

ST. ANTHONY PARISH

Sacramento, CA

Thank you for serving in this ministry! Your service is appreciated!
You are an important part of our Liturgical Celebrations.

Guidelines for Altar Servers (revised July 2015)

Some basic reminders: *Serve with confidence!*

When walking with empty hands, fold your hands together at your waist.

Use nice, crisp actions!

Liturgy of the Word

1. BEFORE EACH MASS please light the candles and make sure the Roman Missal (the big red book!) is out on its stand.

If your processional candle goes out, please find an appropriate, inconspicuous time to relight it.

2. ENTRANCE PROCESSION

The cross bearer will lead the procession solemnly--that means not too fast, not too slow--followed by the two altar servers carrying lighted candles.

The cross bearer will walk down the center aisle and step towards the tabernacle side at the sanctuary steps. The altar servers will come to the first step of the sanctuary and stop also. The deacon or lector will carry the Gospel Book to the altar and come back to the steps for all to reverence. After the priest has walked up the stairs to the altar, the altar servers place their candles in the stands, walk to their chairs and remain standing. Additionally, the cross bearer will proceed into the sanctuary, place the cross in the stand and stand in front of the cross bearer's chair.

Remember to walk in unison with your partner. Not too fast, not too slow! Note: If incense is being used, the priest then incenses the altar.

3. OPENING PRAYER

Immediately following the Gloria is the opening prayer. It will be the responsibility of the cross bearer or #1 altar server to bring the Missal to the priest. Towards the end of the Gloria, proceed to Father with your hands inside the Missal so you can easily open it when Father says, "**Let us pray**". (Four fingers inside/thumbs outside! Pa Da!!) Remember not to stand in front of Father or you will block the view of the people...just stand a bit to the side of him. Hold the book at an angle he can easily read.

Note: During Lent and Advent, the Gloria is not said. The "signal" to move forward with the missal is the blessing following the "Lord have mercy," etc.

4. GOSPEL PROCESSION

Following the second reading, the Alleluia (or Gospel proclamation in Lent/Advent) is sung. As it begins, the servers pick up their candles and proceed to the ambo. Face each other with candles the same height. (You can set the candles on the ground!) After the proclamation of the Gospel, return the candles to their place and return to your chairs.

Note: If incense is used, the priest or deacon incenses the altar before taking the Gospel Book to stand at the front of the sanctuary. In this case, altar servers wait to pick up the candles until the incensing has begun.

Wow....that's it for the Liturgy of the Word!

Liturgy of the Eucharist

6. PREPARATION OF THE ALTAR FOR THE EUCHARIST

After the Creed & Prayers of the Faithful, the servers go to the credence table and bring the tray which includes the chalice, corporal, the small water cruet, 1 purificator and the 4 wine cups to the altar. On the way to the credence table, the cross bearer takes the Missal to the altar and picks up the Gospel book holder to take to the credence table. (Walk behind Father's chair.) **Gently** unfold the corporal over the altar, placing it centered at the front edge of the altar. The chalice, purificator and the water cruet go to the right side of it. The Missal goes on the left side of the corporal. The 4 wine cups go at the top of the corporal in a line. Return the empty tray to the credence table.

7. PROCESSION WITH THE GIFTS

As soon as the altar preparation is completed, the server(s) pick up their candles and process to the entrance of the church, turn around to face the altar and wait. One altar server waits with Father to assist with the intercession book. Father will hand the intercession book to this server to take over and place on its stand. After doing this, the server will proceed to the (ambo) side of the altar. Please remove both cruet stoppers and replace them when Father is finished. Return them to the credence table. When Father or the Deacon signals (usually a head nod—or they just look ready!) he is ready for the gift bearers to be led to the sanctuary. Remember to walk in unison! The servers stop at the first step of the sanctuary and wait until the gifts have been presented to the priest. Once the gift bearers have gone, the servers place their candles back on the candle stands. (So—if there are three servers, the cross bearer will stay with Father. If there are just two servers, only one will go to escort the gift bearers. Instead of waiting with the cruets, go ahead and help your partner with getting the items needed for hand washing.)

8. WASHING THE PRIEST'S HANDS

As soon as the candles have been placed on the stands, the servers then go to the credence table and prepare for the washing of the priest's hands. One server wears the towel and carries the bowl; the other carries the water pitcher. They move toward the altar and wait back (halfway to the altar) until the priest turns to them. They then walk to the priest and wash his hands. The priest and acolytes nod/bow to each other. One server returns the towel and bowl to the credence table. The other acolyte removes the water cruet and the wine decanter from the altar and returns them, along with the pitcher, to the credence table. Return to your place and remain standing. When "Holy, Holy, Holy" begins, all servers go to the steps with the kneelers. Kneel following the Holy, Holy, Holy.

9. COMMUNION TIME

Immediately after the sign of peace is shared, one server goes to the credence table and brings **ONLY** the three gold patens; leave them stacked on the right side of the corporal. All servers go to the tabernacle side of the altar and wait for Communion. When the ministers begin distributing communion, servers return to their seats; one picks up the Missal and takes it to their chair. Following communion, **bring the water cruet** to the altar so that the priest may purify the chalice and paten. Wait a respectable distance from the altar. Father will hand you the items as he clears the altar. Be ready to assist him!

10. DISMISSAL

At the end of the Mass, after the final blessing, the cross bearer removes the processional cross from its stand and goes down the steps of the sanctuary and down the aisle a few steps; turn to face the altar. At the same time the servers pick up their candles and stand at the bottom of the steps facing the altar. Please remain in place while the priest and deacon kiss the altar, come down the steps, turn and bow to the altar. When the priest and Deacon turn around, the cross bearer and servers turn and begin the recession solemnly--that means walking together, not too fast, not too slow!-- to the entrance of the church.

Once the church has emptied the processional cross and candles can be returned to their stands in the sanctuary. Please hang your alb **neatly!** **After EACH Mass, please extinguish the candles.**