

The Catholic Parish of St Michael Altar Servers Guide 2011



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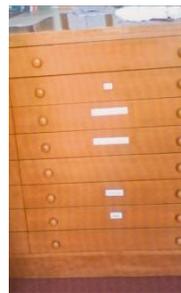
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REVERENCE, RESPECT AND DUTY – PLEASE:

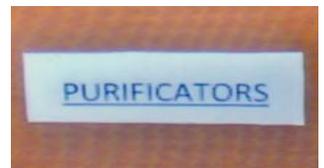
- Be reverent at all times before, during and after Mass
- never **walk in front** of Father or the Altar and walk behind the Credence table to collect the Gospel candles
- **bow** each time you pass the Tabernacle and Cross and when Father does
- **bow** when you receive the Communion and Children's gifts and when Father has washed and dried his hands
- do not talk during Mass unless necessary; do not fidget, sit and stand up straight
- join in the responses and hymns and kneel, stand and sit when the congregation does
- use your Missal to learn the prayers and responses
- **pay attention** so that you not miss your duty- especially the first ringing of the bells when Father lays his hands over the Gifts. Complete duties not done by other servers if they are not paying attention and you have tried to signal. Don't complete another server's duty unless necessary or asked to by Father
- **Mass begins for Altar Servers when they bow to the Crucifix in the Sacristy** with Father and the Reader before the Procession to the Altar. Candle and cross servers bow their heads only to the Crucifix, Cross and Tabernacle.
- Father and/or the Reader may not be there after Mass, however, servers still bow as **Mass ends for servers when they bow to the Crucifix in the Sacristy**
- assist visiting priests who may not be familiar with St Michael's Mass
- assist and guide new servers and lead by example
- be ready for changes, eg Baptism or to do an errand for Father during Mass and do it discreetly
- inquire at all Masses if you are needed (because a server might not have attended)
- arrange another server if you cannot serve at a Mass
- inform the Parish if you no longer wish to serve, your details have changed, etc.
- fill in the roster slips if you want to or don't want to serve at a Mass. Remember to fill in the changes for sport etc.
- Father is not allowed to be alone with the servers so please arrive ten (10) to fifteen (15) minutes before Mass so that you can all be there at the same time. Do not arrive when Mass is just about to start
- complete duties usually done by other servers at Mass when there are not four servers.

SECTION ONE – PREPARATION

The Sacristy:



Purificators:
 In a named drawer
 under the bench.



Safe:
 * Chalice
 * Tabernacle key
 * Patens for Hosts

Hosts: (in containers)
 * in cupboard above bench
 * large, medium, small and gluten free
 * small hosts are covered by large host in the Paten

Bench:
 (near vanity basin)
 * Cruets (jugs)
 * Lavabo (bowl)
 * open bottle of wine

Drawers: above bench
 * towels
 * used towels & Purificators



Candles & Crosses
 outside Sacristy

Robes: (in wardrobe outside sacristy)
 * wardrobe has small, medium & large sections
 * cords on hanging rack
 * remember to hang up robes
 * remember to do all duties in the robes



The Sanctuary:

Credence table: (behind Altar)
 * **Chalices & Purificators** (if not on Altar)
 * **Lavabo & towel**
 (use warm water in cold weather)
 * **Cruets** after they have been used in the preparation for the Eucharist
 * all Gifts at Mid week Masses.

Tabernacle: key (on stand before Mass and returned to safe after Mass)

chairs
for book & cross servers

***Fathers' chair & table**
 ***Bible**
 *sheet
 *hymnal

Cross clamp

Baptism Font

***chairs** for reader & candle servers
 ***bells** (move forward during 'Holy..')

Side table:

*live matches (relight candles at the end of Mass)
 *candles after the Gospel

Lectern:

*stand either side for Gospel
 *Children's Bible at the front after the Offertory Procession

Gifts Table:

*usually behind chairs
 *back of church for Mass with Children's Liturgy
Before Mass:
 ***Paten with Hosts** (large Host on top of small Hosts)
 ***Cruets** with Wine, Water and Purificator

