

Liturgical Ministry Training – Altar Servers

Scheduling Procedures and Other Important Data

Introduction

- 1) What is “*liturgy*”?
 - 1.1) Secular / General Definition - Service in the name of or on behalf of the people
 - 1.2) Religious Definition - Participation by the people of God in the work of God
 - 1.2.1) Celebration of divine worship
 - 1.2.2) Proclamation of the Gospel
 - 1.2.3) Active charity
- 2) What is “*ministry*”?
 - 2.1) Providing service to others
 - 2.2) Based on a spiritual calling
 - 2.3) Requiring commitment, sacrifice and humility
- 3) How do we live the definition of these two words?
 - 3.1) Liturgical ministry is **not** an obligation simply to be fulfilled (contradicts ministry)
 - 3.2) Liturgical ministry is **not** a substitute for full and regular participation in the Mass (contradicts liturgy)
 - 3.3) Liturgical ministry is **not** a show that you stage for one hour a week/month (contradicts both)

General Information and Reminders

- 1) Dress
 - 1.1) Should not distract the assembly from your ministry—Christ should always be the focus
 - 1.1.1) Reverent, not casual – avoid jeans, tennis shoes, sweats, and other “lounging” clothes
 - 1.1.2) Modest, not revealing – avoid low-cut tops and short skirts
 - 1.1.3) Humble, not commercial – avoid large/obvious labels, branding, or printed messages
 - 1.2) Should reinforce your commitment to the nature of the ministry
 - 1.2.1) Willing to serve the whole church community
 - 1.2.2) Willing to serve even if inconvenient or sacrificial
 - 1.2.3) Willing to serve diligently, taking the required time to do all things well
 - 1.3) Dress as though you are going to serve, even if you are not scheduled
 - 1.3.1) “Emergency” Subs may be required right before Mass begins due to a shortage of ministers
 - 1.3.2) Minister may become ill during Mass and require replacement (rare, but it happens)
- 2) Demeanor / Attitude
 - 2.1) Posture / Movement
 - 2.1.1) Avoid slouching, shifting weight constantly, sticking hands in pockets, fiddling with items, etc.
 - 2.1.2) Participate fully and reverently in liturgy as much as possible (e.g. bowing, genuflecting, etc.)
 - 2.2) Conversation
 - 2.2.1) Keep all necessary talking to a minimal volume
 - 2.2.2) Restrict all unnecessary talking, including before and after Mass
 - 2.2.2.1) Shows respect for the presence of God
 - 2.2.2.2) Shows respect for others during their prayer and meditation
- 3) Movement
 - 3.1) Pace yourself – do not rush, but do not poke along either
 - 3.2) Eye contact – respectfully address the person/people to whom you are ministering
 - 3.3) Self-awareness – Be aware of where you are sitting, standing, etc. and what you are doing
 - 3.4) Instill reverence – focus on the nature of your ministry and its role

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Scheduling / Attendance / Substitutions

1) Scheduling Procedures

1.1) New schedules are released every two months

- 1.1.1) Always published on OLL web site - <http://www.ourladyoflourdes.org/ministry/ministry.html>
- 1.1.2) *If a minister's current email address is known*, then schedule sent directly to email address
 - 1.1.2.1) Should be readable by any word processor or editor (formatting may vary slightly)
 - 1.1.2.2) Any changes in email address should be submitted right away
- 1.1.3) *If minister has no email / internet access* (yes, it happens), hard copies are available
 - 1.1.3.1) "Ministry Schedules" box on literature tables in foyer outside of church (with newsletter)
 - 1.1.3.2) Hospitality Closet (door just inside Cry Room) in plastic drawers on right-hand side
 - 1.1.3.3) *Ministers with email/internet access should not take hard copies*—please print e-copies

1.2) Schedules include several items

- 1.2.1) Mass assignments – lists date, Mass time, and ministry
- 1.2.2) Newsletter
 - 1.2.2.1) Provides deadline for submitting vacation dates before next schedule
 - 1.2.2.2) Provides updates to any procedures (e.g. how to set up items prior to Mass)
 - 1.2.2.3) Provides notice of upcoming events (e.g. special Masses, training sessions, etc.)
- 1.2.3) Readings (mainly for Lectors)
 - 1.2.3.1) Included as attachment for those who provide email address
 - 1.2.3.2) Readings available on US Catholic Bishops' web site - <http://www.usccb.org/>
 - 1.2.3.3) Hard copies can be provided if no email/internet access—call office directly
- 1.2.4) Any special items not included in Newsletter

2) Unavailable Dates and Substitutions

2.1) Before a new schedule is published, submit vacation/unavailable dates

- 2.1.1) Can be submitted via phone message, email, or on-line web terminal ("My Profile" tab)
- 2.1.2) *Must be received > 2 weeks before next schedule is released* (see deadline at top of Newsletter)
- 2.1.3) Include minister's name, contact information, and dates/Mass times not available

2.2) After a new schedule is published, each minister must find their own substitutes

