

## **Altar Server Guidelines at St. Therese de Lisieux Catholic Church Wellington FL**

Thank you for your service in the Altar Server Ministry. It is important to realize that you are a very special minister in the celebration of the Eucharist. The entire community of St. Therese de Lisieux Parish is depending on you to perform your duties as an Altar Server with dignity and reverence. May God Bless you and your family for your time and service to the Lord.

This document includes all information needed to fulfill your role as an Altar Server. Read the guidelines every few months or so in order to be sure that you are still doing everything according to procedure. You will be contacted if there are any changes made to the Altar Server guidelines.

Normal rotation allows every server to serve. If you have any questions or concerns that may arise, please contact the Altar Server Coordinator Louis Giannone (Mr. G) at [LouisGiannone@gmail.com](mailto:LouisGiannone@gmail.com).

Another way to serve more is to wear appropriate clothing and shoes to every Mass you attend and offer to fill in if a replacement is needed.

Schedules are emailed monthly and will be listed on the St. Therese website. Please review the perspective calendar before the final release is out on the website. It is your responsibility to find a replacement. Please let the Altar Server Coordinator know in advance when your child can not serve due to vacation, sports activity or any other events. This way you will not be scheduled on that day.

### **Standard Appearance and Behavior**

- Please wear appropriate clothing and shoes. No flip-flops.
- Be sure your hands are clean.
- Put on server's robe. The robe should not be too long or short. Ask for assistance if needed.

### **Always**

- Bow when you pass in front of the Altar and Tabernacle during Mass and any other time.
- Move slowly with reverence and dignity.
- Handle objects solemnly and with reverence.
- Always pay very close attention to what is going on at the Altar and the Mass. Focus your attention on the Priest and Deacon.
- When the priest is standing at the altar the servers should also be standing. The only time you should be sitting is when the priest preaches the homily. When the priest is purifying the Chalice, the ciborium's, and the cups. Stand by to receive the items so you can put them on the credence table.
- Keep your hands folded at the waist or chest, unless holding something.
- While you are up on the altar, please get involved with praying and singing.
- The ciborium cover must always be on when going from the credence table to the altar table.

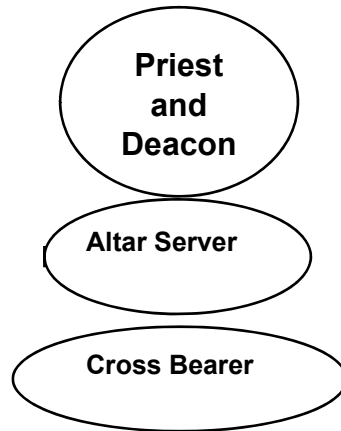
### **No**

- No talking while sitting on the altar, please be professional. Everyone is watching. No fiddling with your hair or vestments while seated or standing.
- When standing, stand up straight.
- When seated, sit up straight and still, with your hands folded in your lap, your knees bent, and your feet flat on the floor.

### **Before Mass**

- Arrive 15 minutes before the beginning of Mass and get ready.
- Go to the Sacristy, put on your vestments and sign in. Ask for assistance if needed.
- Ask the Priest or Deacon ahead of time if you need to do anything differently for the mass or season.
- Decide your role between Altar Server 1 and Altar Server 2. For example: Cross Bearer, and ringing of the bells. If there is only one server, that server brings all.

## ORDER OF PROCESSION FROM THE ENTRANCE OF THE CHURCH



When you are ready at the entrance of the church for the procession, look for the lector to read the introduction of the Mass. As singing begins, process in slowly to the sanctuary. Walk reverently and slowly. The altar server will walk with their hands folded. As soon as you reach the sanctuary, the cross bearer goes on the left side parallel of the ambo and the altar server will be to the left side of the cross bearer as seen below.



Altar Server

Cross Bearer

Priest

Deacon

Once the priest enters the altar, the cross bearer will enter then the altar server, put the cross on the stand and stay standing by your chair with hands folded. Stay standing with your hands folded. Remain standing for the greeting, the penitential rite and the opening prayer.