After Mass:

* all items to Sacristy
 * collect **bulletins**

Altar:

* **candles** are lit before Mass and blown out after Mass – please light and blow out any other candles, such as the Pascal Candle
 * **Bible** (*Sacramentary*) (if not on Father's table)
front: *bow to Cross and Tabernacle in Procession
 *candles on glass after Procession
 *hold Bible & sheet
 *Gospel Procession
back: *hold Bible when guest speaker at end of Mass
 *bow before going to lectern for Gospel
 *line up in front of Credence table for the Eucharist
After The Offertory:
 * **Children's Gifts** on front
 * **Children's candle** on glass
 * **Paten** in the middle
 * **Chalices** and **Cruets** on side near lectern
 * **Cruets** with handles facing towards where Father will use them
 * stand behind Altar to hold **Lavabo & towel**

Before Mass

Please check:

* Altar
 * Bible
 * candles
 * Purificators
 * bells
 * chairs
 * Credence Table
 * Chalices
 * Purificators
 * Lavabo
 * towel
 * Gifts Table
 * Paten
 * Cruets
 * side table matches
 * Tabernacle key

- **Altar Servers do all duties in their robes before and after Mass.** Robes are hung up by the altar servers using them and left it in the condition they would like to find it when serving at a Mass. Ask Father's permission not to wear the robe if it is very hot or humid. Do not wear thongs as they can lead to accidents with the robes, steps etc. Altar Server's families are responsible for cleaning the robes once a month. **Wear your Guild medals**
- offer to assist in the preparation and cleaning up of Masses. **It is not servers duty to set-up and clean-up, however, it is their duty to check it is done:** Credence and Gifts tables, Altar candles and Tabernacle key
- offer to assist after the 9.00am Sunday Mass with the preparation for the 10.30am Mass
- make sure the **bulletins** are collected from the chairs and wooden pews and put at the entrances after Mass
- it is the servers duty to check: there are **live matches** on the side table to relight the candles at the end of Mass
 - * the **bells** are near the candle servers chairs and there are enough chairs for servers
 - * Father's **Bible** (*Sacramentary*) is on his table with the hymnal and 'Prayers of the Faithful' sheet **or** on the **Altar**.

SECTION TWO – THE PROCESSION:

- The Gospel **candles** are lit and the **cross** is collected from the clamp outside the sacristy
- altar servers line up in the sacristy before Mass and **bow to the Crucifix** with Father and the Reader
- the Procession leaves the Sacristy and usually goes around the chairs to the Altar and bows with Father.

Mid week Masses(entry/exit)



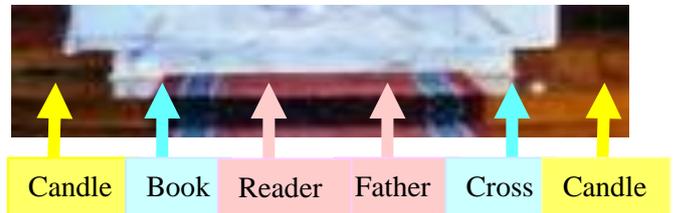
Exit down the centre aisle

Procession at the start of Mass from the Sacristy to the Altar

Procession order for **start and end of Mass:**
Cross (first),
Candles (second),
side-by side,
Book (third),
 then Reader and Father

*Lining up at the Altar to bow with Father to the Cross and the Tabernacle at **start and end of Mass***

- * candle and cross servers bow their heads only
- * candle servers move first after bowing



- **The Gospel** candles are placed on the glass **on the Altar** and servers go to their seats next to the reader
- **the cross** is placed on the clamp **and the book and cross servers go to their seats** behind Father
- if there are **three** servers then book duties are completed by the cross server
- if there are only **two** servers then ‘book’ and ‘cross’ duties are completed by candle servers and there is no cross in the procession. Candles lead the procession if there is no cross server
- if there is only **one** server then ‘book’ and ‘cross’ duties are completed by one server who will either carry the cross (and there is no Gospel candle) or candle.