- 2.2.1) Request a sub using on-line web terminal (MSP) – *only use when >2 days available to find sub*
 - 2.2.1.1) Login using your username / password (provided when ministry started)
 - 2.2.1.2) On the "My Schedule" tab, find the date/Mass time for which you require a sub
 - 2.2.1.3) Click on the "request a sub" link at the end of this entry
 - 2.2.1.4) Request sent only to ministers who could accept (i.e. have no conflicts on that date)
 - 2.2.1.5) Web terminal updated to show that "sub requested" for that slot/Mass
 - 2.2.1.6) **To accept an automated sub request**, click on "volunteer now" link in requesting email
 - 2.2.1.7) Acceptance sent to requesting minister, confirming that coverage is arranged
 - 2.2.1.8) Web terminal updated again to show that substitute minister is covering slot
- 2.2.2) Request sub by calling other ministers
 - 2.2.2.1) *Required option if sub needed on short notice (<2 days in advance)*
 - 2.2.2.2) Once substitute is obtained, submit information to Director via email/phone
 - 2.2.2.3) Access phone lists on-line (MSP)
 - 2.2.2.3.1) Login to web terminal pages and click on "Rosters" tab
 - 2.2.2.3.2) Login also via OLL page - <http://www.ourladyoflourdes.org/ministry/ministry.html>
 - 2.2.2.4) Pick up hard copy of phone lists from Hospitality Closet
 - 2.2.2.4.1) First door on left in Cry Room
 - 2.2.2.4.2) Phone lists found in labeled plastic drawer on right-hand side of Closet
 - 2.2.2.4.3) Lists are color-coded to prevent confusion

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- 3) Attendance Procedures for Regular Weekend Mass
 - 3.1) The Sign-In / Attendance Sheet is located in the Vesting Sacristy (at end of bathroom hallway)
 - 3.2) **Ministers should sign in 15 minutes before Mass begins** and then begin their pre-Mass duties
 - 3.2.1) Allows time to complete all pre-Mass duties
 - 3.2.2) Provides an opportunity for clergy to explain any differences (Holy Day, Baptism, etc.)
 - 3.3) **If you arrive late**, check the Sheet immediately; someone may be covering for you already
 - 3.4) **If you are covering for someone else as a pre-arranged sub**, please remember:
 - 3.4.1) Be sure to fill out the sign-in sheet appropriately—*see instructions sheet on cork board*
 - 3.4.2) Do not assume that I received any messages regarding changes/substitutions
 - 3.4.3) Do *not* write substitutions on the master schedule on the cork board
 - 3.5) **If you are not scheduled and you are not a pre-arranged substitute**, please remember:
 - 3.5.1) **Wait until 5 minutes before Mass and check the sheet**—someone may simply be running late
 - 3.5.2) If you sign in as though you are scheduled, you will take away someone else's chance to serve
 - 3.5.3) Please don't sign in the margin or in another ministry's blanks—confuses me and the clergy
- 4) Attendance Procedures for Special Masses/Services
 - 4.1) Sign-up sheets are posted in advance to allow trained ministers to volunteer for service
 - 4.1.1) Poster board in foyer – allows people without email/internet access to volunteer
 - 4.1.1.1) Contact me directly for changes / substitutions
 - 4.1.1.2) If number of required ministers changes, I will rearrange names and contact everyone
 - 4.1.2) Web terminal (MSP) – allows people with internet access to volunteer on-line
 - 4.2) **Holy Days have sign-in sheets just like regular Sundays, so please remember to sign in**
- 5) Policy Regarding Attendance
 - 5.1) Based on the Sign-In Sheets – *if you don't sign in prior to Mass, you're considered absent*
 - 5.2) Chronic absenteeism (> 50%) will entail a reminder, asking if we need to adjust your schedule
 - 5.3) Further absenteeism after the reminder will entail suspension and/or removal from schedule
 - 5.4) Reason for Attendance Policy
 - 5.4.1) Must have minimum number of ministers for Mass to proceed smoothly
 - 5.4.2) Experience dictates that we cannot rely solely on volunteers every week
 - 5.4.3) Prevents confusion and accidents caused by lack of practice/involvement
 - 5.4.4) Encourages respect for other ministers and for the community
 - 5.4.5) Scripture (Acts, St. Paul's letters) repeatedly tells us that we are accountable for our actions
- 6) Extra Schedules / Phone Lists
 - 6.1) Extra copies of new schedule provided every two months when assignments released
 - 6.2) Phone lists updated every 6-12 months depending on turn-over
 - 6.3) Location of extra copies
 - 6.3.1) Hospitality Closet (see above)
 - 6.3.2) Web Site (<http://www.ourladyoflourdes.org/ministry/ministry.html>, see above)

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Concluding Notes

1) Training Information

1.1) All liturgical ministers including Altar Servers **must** receive training before assuming their duties

1.1.1) Specific to Our Lady of Lourdes – procedures from other churches may not be the same

1.1.2) Provides basic knowledge needed for advanced training

1.2) Training dates are normally advertised in at least one of the following places

1.2.1) Sunday Bulletin – primary location; listed several weeks in advance

1.2.2) Ministry Newsletter – included with each schedule

1.3) **Training requires two mandatory sessions** – both sessions must be completed

1.3.1) Session #1 – **Orientation**

1.3.1.1) What is an item called?

1.3.1.2) Where is it stored?

1.3.1.3) How is it used?

1.3.1.4) Who uses it?

1.3.1.5) When should it be used?

1.3.1.6) Why is that item important?

1.3.2) Session #2 – **Review and Practice**

1.3.2.1) Preparing the Altar for Holy Communion

1.3.2.2) Holding the Roman Missal during Opening and Closing Prayers (and other times)

1.3.2.3) Handling/walking with the Processional Cross

1.3.3) “Session #3” – **Additional Practice (optional)**

1.3.3.1) Any Server may attend additional training sessions

1.3.3.1.1) Allows questions to be asked

1.3.3.1.2) Allows procedures to be clarified

1.3.3.2) Servers may contact any of the training coordinators for additional help

2) Who to Contact with Questions / Problems / Issues

2.1) Director of Music and Liturgy – contact me via email, phone, or personal conversation (see below)

2.2) Deacon Jim Leyden – you may contact Jim in the same manner

2.3) Clergy – contact any other deacon or priest through the OLL parish office

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