

How to Serve a 5 Server Mass
Saturday Vigil and Sunday Masses

(MC, CB, A1, A2, and A3)

Preparation

1. All servers must report to the Servers' Sacristy 20 minutes before the beginning of Mass. The **MC**, after vesting quickly, checks to make sure all preparations for Mass have been made. Check to make sure there is a host on the paten and the Tabernacle key is in the Tabernacle door.

Credence Table- Place the wine cups, purificators, water cruet/tray, Chalice set up (with host on paten), extra ciboria (if there are more than 2) and extra water cruet for Eucharist Ministers on the Credence table. Be sure the Roman Missal is placed on the shelf under the Credence table.

Altar- Display stand needs to be placed in the center of the Altar.

Gift Table- The wine cruet and 2 ciboria need to be placed on the gift table. Be sure there are hosts in the ciboria.

Note- When setting up, only carry 2 items at once. One in each hand.

Light the candles on either side of the Altar.

Then check in with the Celebrant for further instructions for that specific day.

Check also to make sure the servers are properly dressed according to our guidelines. Belt colors need to match the vestment worn by the Priest, not the banner colors. Review duties with servers.

2. At a regular Mass on weekends, there are five servers: The Master of Ceremonies (**MC**) is in charge of all the servers during the Mass. The **MC** makes sure all the servers are doing their jobs correctly. The Cross Bearer (**CB**) carries the Cross in processions, and takes the lids for the ciborium from the Altar. Acolyte 1 (**A1**) and Acolyte 2 (**A2**) are the bearers of the candles; they carry the candles up to ambo for the Gospel, and are the main candle-bearers in the offertory procession. They are also the main servers (water and wine) during the Mass. The Acolyte 3 (**A3**) brings the Chalice set-up to the Altar, helps with gifts at the offertory and holds the door for Eucharistic Ministers.

The Procession

3. The **MC** is in charge of the procession. He has the servers line up in the vestibule at least 5 minutes before the Mass begins. **CB** carries the Cross between **A1** and **A2** with the candles.

Note- Make sure to hold the candles straight upright. Start the procession in the vestibule, and proceed into the church when the Celebrant says he's ready. **A3** and **MC** walk behind them in single file. The Lector is before the Celebrant. Walk at a slow even pace. Do not walk too fast. When inside the church, **CB** stops at the last pew to wait for the greeting and introduction. Move down the aisle as the hymn begins. The **CB** leads the procession, walking slowly. Servers process down the aisle 2 to 3 pews behind the ones they are following. Candles are held high and level with the other candle. The procession will look like this:

A1 CB A2
A3
MC
Lector
(Deacon) Celebrant

Note: If there is a Deacon at the Mass, he will walk next to the Celebrant.

4. When the procession reaches the front aisle, the following takes place:

CB, A1 and **A2**: Turn to the left military style keeping a straight line, with the **CB** in the center, follow the lower step around the Altar until you reach the aisle next to the piano. The **CB** turns right and carries the Cross to the stand, which is located next to the piano and behind the ambo. Place the Cross silently on the stand, with Jesus facing the Altar. **A1** and **A2** put the candles on the Credence table at the far edge of the table. With hands folded in prayer, go to your places at the benches. Remain standing, facing the Altar.

A3 goes to the left of the Celebrant and **MC** goes to the right of the Celebrant at the bottom of the Altar. Bow low when the Celebrant bows. As the Celebrant climbs the stairs, turn left, and in single file go to your places at the benches. Remain standing, facing the Altar.

When everyone is in place, hands folded, you will be in these positions:

MC CB A1 A2 A3

Note: Remember that while you are working in and around the Sanctuary, your hands are always folded in prayer, unless you are holding something. If you do have a free hand, that hand is placed over your heart. When sitting, your hands should be either resting open palmed on your thighs, or clasped together on your lap. Always sit up straight – never slouch!

The Greeting, Penitential Rite and Gloria

5. At this point, after the Procession is over, all the servers will be standing at their seats with hands folded in prayer and facing the Altar straight ahead. **It is important at this time to watch the Celebrant, not the people!** Don't look out at them, or you will miss your cues. Remain

standing during the Greeting and Penitential rite. Participate fully in the Mass, saying prayers and singing songs.