### **LITURGY OF THE WORD**

(Normally, no duties) Servers listen with attention during the Scripture readings and respond with the assembly during the psalm.

### **GOSPEL PROCESSIONS**

After the second reading, the altar servers stand at the Gospel with your hands folded.

### **HOMILY**

Sit

### **PROFESSION OF FAITH**

Stand with hands folded

## **Preparation of the Altar and the Presentation of the gifts**

**(Remember each Mass may be slightly different and depending on the season. Be Flexible, changes can happen on the fly. There is no preparation of the gifts for 7:30 and 5:30 mass.)**

- As soon as the prayer of the faithful is finished, the priest or deacon will step down to prepare the altar. Altar Servers take items from the credence table and place them on the altar in this order: chalice first, the Ciborium(s), and the 2 Communion Cups with purificators.
- When finished, return to your seats and stand ready to join the priest when he goes to receive the gifts. The altar Servers will stand on either side of the Priest.

**The two cruets - (wine and water cups) and the bowl should always be placed close to the wall. Do not leave at the edge of the Credence table.**

- Take the covers off the cruets and bring the water and wine to the priest. When the priest is done both altar servers should bow to the priest before proceeding back to the credence table.
  - If there is only one server, you can leave the water on the altar table for the washing of the hands.
  - Whoever has the water cruet take two steps back and wait for the altar server to return with the lavabo bowl in his or her hand and a towel draped over his or her wrist. When the priest is ready, the servers approach the priest and the first server holds the bowl under the priest's fingers as the second server pours a small amount of water over his fingers.
  - When the priest has finished washing his hands, both altar servers should bow to the priest and return to the credence table. Then the priest says the prayer and sings the 'The Lord be with you. During that time, the altar servers stand with folded hands.
- When the Holy Holy Holy is sung, all the altars servers kneel down for the Consecration.

## **RINGING OF THE BELLS**

Gently place the bells out. The ringing of the bells is done to bring attention to the significance of the moment when the Body & Blood of Jesus is made manifest. The server rings the bell two times during the Eucharistic Prayer; at the elevation of the Host and the elevation of the chalice containing the precious blood Ring 3 times. Gently place the bells back.

## **OUR FATHER/ SIGN OF PEACE:**

- After the great Amen, which follows the Doxology (through him, with him, in him...), the servers stand in place (as they were just prior to kneeling) for the 'Our Father' and Servers will extend the sign of peace to each other, the priest, deacon and other ministers if present.
- Then stand with folded hands to receive Communion.
- After receiving Holy Communion, proceed with the Processional Candlesticks and stand on the middle step by the side of the Priest and Deacon at the center aisle as a 'Eucharistic Guard of Honor' while Holy Communion is being distributed.
- If there is only one Server at a given Mass, he or she is to take ONE of the Processional Candlesticks and stand on the middle step between the Priest and Deacon in the center of the main aisle.
- Standing at "stiff attention" is not necessary. Please bend and 'unlock' your knees every so often to relax the leg muscles! Please hold the Processional Candlesticks with one hand at the base and one hand around the wooden candlestick. It's fine to switch hands and change your position when needed.
- When the distribution of Communion ends, the Processional Candlesticks are to be returned to the sides of the Tabernacle.
- After the Processional Candlesticks are back at the Tabernacle, proceed as usual bringing the cover(s) for the ciboria to the priest or Deacon at the altar.

•Then bring the water cruet to Father or Deacon so he can purify the chalice and ciboria. When Father or Deacon are finished purifying, bring the chalice and any empty ciboria to the credence table; then return to your chair.

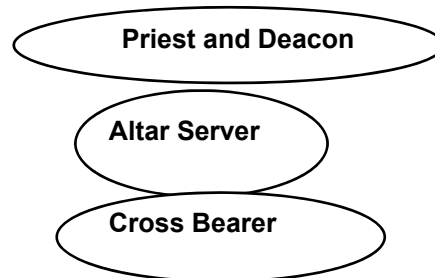
### **DISMISSAL AND RECESSION**

When the priest says, “please stand for the final blessing, stand with hands folded.