SECTION THREE – OPENING PRAYERS, GOSPEL AND PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

a) The Opening Prayers:



Holding the Bible for the Opening/ Closing Prayers and the sheet for the Prayers of the Faithful at the front of the Altar for Fr Hien

- * hold the Bible at the bottom and rest the top at an angle on your body
- * do not put your fingers over the words
- * hold the sheet at the sides

- The **book server usually holds the Bible** for all the opening prayers for Father Hien (The Penitential Rite, the Kyrie, the Gloria and opening prayer). Please move forward before the Opening Prayers. The Gloria is not said during Lent
- move as soon at the opening prayers end for all other priests and be there before Father says “Let us pray”
- the book server moves with Father to where he reads the Bible and sheet for the Profession of Faith and Prayers of the Faithful. Do not wait until Father is already there. Father Hien usually stands in front of the Altar for the opening Prayers and Prayers of the Faithful
- Father stands at both the front and back of the Altar for the closing Prayers
- if there is no book server the cross server holds the Bible/sheet
- if there is no cross then a candle server holds the Bible/sheet.

b) The Gospel:

Collecting candles from Altar:

- * The candle servers collect the candles from the Altar at the start of the Alleluia as Father starts to move towards the Altar
- * candle server on the outside walks around the Credence table to the Altar and follows Father to the Lectern
- * candle server nearest the reader goes to the lectern side of the Altar and leads Father to the Lectern



Walking to the Lectern:

- *server closest to the lectern leads Father
- *stand on each side of the Lectern



Bowing with Father:

servers bow with Father behind the Altar and walk with Father to the lectern (visiting priests may not bow)



Gospel Procession



Gospel Procession:

Servers collect the candles and stay at the front of the Altar when the Reader places the Bible on the Altar. Father will come to the front of the Altar and raise the Bible. Server nearest to the lectern leads Father.

- ❖ blow out the candles at the end of the Gospel and place them on the side table ready for the end of Mass.

c) The Profession of Faith and Prayers of the Faithful:

- **Move to hold the sheet after the Homily (during the 'collection')**
- turn the sheet over between the Profession of Faith and Prayers of the Faithful
- the sheet is not held during a mid week Mass and visiting priest may not want servers to hold the sheet
- the Profession of Faith is said as part of the Baptism ceremony and Guild Mass
- cross server holds the sheet if there is no book server and candle servers hold the sheet if no book or cross server.

SECTION FOUR – OFFERTORY PROCESSION AND THE GIFTS

Remember to bow when giving and receiving the gifts and when holding the lavabo and towel

a) The Offertory Procession:

- **the candle servers go to the front of the Altar with Father to collect the Offertory Gifts as soon as the Prayers of the Faithful have been completed**
- the book server helps candle servers with the Offertory Gifts at a Mass with Children's Liturgy and then goes to hold the towel for Father to dry his hands. Cross server collects the chalices and Purificators on their own
- If there is no book or cross server then the candle server/s quickly collect the Chalices and Purificators and then go with Father to collect the Offertory Gifts.

b) Offertory Gifts:

Cruets on side of Altar with handles facing to where Father is preparing the Gifts

c) The Chalices and Purifiers:

- * The **cross and book servers** usually collect the chalices and Purificators (if not on the Altar) **from the credence table** as soon as the Prayers of Faithful are finished
- * Chalices and Purificators are placed next to the cruets

Paten in middle of Altar

Lavabo
(Cross)

Towel
(Book)

Children's Bible on the front of the lectern

Children's Gifts at the front of the Altar

Children's candles on the glass

d) Lavabo (bowl) and towel:

- The cross server collects and holds the lavabo for Father to wash his hands during the Offertory and then returns it to the Credence table
- the book server collects and holds the towel for Father to dry his hands during the Offertory and then returns it to the Credence table
- cross server collects cruets from the Altar taking them to the Credence table (after Father has finished using them in the Eucharist preparation) and a candle server collect the cruets if there is no cross server
- a candle server holds the towel if there is no book server
- candle server/s hold the lavabo and towel if there is no book or cross servers after they have firstly collected the Chalices and Purificators and then collected the Gifts in the Offertory procession
- if there is only one server then the towel is put over the arm and the lavabo as held as usual.



