

Dress Code

Altar servers are expected to wear "Sunday clothes" during Mass. Dark colors are preferred as they blend in with vestments and do not call undue attention to oneself.

SHOES

Boys: Closed-toe dress shoes (black preferred) or **solid-black** athletic shoes. No sneakers or white soled athletic shoes

Girls: Flat, closed-toe dress shoes with a back (black preferred) that are stable and comfortable to walk in. No sneakers, white-soled athletic shoes or sandals.

CLOTHING UNDER VESTMENTS

Boys: Solid color dress pants (black or navy preferred). Dark sock to go with dress pants.

Girls: Solid color dress pants, skirts or dresses. Dark colored tights are preferred if wearing a skirt or dress.

Conduct

Altar servers display a true desire to serve at Mass by:

1. Arriving at least 20 minutes before Mass begins
2. Acting respectfully and reverently before, during, and after Mass.
3. Participating fully in Mass by praying, singing, and being attentive to the priest and what is happening during Mass.
4. Studying and knowing your responsibilities as an altar server.
5. Remembering to keep "prayer hands" facing upward when standing, kneeling or not holding a religious object.

Closing Rite & Recessional

When the priest stands to give the final blessing, move quickly up the ramp and WAIT at the top of the ramp. The Crucifer will retrieve the crucifix when the first verse of the recessional hymn is sung. (Do not wait in the pew for this to happen. Be ready at the top of the ramp to move quickly.)

Move down the center aisle, line up with the third pew and face the altar. The candle bearers will stand in front of you in reverse order from when you processed in. Be sure to maintain a triangular formation.

When the priest genuflects, nod your head and turn to proceed down the aisle. Be sure to move at a quick pace.

After Mass

Return the crucifix its stand in the sacristy.

NEATLY hang vestments in the sacristy closet and return crucifix to its hanger.

Listen to the altar server coach, seminarian, or sacristan for final instructions or feedback before leaving.



Altar Server Guide: Crucifer

It is a great privilege to serve at the Altar of our God. Altar Servers perform a very important and much needed role in liturgical services. They assist the priest so that the liturgy can be conducted with grace and reverence which enables the priest to focus on leading all present at Mass through word, prayer, and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The priest, deacon, and other altar servers are counting on you to know your duties. This allows distractions to be eliminated so all can focus on the holiness of the Mass.

By choosing to serve at the Altar of our God, you will strengthen your personal relationship with the Lord, learn more about the order of the Mass and the Catholic Church, serve as a role model to all present at the Mass, and grow in reverence, respect, responsibility, and teamwork.

Altar servers are expected to:

- Arrive in the sacristy and sign in at least **20 minutes** before Mass begins
- Be prepared by knowing all cues and procedures for your position
- Participate in Mass by praying and singing
- Request a substitute in the scheduling system (Planning Center Services) if your are unable to serve at your scheduled time



If you are not scheduled to serve and arrive early to Mass, please stop by the sacristy to ensure that an altar server is not needed.

Thank you for your service to this ministry!

You can find training videos and information at:

<https://www.stpatrickdallas.org/altar-servers>

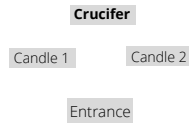
Preparation

All servers will dress in the appropriate size vestments. Cassock (long vestment) should reach the ankles or skim the top of one's shoes. If a cassock is too long, one may use a cincture (rope belt) to shorten the length of the robe. Surplices (white vestment worn over cassock) should be waist-length with sleeves to the wrist. Altar servers wear a crucifix around their neck.

One server will light the altar candles using a lighter stored by the credence table.

One server will light the ambo candles. Take care to hold your candle upright so that the oil does not spill.

Proceed to the entrance of the church. The Crucifer usually leads the procession. If incense is used at the Mass, then the Crucifer will line up behind the Thurifer and Boat Bearer (incense holders).



Procession

When the first lines of the processional hymn are sung, the Crucifer (or Thurifer if there is incense) will lead the procession at a slow pace. The two candle bearers will walk BEHIND the Crucifer.

Crucifer will proceed directly up the altar steps to place the crucifix behind the tabernacle. Do NOT stop at the altar steps to bow.

After placing the crucifix in it's holder, bow in front of the tabernacle and move down the ramp to the altar server pews by the baptismal font.

Liturgy of the Word

Be a good example to others by paying attention & listening to the readings and the homily. Stand with prayer hands during the gospel reading. Sit up straight with feet flat on the floor and keep your hands still while sitting.



Liturgy of the Eucharist

After the homily, the altar is prepared, gifts are brought, we recite the Lord's Prayer, exchange the sign of peace, and receive Jesus in Holy Communion.

Only TWO altar servers should be at the altar during the preparation of the gifts. This will be the Crucifer and ONE Candle Bearer. The other Candle Bearer will remain in his or her seat.

.....
CUE 1

After the prayers of the faithful have been said (sometimes this is followed by a Hail Mary), move up the ramp and wait for the deacon and/or priest to come to the altar.

PROCEDURE: PREPARING THE GIFTS

When bringing items to the altar, stand behind the priest or deacon and to his right. Do not wait by the credence table for him to call you forward. Be sure the the priest or deacon has a secure grip on items before releasing them. This will avoid accidents at the altar.

Items should be brought to the altar in the following order. Hand these items to the priest or deacon when he is ready.
Please, do NOT put them directly on the altar yourself:

1. Roman Missal and stand (if not already on the altar)
2. Priest's chalice "stack" with chalice, paten and pall. Hold all three items securely with both hands
3. Ciborium with lids removed (leave lids on the credence table)
4. Cruet of wine and ciborium of bread. *If gifts are being presented by members of the congregation, move down the altar steps with the priest to assist him. Then bring these items to the altar.*
5. Cruet of water. Wait for the priest or deacon to pour the water into the chalice and take the cruet back from him.

**If there is incense at the Mass, the priest will incense the gifts after these steps.*

.....
PROCEDURE: WASHING OF THE HANDS

Cruet of water, lavabo (bowl) and towel. One altar server will hold the bowl with the towel over his forearm. The other altar server will pour water over the priest's hands.

Return the water cruet, lavabo and towel to the credence table. Move down the ramp to return to your seat in the pew.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

PROCEDURE: SANCTUS BELLS

When it is time for the Holy, Holy (Sanctus), the Crucifer will kneel on the bottom altar step near the baptismal font and next to the sanctus bells. (If a seminarian is present during the Mass, remain in your seat in the pew.)

During the elevation of the Host, ring the bells in three short bursts when the priest has fully lifted his arms. Place the bells on the damper after he has fully lowered his arms. During the elevation of the Precious Blood, ring the bells in three short bursts when the priest has fully lifted his arms. Place the bells on the damper after he has fully lowered his arms.

The Crucifer will return to his/her seat when it is time to stand and pray the Our Father.

.....
PROCEDURE: RECEIVING COMMUNION

Altar servers will receive communion from the Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion who stands closest to the baptismal font.

Keep an eye on the lines of people, when it looks as if almost everyone who intends to receive communion has done so, proceed up the ramp and wait for the priest and deacon to return for the purification.

.....
PROCEDURE: PURIFICATION

Only TWO ALTAR SERVERS should be present at the altar: the Crucifer and one Candle Bearer. The other candle bearer will remain in the pew.

Bring the cruet of water to the altar and hand to the priest.

As items are purified, the priest or deacon will set them on the lower right corner of the altar. You may then take them from the altar. You do not need to wait for a member of the clergy to hand them to you.

Return the Roman Missal to the credence table and return to your seat in the pews.

