

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish

Advanced Altar Servers – Training Notes

General Reminders

- 1) **Reverence Is Primary** ó Set a good example in the way you
 - a. Stand ó Straight, with hands folded over chest, and with minimal fidgeting
 - b. Walk ó Slowly, but with a purpose and direction
 - c. Kneel ó Again, straight with hands folded over chest, and with minimal fidgeting
 - d. Sit ó Straight with hands in lap
 - e. Handle Objects ó Everything used at Mass should be handled with care and respect
 - i. Patens / Chalices / etc. ó Specially blessed for use at Mass
 - ii. Albs / Cinctures ó Only used for Massô Please don't wash them up / throw them on the floor!
 - iii. Candles / Lighters / etc. ó Must be correctly used/maintained to keep them working properly
- 2) **Participation Is Necessary** ó As an Altar Server, you set an example to the congregation in
 - a. Reverence ó (see above)
 - b. Praying ó The prayers at Mass are for everyone, not just the priest or the rest of the congregation
 - c. Singing ó Singing is a form of praying at Mass, so yes, you ARE expected to sing! ;-)
- 3) **Knowledge Is Crucial**
 - a. As stated in the previous training, you are required to know all the regular procedures for Mass
 - b. Priests will expect you to know the procedures / vocabulary during Massô ignore this at your peril!
 - c. Beginning Altar Servers won't be able to help youô they won't have heard any of this yet
- 4) **Responsibility Is Essential** ó You have been invited for a reason; therefore, you must
 - a. Sign in when you arrive ó Keeps the priests and everyone else informed about who is missing
 - b. Find Subs when you must be absent ó This is your ministry, therefore it is your responsibility
 - i. The new program makes this extremely easyô start here
 - ii. The web terminal Phone List should be current at all timesô use it on short notice!
 - iii. If you have lots of trouble, you can call me for help
 - c. Contact me if your family schedule changes so that I can adjust the program
 - d. Update your information on-line (or by sending me an email) if your email/phone number changes

Procedures

- 1) **Handling / Preparing Incense** ó This Server is known as the ðThuriferö (or rarely, the Censer Bearer)
 - a. Always remember—*when incense is used, the sacristy bathroom must be prepped:*
 - i. Shut door to sacristy and crack door to bell tower (creates closed loop of airflow)
 - ii. Light must be on / fan must be running (linkedô you can't have one without the other)
 - b. Make sure there is charcoal ready and that at least one lighter is working well (or have matches)
 - c. Insure the thurible (censer) is empty and clean from the last usage (prevents premature smoking)
 - d. Insure the boat (the container for the incense) is not empty
 - i. Incense is stored in the cabinets above the sacarium
 - ii. Make sure bag / container is well-sealedô incense will become inert with humidity
- 2) **Handling Thurible (Censer)**
 - a. Always bring the incense boat with you when you bring out the thurible
 - b. Once you leave the sacristy bathroom, DO NOT STOP in the sacristyô alarms will sound!
 - c. Swing the thurible gently while walking or standing to insure charcoal doesn't burn out
 - d. Insure you don't bang / bump thurible while walking or going up stepsô will burn carpet and feet!
 - e. When you assist the priest, always hand the boat to him first, then lift the lid of the thurible for him
 - i. He will always add the incense, as he may need a specific amount for that moment
 - ii. He cannot spoon the incense and handle the lid at the same time
 - f. Once the incense is added, lower the lid, take the boat, and hold out the thurible for him
 - g. When priest finishes and gives thurible back, return to bathroom unless directed otherwise

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- 3) **Cleaning Up Incense after Mass** ó This is YOUR responsibility, so don't forget about it!
- Prop open the emergency exit doors at top / bottom of stairwell
 - Door behind organ / choir area can be propped with doormat (found at top of stairwell)
 - Door at bottom of stairwell can be propped with rocks or flower pot (found outside door)
 - Both doors will LOCK behind you if shut**, forcing you to walk to back entrance of church
 - Obtain a full cruet of water from the refrigerator (if not one available, refill one from Mass)
 - Carry cruet and thurible out of bathroom and down stairwell
 - Remember to shut the bathroom door behind you— smoke will set off alarms in sacristy
 - Do not stop in the stairwell either, as it also has smoke alarms!
 - Lift top of thurible and gently empty charcoal / remaining incense onto grass, spreading it out
 - Do not remove the metal insert; if it comes out, carefully replace it— HOT!
 - If any incense residue sticks to the insert, you can use a piece of mulch to pry it off
 - Very quickly douse all of the charcoal / incense with the water to insure it is not smoldering
 - Works just like a campfire— you don't assume it's out in the absence of water
 - DO NOT pour water into the thurible—water will corrode the metal and ruin the thurible!**
 - Once you are certain that all embers are out, return to church, closing each door behind you
 - Place the thurible on the stand and make sure the metal insert is seated properly for the next use
 - If any smoke still remains in the bathroom, keep the light / fan going as you exit
 - Refill the water cruet and place it in the refrigerator
- 4) **Funeral Masses** ó Only beginning and end are different; middle is pretty much the same
- Before Mass begins ó Insure charcoal / incense are ready for end of Mass (*see previous notes*)
 - Beginning of Mass ó Casket Present (if no casket present, same as regular weekend Mass)
 - Servers should stand off to the side of the main aisle (by pillar in front of Mary statue)
 - Priest will start Mass by sprinkling the casket, then family will place funeral pall
 - Once music begins, move to normal starting position at center of aisle
 - When singing begins, process forward as normal and family / casket will follow
 - After Communion ó Thurifer should light the charcoal
 - Once Communion is received, instead of going back to seat, go to sacristy bathroom
 - Turn on the light / fan, shut the door behind you, and open the bell tower door a little
 - Break a disc of charcoal in half and light it well along the edges, placing it in the thurible
 - To help the charcoal along, you can blow very lightly on it— don't blow embers everywhere!
 - Once charcoal is ready, take thurible and boat, shutting the door behind you
 - Stand behind the organ, gently swinging the thurible so that the charcoal continues to burn
 - When the priest descends the steps after the closing prayer, walk over to him
 - He will incense the casket (or urn) and return the thurible and boat to you
 - Return both to the bathroom, close the door behind you, and meet up with other Servers
 - If they are standing at their chairs, go to your chair
 - If already on main floor, join them in proper position (getting Cross if necessary)
 - Recess as normal, with Servers leading, just like regular weekend Mass
 - After Mass ó Insure charcoal / incense is properly discarded (*see previous notes*)
- 5) **Mass with Bishop** ó Main ones are Confirmation and Diocesan Mass of Healing (in February)
- Incense ó **Bishop Gaydos has no specific preference for incense, so it is almost always omitted**
 - Vimpsö ó Servers who hold the Bishop's mitre (hat) and crosier (staff) during Mass
 - Name refers to the veil or •vimpäö (plural = •vimpaeö) worn by these Servers
 - Normally one Server is in charge of each item
 - M/C ó Bishop will always have a Master of Ceremonies who will meet with Servers before Mass
 - Will cue Vimps to come forward at various points when items are needed
 - If Bishop needs Roman Missal or other book, M/C will direct Server to proper location
 - Always watch M/C for instructions— may change procedures if something happens!