



ST. JOSEPH'S
CATHOLIC CHURCH

ALTAR SERVER FORMATION *FLOW OF THE LITURGY AND PROCEDURES*

Updated on November 3, 2015

“God of all the earth, you clothe the world in splendor and make all creation shout praise to you. As I dress for Mass, make me radiant with devotion, that all who worship with me today may give thanks to you.”

“Almighty God, you Son Jesus Christ willingly came to us and took up a cross for our salvation. As I lift up this cross, let me be mindful of its saving power, and help me sacrifice cheerfully for the sake of those your Son came to save.”

“Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, you came to be our light and our life. Dispel the darkness of my sin, make me radiant with faith, and draw all those who see this candle into the fire of your love and service.”

“Lord Jesus Christ, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, look kindly upon us whom you have called. Help us take up this procession in hope, walk it in faith, and reach our goal in love of you and of our neighbor.”

Before Mass begins

This is a time when you arrive early and meet the other servers. Light the candles. During special seasons and times we might have more than two candles to light. One of the staff will help you to know what is special that day.

1. Arrive at least **15 minutes** before mass. Check in with the Mass Coordinator, located near the statue of Mary up front in church. Come to the sacristy and put on your alb/robe. If you have trouble, ask an adult for help.
2. Make sure the candles are lit at least **10 minutes before Mass begins**. If you need to light the candles, ask an adult to light the taper (candle lighter) for you.
3. After all of the altar servers are there, choose which one will carry the cross in, who will take up the Red binder the first and second time, and who will carry the cross out. All of you go to the back of the church and wait with the priest and the rest of the procession.

OPENING RITES

Gathering Song and Procession

The cantor will announce the opening/gathering song. We will normally do all of the verses of the gathering song. The procession stays in the back for at least the first verse, then we walk slowly down the aisle, the cross first, then other servers, hands folded, Liturgy of the Word for Children Presider, the Lector with the large lectionary and then the deacon and priest.

When Mass begins

1. You line up in this order: The cross person first, then other servers standing two by two, with hands folded in 'prayer' position. If you cannot do this, walk single file. ALTAR SERVERS ALWAYS GO FIRST. If you are not carrying the cross, be sure that you fold your hands into the prayer position in front of you.
2. You begin walking when the people begin singing the second verse of the song. If there is a change, we will let you know when you get to the back.
3. Walk slowly all the way up the center. Spread out up in front. Make sure there is enough room for the others to come up and make the line. Bow to the altar when the priest does. *[If you are carrying the cross, please only bow your head, not your whole body and the cross. The cross stays upright].* The cross gets put in the back in the stand, then the cross bearer returns to their seat and sings. All go to your seat and stand there singing with everyone else.

Kyrie

Sometimes we will sing this sometimes we will speak it and sometimes it is omitted. It is the threefold response, Lord have Mercy, Christ Have Mercy, Lord, Have Mercy

Gloria

At this time, we do sing a Gloria at all of the masses except for those in Lent or Advent.

Collect

The priest/presider leads us in the Collect, one of the servers holds the book for the priest, then we all are seated to hear the word of God, which is the real presence of Christ for us. God speaks through people and through the stories of the bible to help us, today. We should read the three readings

4. One of you should be the "First Book Person". As the Glory to God is ending, please be walking slowly to the front of the presider/priest. **Arrive when the Gloria is ending.** Open the binder for him and have it placed where he can see it. The priest says, "Let us pray" and he continues. After we say 'AMEN', walk slowly back and be seated for the Liturgy of the Word.

Dismissal of the Children

Our youth go with a Presider of the word so that they might better break open the word, together. We sing 'We send you forth to hear the word of the Lord, take these words to heart, and walk in God's ways.'

LITURGY OF THE WORD

- First Reading** *This is usually a reading from the Old Testament and during the weeks following Easter, we read from the Acts of the Apostles.*
- Responsorial Psalm** *The psalm is always sung. It is taken from the 150 Psalms in the bible.*
- Second Reading** *The second reading is from the New Testament*
- Gospel Acclamation** *During this time, the Alleluia is sung. During Lent, another acclamation is sung, like 'Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ, King of Endless Glory.'*
- Gospel** *At this time the deacon or the one sharing the homily reads the Gospel. We all stand up, now.*
- Homily** *The Word of God is 'broken open' or 'explained and offered in ways that we might understand it. We hear words from one of our preachers about the readings.*
- Baptisms, Blessings and other Rites** *Following the homily, sometimes there will be liturgical blessings, sacramental celebrations like a Baptism. Normally if these are going to happen, we will know ahead of time. The servers aren't usually needed during these times, but always pay attention and be ready to assist if needed.*
- Creed** *We share our profession of faith. Sometimes during the Easter Season, we are asked questions that are another kind of creed and we answer 'I DO'.*
- General Intercessions** *The lector or the deacon will read each petition and we respond in song.*

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Ushers gather our gifts of treasure/Preparation of the table/presentation of the gifts - The cantor will announce the number of the song and we will sing it together.