Gloria- At approximately half way through the “Gloria” (sung or recited), the **MC** will move to the Credence table, remove the Roman Missal, lean its against your chest and stand at the bottom of the stairs, keeping your eyes on the Celebrant (or the Deacon, if he is present). Walk towards the Celebrant when he says, “*Let us pray*”. Do not bow as you pass the Altar, just walk making it one smooth transition. When the prayer is over, close the Roman Missal and proceed back to the Credence table. Again, do not stop to bow at the Altar. Replace the Roman Missal on the lower shelf of the Credence table and take your seat for the readings.

Note- During the Lent and Advent Seasons (when the Celebrant is wearing purple vestments), there is no “Gloria,” MC must get the Roman Missal during the “Lord have Mercy.” Stand at the bottom of the stairs and proceed as usual to the Celebrant when he says, “Let us pray.”

The Liturgy of the Word

6. All servers remain seated for the First Reading, the Responsorial Psalm and the Second Reading.

7. At the singing of the “Alleluia” verse after the Second Reading, **A1** and **A2** rise together, proceed to the Credence table, take their candles, and go to the sides of the ambo for the reading of the Gospel. They walk up the stairs together, except **A2** goes **behind** the lectern to the other side. **MC**, **CB** and **A3** all turn towards the ambo during the Gospel reading. At the conclusion of the Gospel Reading, they return their candles to the Credence table, this time, the **A2** walks in **front** of the lectern. When both meet, they go down the steps together. After they replace their candles, they fold their hands and are seated for the Homily.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist/The Offertory

8. After the Creed and the General Intercessions, when the Celebrant sits down, the following occurs:

CB: Rise and get the Cross. **A1** and **A2:** Get your candles, **CB**, **A1**, and **A2** process to the rear of the church by way of the far outside north aisle. Go to the center aisle where those who are carrying the gifts are waiting. As soon as the Celebrant leaves the Altar, slowly start the procession down the aisle. The Celebrant and the other two servers who will be waiting at the foot of the stairs.

MC and **A3:** **A3** takes the Chalice set up and places it on the very far right corner of the Altar. The **MC** retrieves the Roman Missal from the Credence table shelf. Carefully place it on the left side of the Altar. **MC** and **A3** carefully carry cups of wine and purificators to the Altar, 2 at a time. Any extra ciboria also are carried to the Altar.

Make a slight bow to the Altar, then return to the benches and remain there until the Celebrant goes to the aisle to meet the procession.

9. **MC** and **A3** meet the Celebrant in front of the Altar at the bottom of the steps and face the procession as it approaches. When they arrive at the front, **CB**, **A1** and **A2** turn left military style, as during the entrance procession. Once again **CB** replaces the Cross in its stand, and **A1** and **A2** place their candles back on the Credence table.

10. At the end of the offertory procession, the Celebrant will hand one of the servers the wine cruet, and the ciboria (ciborium) he will give it to the other server. The Celebrant will usually carry the ciborium to the Altar. The **A3** with the wine cruet goes immediately to the Credence table, sets it into the tray and takes off the tops. The **MC** brings the ciboria (ciborium) to the Altar and sets them down at the right of the Altar.

11. The **CB** goes immediately to the Altar and removes the ciboria lids and carries them to the Credence table. The maximum number to carry is two in each hand. If there are more on the Altar, make another trip. In the meantime, **A1** is taking the wine and water cruets and **A2** opens the small finger towel, puts it over their left arm, and takes the finger bowl in the same hand. Together, they walk up to the Altar. **A1** must be sure to have the cruet handles pointed outward so the Celebrant can take them easily (wine in right hand and water in left hand). After using the water cruet, the Celebrant will return it to **A1** who will hand it to **A2**. When the Celebrant turns to **A2** to wash his fingers, **A2** holds the bowl low and pours some water over the Celebrant's fingers. The Celebrant will take the small finger towel, dry his hands and return the towel to **A2**. Both servers then bow to the Celebrant, turn toward each other, walk together to the Credence table and return the cruets, finger bowl and towel. Place the tops back onto the cruets and then go back to their seats.

