and candles and then **proceeding to the back of the church** (near main door) to escort the gifts to the altar. The remaining altar servers will finish setting up the altar with the priest/deacon.

### *The ORDER of setting up the Altar*



- Cross & candle servers will have brought one or two items to the altar. (see above)
- **Server 5** brings the **chalice** from the credence table to the center of the altar.



Chalice





- **Server 4** places the **book stand** and the **Sacramentary** on the altar.

- **Servers 4 and 5** (together) bring **the remaining sacred articles** (see list below) to the altar **except** the water bowl and the towel.



- Next: **Ciboria** or Ciborium



**Ciborium**

- Next: **Cups**



**Cup**

- Next: **Purificators**



**Purificators**

- Next: **Water Cruet**



Cruets



- Next: **Tray with pixes** or a **pix**, if any



Tray with pixes



Pix

***FINAL SET UP OF ALTAR LOOKS LIKE THIS:***

Note that the Purificators are in a stack at right corner of Altar, not in between the Cups.



### *Escorting, Receiving the Gifts & Assisting Priest at Altar*

- After setting up the Altar, **Servers 4 and 5 follow** the priest **down** to the base of the altar and stand on either side of the priest. **However**, if there is a **deacon**, the deacon should stand directly next to the priest. The deacon will receive the decanter and the one server will receive the other gift.



- Once the priest & servers are waiting to receive the gifts, the **cross-bearer and candle-bearers escort** the gift-bearers down the main aisle.

- As the procession reaches the base of altar, the **cross-bearer returns**, the **cross** to its stand. Then goes to stand by the credence table.



- **Candle-bearers** stand **face-to-face** on either side until the celebrant receives the gifts.
- The celebrant will **hand over** the gifts to **Servers 4 and 5** (however, if there is a deacon, the deacon receives the decanter from the celebrant & only one server will receive an item).
- Bow to gift Bearers when priest does.



- After this, the **candle-bearers** return the candles to their stands and go to the credence table to prepare to **take the washing bowl and towel** to the priest when he's ready.



Washing bowl & Towel

- **Servers 4 and 5** take the **ciborium** and **decanter** received from the gift bearers and **place** them on the **altar** and **remove the lids** and **hold onto them**.



➤ **Ciborium**



**Ciborium**



**Lid**



➤ **Decanter**



**Decanter**

- **Servers 4 and 5** wait by the side of the altar to receive the empty water cruet and empty decanter; once they receive it, they should place the lid back on & return them to the credence table and wait there reverently.



- After the offertory prayers when the priest is ready, the **Servers 2 and 3** bring the **water bowl** and **towel** to the priest to wash his hands; pause while he washes and dries his hands. Then bow to the priest and **return** the bowl and towel to the credence table. Next, the servers leave the altar area (see instructions below).



### *Leaving the Altar Area*



- **Server 1** leads all other servers down the stairs to the **center** of the base of the altar for **a bow** (in this process, the server who is ringing the **bells** should be the **last one in the line**).
- Then **walk to the right towards the bells** and remain standing at the base of the altar.
- **After** the Holy, Holy, Holy, all servers **kneel down** on the step.

### *The Eucharistic Prayer: Ringing of the Bells*



#### STEP 1

- **One long strong ring (1)** at epiclesis (when the priest shows his hands in blessing over the bread and wine)

#### STEP 2

- **Three short rings in a row (1+1+1)** at elevation of the Body of Christ.



#### STEP 3

- **Three short rings in a row (1+1+1)** at elevation of the Cup.



## D. Communion Rite:



- After receiving communion, the bell server begins to **pass the communion plates** down the line to each server.
- Each server goes to his/her **assigned station** to assist the Eucharistic Minister (EM). Servers on the large main aisle will stand on the outside of the priest/EM. Servers on the side aisles of the church should stand on the side of the EM that is opposite of the side most people will exit. In other words, try to stand out of the flow of traffic.
- **Always hold** the communion plate **flat, steady & reverently**. Remember the purpose of holding the communion plate is to catch the host or any particles that may fall.

### *Post Communion Rites*

#### STEP 1

- After **servers** finish assisting at the communion stations, place your communion plate on the **right side of the altar**.