Be ready to ring the bells for the first ringing when Father lays his hands over the Eucharist and says 'Bless these Gifts' in the preparation for Communion

Hands joined for the Lord's Prayer



a) The Ringing of the bells:

At least one server must sit near the bells

- Candle servers move the bells forward during ‘Holy..’ or as soon as the servers kneel as long as the bells are ready for the first ringing
- do not turn your back to Father as you may miss the first ringing of the bells as Father does not stop praying
- there are various Eucharistic prayers and the first ringing often occurs very early in the preparation of the Gifts, so servers must be ready. Ring the bells when Father lays his hands over the Gifts and says ‘Bless these Gifts’
- Father stops praying when he raises the Host for the second ringing and the bells are rung for the whole time the Host (Body of Christ) is raised. Some visiting priests may not raise the Chalice or Host and some may kneel
- Father stops praying when he raises the Chalice for the third ringing and the bells are rung for the whole time the Chalice (Blood of Christ) is raised
- the bells are replaced as the bells are rung to reduce noise or anytime as long as it is quiet
- servers may sit after the bells have been rung, however it is respectful to kneel until the Prayer is finished

b) The Lord’s Prayer and Sign of Peace:

* During the **Lord’s Prayer** either hold hands, join or clasp hands in prayer or stand like Father with hands out

* during the **Sign of Peace** servers may shake hands with other servers, the reader, Father or their family (if close).

c) Eucharist:

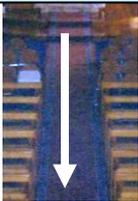
- Servers line up for Communion in front of the credence table with the reader and Eucharist ministers
- servers hold the Host in their hands and take it together with Father when he says ‘Lord I am not worthy..’
- if the servers are not taking the Bread or Wine they stay in their seats or return to their seats before the Eucharist and/or Wine is given or cross arms for a blessing
- servers may sit after they have knelt for their Communion Reflection.

SECTION SIX – CONCLUDING PRAYERS

a) Ready for the end of Mass:

- **Book Server** holding the Bible: Be ready after the Communion Reflection as Fr Hien may read the notices before or after the prayers and visiting priests may not read the notices. Always offer to hold the Bible for Fr Hien or visiting priests. Stand at the front of the Altar for Fr Hien **unless** Father puts the Bible on the Altar and says ‘Please remain seated for the Prayer’ or there is a guest speaker -.then the server stands behind the Altar or sometimes will not be needed. Visiting priest may stand anywhere around the Altar. Cross servers holds the Bible if there is no book server and a candle server holds the Bible if there is no cross server.
- servers **collect the cross and relight the candles** as Father is reading the notices
- servers **collect the cross and relight the candles** when Father stands after his Communion Reflection for mid week Masses and visiting priests (as they may not read the notices)
- If there are only **one or two servers**: candles are relit (and put down safely) in time to hold the Bible for Father.

Procession



b) Procession:

- Move to the front of the Altar as Father kisses the Altar
- line up in front of the Altar to bow to the Cross and Tabernacle the same as the start of Mass
- Father Hien usually leaves through the back exit of the church.
- cross server leads the procession after a signal from Father on which way to exit.
- candle servers lead the procession if there is no cross server
- Mass ends for servers when they bow in the sacristy even if Father and/or the reader are not there.

SECTION SEVEN – AFTER MASS – Make sure the following are completed:

a) After the Saturday, Sunday 10.30am and mid-week Masses please check:

- All items from the Credence table are put on the bench in the Sacristy
- the cruets and lavabo are washed and put on the bench in the sacristy
- the paten and chalices are washed and put in the safe with the Tabernacle key
- the Altar candles and any other candles are blown out
- the used towels and Purificators are put in the named drawer in the sacristy at the end of all Masses.

b) After the Sunday 9.00am Masses servers offer to assist in the preparation for the next Mass:

- Paten is refilled with Hosts and the cruets are refilled with water and wine and they are on the gifts table
- there are clean Purificators on the Altar or on the Credence Table with the Chalices
- the water is refilled in the lavabo and it is on the credence table with a clean towel
- the Bulletins are collected from the seats and put back at the entrances.

