

## Guidelines for Altar Server/Acolytes

Note: Ordinarily it is hoped that there would be two altar servers at each liturgy. If there is not however, **each server must be familiar with all tasks** listed below since they would need to fulfill all of them.

- The basic premise regarding servers is that they should act side-by-side or two-by-two. These updated guidelines are drafted on this basis. Servers are equal partners and expected to share equally in all tasks
- Certain tasks cannot be done in tandem, such as carrying of the cross, but the remainder of them should be in pairs as much as possible. **At the beginning of Mass, the Cross-bearer will wait until the singing starts before moving. Then it is a slow but purposeful walk to the Altar, then immediately place the Cross in its stand.**
- If there were three servers, one would carry the cross and the other two would process or recess, side-by-side.
- **During the mass the following should be done together**
  - Carrying the vessels to prepare the altar for communion: one server should carry the tray, and the second should carry the chalice. Both servers will approach the altar together and return to their seats together
  - Both servers will assist with placing the gifts by the altar
  - Both servers will approach the altar when preparing the cup, one will carry the water to the deacon/presider and the second will stand next to the first and wait for the carafe (wine). Both servers will approach the altar together and return to their seats together
  - Both servers will assist with the presider's hand washing, one will carry the bowl and the cruet, and the second will carry the towel over their arm
  - For communion, servers will stand at the floor level near the Eucharistic Ministers and proceed to the altar platform when the ministers do so
  - Servers will stand to the right of the bread ministers and await communion
  - If a server does not wish to drink from the cup, s/he will take the cup as offered, say "Amen" and return it. One should never "deny" the precious blood
  - Servers return to their seats when the ministers proceed to their stations to distribute communion

- Both servers will then clear the altar, one will place the book on the lectern and the other will remove ciboria (silver tops) covers
- Once the presider returns to the altar, both servers will go to the altar, one carrying the tray and one carrying the water
- Once the vessels have been purified, the server carrying the tray will continue to do so and the second server will carry the chalice, and both will place their objects on the credence table
- At the beginning of the closing hymn the Cross-bearer (crucifer) will retrieve the Cross from the stand and wait until the singing begins. Once the singing is underway the cross-bearer followed by the other server(s) will proceed to the center aisle and face the altar.
- When the presider bows to the altar, servers turn and recess out

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