1. When everyone sits down, one altar server brings the large red book (Roman Missal) to the altar, using the path directly from the small table where the Roman Missal is located. Do not use the area nearest to the railing. The Red Book is placed on the 'left' side(as you face the people). That server returns to their seat.
2. When the priest or deacon stands up, the altar servers walk down to the front of the altar to join him and wait at the first step.
3. Stand next to the priest or deacon and help him. Never take the bread, the wine, the chalice, or water from the people. Let the priest hand it to you.
4. Bring everything to the altar and hand it to the priest or deacon so that it can be put on the table.
5. Others should go to the side table and get the large bowl of water and the towel for the hand washing. (Bowel on right and Towel on left)
6. The two hand washers should go up to the priest and wait until he is finished rinsing his hands. Use the path to the far right of the railing- do not go directly up the steps near the railing. Bow to the priest as he bows to you as a sign of honor and as a sign the rite is completed. Bring the vessels back to the table and go to your places.

Holy, Holy, Holy

This is the song of the angels. Everyone joins in singing.

Kneeling during the Eucharistic Prayer

Following the Holy Holy Holy, the people in the Altar Server chairs are to kneel on the first step until after the Amen.

Memorial Acclamation

This is when we sing of what we believe. For example: When we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus, until you come in glory.

Amen

All sing the AMEN or the YES to the prayer that the priest/presider has just led us in.

Our Father Sign of Peace

*All sing the words our Savior has given to us
Share in the sign of peace with those around you.*

Lamb of God

This begins when the priest returns to the altar after the sign of peace. The priest is standing in the middle of the altar ready to continue and the other ministers are away from the table.

7. For communion, stay at your chair, then receive communion with the rest of the assembly.
8. Take off the Roman Missal (Big Red Book) from the altar at this time before the priest returns.
9. When you have taken the host, then go over and receive from the cup with the rest of the people.

Communion Song

This begins when the cantor announces it and doesn't end until everyone in the entire assembly has received communion and all of the Ministers of Holy Communion have gone to the sacristy, and the presider has gone back to his chair. After this be ready to take the red binder back to the priest for the final prayer after Communion.

Dismissal to Atria and Heathwood

A Minister is dismissed pray and give communion to the people living at Atria and Heathwood. This Blessing normally happens only at the 9:00 am mass.

CLOSING RITES

Closing prayer and Dismissal *The priest says, 'Let us pray' and we take the Red Binder over to him.*

After communion, near the end of mass

1. After communion, when everyone has been seated, there will be a little time of quiet. The priest will say "Let Us Pray" and the second book person brings the red binder to the priest. **Try to be on your way up to him as he stands up.**

Announcements *Sometimes, there are announcements, here.*

Song of Going Forth

The cantor will announce this. We normally will sing all the verses. Leave your chairs and get the cross and be ready to leave when the priest and/or deacon leave their chairs to kiss the altar before they go down to the bottom of the altar stairs. Do not be in a hurry. Remember to fold your hands in front of you.

At the End of Mass

1. As the priest leaves his chair in the sanctuary, the cross bearer gets the cross and waits.
2. When you see the Priest move, all the servers move to the front of the altar. Bow with the priest [as in the beginning], turn around and go down the center in the same way you did at the beginning. ALTAR SERVERS ALWAYS GO FIRST. THE CROSS PERSON LEADS, OTHERS SERVERS FOLLOW.
3. Go to the back. You're finished.
4. If the people in the pews are still singing, wait a bit in the back. When the song is over, come forward and return the cross to its stand. Put your robes away carefully. Please hang up any robes that have fallen. Do not blow out the candles. Use the candle lighter to extinguish the candles. If there was a baptism, please remember the paschal candle near the font needs to be extinguished!
5. **THANK YOU FOR A GREAT JOB! SEE YOU NEXT TIME!!**

+ The liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the fount from which all the church's power flows (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, 10)

+ This sacrament is called *Eucharist*, because it is an action of thanksgiving to God—the Greek word, *eucharistein* and *eulogein* recall the Jewish blessings at meals. (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1328)

+ This sacrament is called the Holy Mass (*Missa*) because the liturgy in which the mystery of salvation is accomplished concludes with the sending forth (*mission*) of the faithful, so that they may fulfill God's will in their daily lives (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1332)