- The **server who returns first** to the altar **takes the Sacramentary** book with stand and **places it** on the small table beside the altar. Then **he/she** goes to the credence table and **brings the water cruet** and places it on the right side of the altar.

- At this time, **all the servers wait reverently in a line in front of** the credence table.
- Servers will **take turns** one by one retrieving the cleaned sacred vessels from the altar. The server closest to the congregation will first retrieve an item or two, return it to the credence table (or basket for communion plates), then stand at the other end of the line, and so on in a rotation.





- **Go one by one** to clear the altar and take **no more than two** items at a time.
- Servers should always **bow** upon taking an item from the altar.

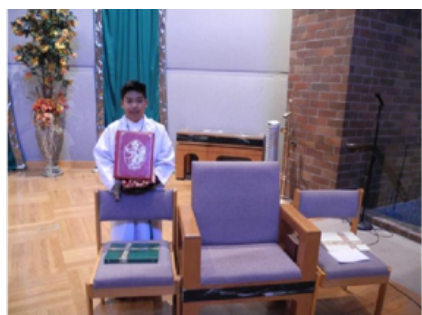
### STEP 2

- **After** finishing with **clearing** the altar, Server 1 leads all other servers down the stairs to the center of the base of the altar to **bow** and then proceed to their **seats**.



### STEP 3

- After the mediation song, the **book-holder goes up** to center of the base of the altar, bows, walks to left around the back side of the altar, picks up the book and **waits behind** the chair next to the celebrant.



- When the celebrant says **“Let us pray,”** the server comes forward with the book as he/she did at the opening prayer.
- When the priest is **done** with the prayer, the server should **return the book** to the **small table** beside the altar. Then walk behind the celebrant’s chairs, down the stairs to the base of the altar, bow, and return to his/her seat.

## E. Concluding Rites & Recessional:



- After the final blessing and **after the celebrant kisses the altar**, the **cross-bearer** and **candle-bearers** go up to the altar to retrieve the cross and candles and then come down to the base of the altar waiting for all of the other ministers to join them for a **solemn bow led by the priest**.
- Remember, this time the **cross-bearer** and **candle bearers** **do NOT bow** but all others do in a uniform manner, led by the priest.
- Then all turn around to face the congregation. The **cross-bearer leads the procession SLOWLY** followed by the candle bearers, other altar servers, etc. down the main aisle to the main door and out into the vestibule of the church.

### Altar Server Duties AFTER the Mass

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- **Candle-bearers extinguish** the candles and **return** them to the altar.
- **Cross bearer returns** the cross to the altar.
- Be sure to **hang up** your **alb** and **cord** nicely. If there are any albs on the floor, please hang them up too. A special thanks to you for doing this.
- **See your Altar Server Coach**. Your coach is available to provide feedback and answer **any questions** about your serving.
- **Say a prayer** of thanksgiving for the privilege of serving our Lord and His people. As a parish, we too will say a prayer of thanksgiving for the gift of your altar serving. Your contributions help the Mass flow well. May God bless you always.

## PRAYERS FOR ALTAR SERVERS

Prayer before Serving	Prayer after Serving
<p style="text-align: center;">             Father in heaven,              your son, Jesus Christ,              showed His love for you              by serving His needy brothers and sister.              I now ask you to give me your help              as I serve you and your people.              Open my mouth to praise you in word and              song.              Open my ears to hear your word.              Open my hands to do your work well.              Take from my heart all evil and distracting              thoughts.              Help me to know what I should do and to do              it well.              Help me to serve reverently at your holy              altar,              and so give you praise and glory,              now and forever. Amen           </p>	<p style="text-align: center;">             Lord Jesus Christ,              You are the eternal High Priest.              You lead all your saints in heaven              And your people on earth              In praising God, our Father.              Thank you, Lord Jesus,              For letting me come before your altar, so              that, with your help,              I can praise my Father in heaven as His              server.              Help me find joy in serving at your altar.              Help me find gladness              in knowing and doing your will in all things.              Glory to you Lord Jesus,              And to the Father and to the Holy Spirit,              As it was in the beginning, is now              And will be forever. Amen           </p>