Once the priest or deacon says, "Go forth, the Mass is ended," and the people respond "Thanks be to God", the priest and deacon will walk to the altar and kiss the altar and ready to process out back to greet the people. The priest and deacon will join the cross bearer and the altar server with their hands folded.

#### **Line up at the altar**

- Immediately following the final blessing, the cross-bearer lifts the cross and begins walking toward the center aisle to the second pew, turns around to face the altar.
- The other server stands in front of him or her facing the altar with hands folded.
- The priest will be standing on the floor in front of the servers facing the altar. When the priest bows to the altar, the servers bow as well. When the priest turns around, The Cross Bearer starts to lead the procession towards the front doors.
- When the cross-bearer reaches the Church entrance, he or she puts the cross back on the stand in the sacristy. Go to the altar and make sure the candles are not lit. Return to the sacristy and remove your vestments, and neatly put them back on the hangers. Return them to the rack in the proper place. If you didn't have time before Mass, please sign in and THANKS for helping! God Bless you and your family.



#### **Altar Server Prayer**

Generous God, creator of the universe, you call us to worship, to be with you and one another at Mass. I thank you for having called me to assist the Church in our prayer to you. May I be worthy of the trust placed in me and through my example and service bring others closer to you. I ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, who is Lord forever and ever. Amen.

#### **Vocabulary**

**Sacristy** – the room where the vestments and sacred vessels are kept

**Sanctuary** – the raised platform where the altar and ambo are located, and the clergy sit

**Alb** – the long, white garment used to cover street clothes and worn by the priest, deacon, and altar servers

**Genuflection** - An act of reverence, made either singly, by touching the right knee to the ground or doubly, by kneeling and bowing the head slightly. A single or simple genuflection is the proper act of reverence accorded Christ in the Blessed Sacrament within the tabernacle. A double or solemn genuflection is sometimes used before the Blessed Sacrament when it is exposed.

**Cincture** (SINK chir) – a knotted rope used to tie the Alb in place

**Vestments** – the clothing worn during the Mass by the priest and deacon

**Main Altar** – the table on which the Mass is celebrated

**Ambo** – the lectern where the Word of God and sermon are proclaimed

**Credence Table** – the small table off to the side of the sanctuary where the chalice, cruet, lavabo bowl, and towel are kept during the Mass when they're not being used

**Tabernacle** – This box-like container in which the Lord Jesus is kept. Communion hosts are taken from here.

**Book of the Gospels** – the book used by the deacon to proclaim the Gospel

**Lectionary** (LEK shun air e) – Scripture reading for the mass.

**Roman Missal (Sacramentary)** – the red book of prayers used for the Mass except the readings.

**Processional Cross** – the cross mounted on along pole that is carried in the Procession at the beginning and end of Mass.

**Processional Candlesticks** – "Guard of Honor" candles during the distribution of Holy Communion.

**Chalice** (CHAL liss) – the large cup used at Mass to hold the wine that becomes the Blood of Christ.

**Pall** (PAUL) – the stiff, embroidered square that sits on top of the chalice, purificator, and paten



**Ciborium**– the small, round, closed container/s holding the host to be consecrated during the Mass.

**Paten** (PAT in) – the round, flat, gold dish that fits on top of the chalice and has the large host on it

**Paschal Candle** – used from Easter Vigil through Pentecost Sunday. It is also used for funerals and baptisms.

**Corporal** (CORE pore uhl) – a square piece of white cloth which is spread over the altar cloth. It is put on the Altar where the celebrant will say Mass. The chalice and paten are placed on top of it

**Purificator** (PURE if ih kate er) – the cloth used to wipe the chalice after receiving the Precious Blood



**Cruet** (CREW it) – the small glass pitchers holding the water and wine. When handing the priest the water and wine it will be with the handle towards the priest. Do not bring the tops to the altar table.

**Lavabo** (luh VAH bo) Bowl – the basin over which the priest's hands are washed

**Aspergillum:** A liturgical instrument used to bless people and objects with Holy Water in the liturgy and during blessings.

**Censer / Thurible:** the metal container that holds the charcoal for the incense. This is carried by the server in the right hand.