12. After this, all are standing with the congregation for the Offertory Prayer and the Preface. After the "Holy, Holy, Holy" is said or sung, all servers step forward together and kneel at their places on the bottom step, hands folded in prayer, and all watching the Celebrant during the Eucharistic Prayer.

13. All stand at the Amen, extend your hands in front of you and say the Our Father with the congregation. Greet each other during the Sign of Peace.

Communion

14. Kneel at the "Lamb of God" and during the Celebrant's Communion. When the Celebrant turns to give the Eucharistic Ministers Communion, all servers rise together and go to the platform to receive Communion and then all the servers return to their seats together, sitting down together. Remain on the Altar if you wish to receive the Blood of Christ. Remain seated for the remainder of Communion, bow your head to make your private thanksgiving.

During Communion time, the **CB** takes the ciborium lids from the Credence table to the Blessed Sacrament Chapel where they are placed on the ledge under the Tabernacle. **MC** accompanies **CB** if his hands are full and therefore cannot open the door. Both return to their seats afterward.

A3 watches for the Eucharistic Ministers as they finish serving their section. **A3** walks to the Blessed Sacrament Chapel door and opens it for the Eucharistic Ministers to pass through, as some will be carrying more than one ciboria and it would be difficult for the Minister to open the door. When they have all gone into the Chapel to replace their ciboria in the Tabernacle, **A3** may close the door.

15. When Communion is over the following occurs:

A1 goes to the Credence table and picks up the water cruet. Then he joins the **A2**, and they both go up to the Altar to help the Celebrant. **A1** pours the water into the Chalice or ciborium offered by the Celebrant. The Celebrant will indicate when he has enough water. When the Celebrant or the Deacon has finished cleaning the Chalice, he will turn and go to his chair. At that time, the Celebrant will hand the Chalice set-up to **A2** who takes it from the Altar, and together with **A1** they leave the platform and go to the Credence table to replace the Chalice and the cruet. **A1** and **A2** return to the bench.

The **MC** goes to the Altar and gently closes the Roman Missal and returns it to the bottom shelf of the Credence table.

The Concluding Rite

16. Near the end of the announcements, the **MC** moves to the Credence table, removes the Roman Missal, leans it against their chest and stands at the bottom of the stairs, keeping their eyes on the Celebrant (or Deacon). When the announcements finish, the Priest will say, "*Let us pray,*" and the **MC** slowly walks towards him. Do not bow as you pass the Altar, just walk making it one smooth transition. The **MC** will stand in front of the Celebrant, leaning the Roman Missal against their chest. When the prayer is over, gently close the Roman Missal and proceed back to the Credence table. Again, do not stop to bow at the Altar. Replace the Roman Missal on the lower shelf of the Credence table and return to the benches.

After the final blessing, when the people have responded, "Thanks be to God," the closing ceremony takes place.

The Procession after the Mass

17. For the usual final procession:

CB retrieves the Cross and carries it to the center aisle, turning around to face the Altar when reaching the fifth pew from the front.

A1 and **A2** go immediately to the Credence table and get the candles. Then stand on either side of the **CB**.

MC and **A3**, after **A1** and **A2** have passed in front of them, proceed to the main aisle, at the third pew for **A3** and the first pew for **MC** facing the Altar. This allows for plenty of space for the Celebrant and another Priest or the Deacon.

When the Celebrant bows, all bow with him then turn and process out slowly, again walking in a dignified manner. The procession lasts until everyone reaches the Server's Sacristy. Do not talk or blow out the candles until you get there!

After the Mass

18. After having returned to the Servers' Sacristy, the Servers then take care of setting up for the next Mass. **MC** returns the Chalice to the sacristy, sets it on the counter and leaves it alone. He also retrieves any other Sacred Vessels. **A1** and **A2** refills the water and wine cruets; puts them in the refrigerator, and places the finger bowl and a fresh finger towel out on the counter. Extinguish candles on either side of the Altar.

19. Do not begin clean-up of the Altar area until the music has stopped and most parishioners have exited the church.

Note: Never carry anything else while you are carrying the Celebrant's Chalice! One hand grasping the stem and the other hand flat on the top.

20. Remove your alb, carefully hanging it in the closet. Please keep the Servers' Sacristy clean and neat.