DUTIES: (Refer to the previous guidelines for full explanation of duties) **ALL SERVERS:**

- Offer to assist in the preparation and cleaning up at Masses. Bow with Father and the other servers to the Crucifix in the Sacristy at the start and end of Mass
- if there is only one server then Father will decide whether to have one candle, who does all the duties or a cross server, with no candles for the Gospel, who does all the duties. If there are two servers then the candle servers do all the duties. If there are three servers then the cross server completes the book server duties.

BOOK SERVERS:

- Walk behind the candles in the processions and stand next to the reader in the line in front of the Altar
- hold the Bible for Father at the opening and closing prayers
- hold the sheet for the Profession of Faith and Prayers of the Faithful
- assist candle servers to collect the Gifts at a Mass with Children's Liturgy
- collect the chalices and Purificators with the cross server and hold the towel for Father to dry his hands.

CANDLE SERVERS:

- Walk side-by-side behind the cross holder in the procession from the Sacristy to the Altar at the start of Mass. Leads the procession if there is no cross
- stand on either end of the line in front of the Altar at the start and end of Mass
- place the Gospel candles on the glass on the Altar after Father has bowed at the start of Mass
- hold the Bible for Father for the opening and closing prayers and the sheet for the Prayers of the Faithful if there are no book or cross servers
- collect the candles from the Altar, bow with Fr Hien behind the Altar and lead him to the lectern
- stay at the front of the Altar after collecting the candles in a Gospel procession.
- assist Father at the front of the Altar to collect the gifts in the Offertory
- collect the chalices and Purificators if there are no book or cross servers. One server holds the towel if there is no book server. Hold the lavabo and towel if there are no book or cross servers. If there is only one server, then the towel is placed over the arm and the lavabo is held as usual
- collect the cruets from the Altar when Father has finished using them in the preparation for The Eucharist if there are no book or cross servers
- ring the bells three times as the Gifts are prepared for Communion
- relight the Gospel candles as Father reads the notices at the end of Mass
- walk behind the cross holder in the procession at the end of Mass and leads the procession if there is no cross.

CROSS SERVERS:

- Leads the procession from the Sacristy to the Altar at the start of Mass.
- stands next to Father in the line in front of the Altar
- collects and holds the Bible for Father for the opening and closing prayers and the sheet for the Prayers of the Faithful if there is no book server
- collects the Chalices and Purificators with the book server
- collects the Chalices and Purificators alone at a Mass with Children's Liturgy or when there is no book server
- collects and holds the lavabo and returns it to the Credence table
- collects the cruets from the Altar when Father has finished using them
- collects the cross from the clamps during the notices at the end of Mass
- leads the procession down the middle aisle for Fr Hien at the end of Mass or after a signal from Father on which way to exit the church.

St Michael's Parish trains servers from Grade Three and older after their First Eucharist. Servers receive practical training and complete a written test. They often serve at mid-week Masses. They are rostered with older servers to gain experience. Servers receive a certificate which is presented by Father Hien at a Welcoming Mass. Retiring servers are also presented with certificates. Servers who have been serving for five years or more are presented with medallions. Altar Servers who are in Year Seven or above can be admitted into the Guild of St Stephen by the Archbishop at St Patrick's Cathedral. Servers receive medals, certificates and newsletters from the Guild. Servers are emailed/printed rosters, roster requests, forms and newsletters. Servers must have parent/guardian's permission to be on the website. Photos are regularly taken and emailed to servers and on the website.

Fran Grouios - With acknowledgement to:

Fr Bill Attard, Fr Phillip Smith, Fr Hien Vu, John Ballek, Karen Brown, Lisa & Maddy Cannata, Betty Column, Lucy De Suma, Vikki Grouios, Amy & Cindy Lim, Olga Tennison, St Michael's Parish Ashburton, the Guild of St Stephen and the servers and their families.