



# LITURGICAL MINISTRY PROCEDURES

## ALTAR SERVERS

UPDATED: 10/1/2025

### ALL MINISTERS

OLGC is delighted to offer parishioners opportunities to participate in the liturgy. Serving as a liturgical minister deepens spirituality and helps the liturgy flow smoothly and reverently. And, as an altar server, you are a great help to the priest and all who worship at our parish by assisting at the altar and setting an example of reverence and attentiveness for the entire assembly.

### Check-in

- **Ministry Scheduler Pro (MSP):** This app is used to schedule and manage all ministers for Mass. An email will be sent to you at intervals throughout the year to let you know when you are scheduled. You can indicate your availability and/or blackout dates on the site. You can also request a substitute on the site when needed.
- **Reminders:** MSP will send you a reminder two (2) days before your assignment. Your device's<sup>1</sup> calendar will also send you a reminder the day of your assignment.
- **iPad:** There is an iPad located the Narthex near the double entry doors. When you arrive at church, locate your name on the iPad and "check in" so that the Sacristan will know you have arrived and ready to serve.
- **Frequently asked Questions:**
  - Q:** Can I check in from home?
  - A:** Yes, you can check in up to 12 hours before Mass begins.
  - Q:** What if I can't make my assigned Mass and time?
  - A:** Request a sub **as soon as you know** you will need one. You can request a sub up until 10 minutes before Mass begins on the MSP app.
  - Q:** What if I arrive late for Mass?
  - A:** If you have not checked in and arrive after the bells have rung assume a substitute has been arranged. Check the iPad which should reflect the name change.

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<sup>1</sup> MSP can download your schedule to your device's calendar (google calendar or iCal/Outlook). This is done by logging into the MSP website, My Schedule tab.

## **Attire**

Come dressed appropriately for ministry—both in spirit and in appearance—reflecting a balance of professionalism and ease. Attire should be respectful and polished, without being overly formal, so that it blends into the background and allows the focus to remain on Christ and the sacredness of the Mass.

Suitable options include slacks, dresses/skirts no more than 2” inches above the knee with covered shoulders. Please avoid clothing that is overly short, tight, casual or revealing (e.g., spaghetti straps, t-shirts with wording, flip flops, campaign buttons, etc.), or anything else that could distract from the liturgy.

## **Before Mass**

### ***Altar Servers (Arrival: 15 minutes prior to the start of Mass)***

- Check-in on iPad.
- Vest, making sure you choose an Alb that fits.
- Check the calendar to see what color cincture (cord) to wear.
- Collect candles and cross and ensure the colored glass of the candle is correct for the season/holiday.
- Once vested, wait for Presider in Narthex left of the TV screen (not blocking the doors or hallway to the restroom) and participate in the Gathering Prayer (Direction of Intention).

## **The Introductory Rites**

- When the Presider is ready to begin Mass, Sacristan (or Priest) will motion to Lector 1 who is in the Sanctuary to read the opening announcements.
- Lector 1 reads the opening announcements printed in the binder and remains in the Sanctuary.

- The procession begins after the first verse of the opening hymn.

### Order of Procession

Cross  
Candle    Candle  
Server    Server  
MC  
Lector #2 w/ Book of the Gospel  
(*Deacon w/ Book of the Gospel*)  
Presider

#### Altar Service Guidance when all servers are not present:

One Altar Server:

- Will carry in cross at procession
- Will **not** meet gift bearers with cross so they can dress the Altar.
- With no cross procession, Usher will assist by meeting gift bearers at gifts table and send them forth when Priest and Altar Server have descended the steps to receive gifts.

Two Altar Servers:

- No candles
- One carries the cross
- One processes
- Cross bearer will meet gift bearers to process with the cross, returning the cross to the holder and then returning to the Altar to assist with dressing the Altar.

When the procession reaches the Altar:

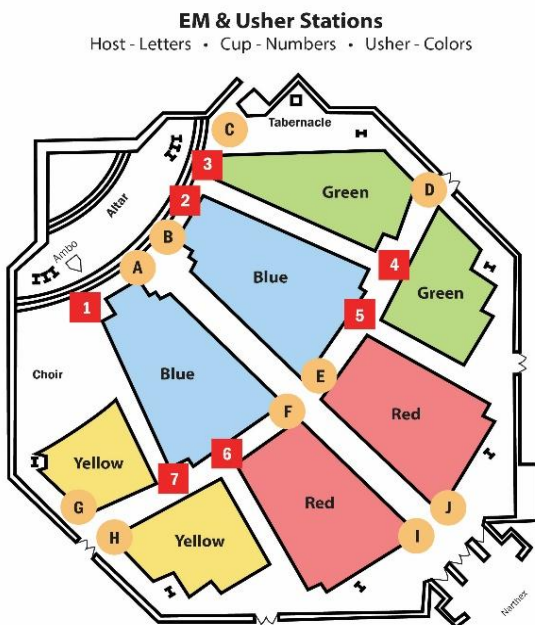
- the Cross Bearer turns right and places cross on stand next to the Tabernacle
- Candle Bearers walk up the steps and place the candles on the table behind the Presider's Chair then go to their respective seats and remain standing
- If there is a 4<sup>th</sup> Altar Server, he/she will remain at the foot of the stairs and bow with the Priest then take their respective place in the Sanctuary.
  - Candle bearers stand on Ambo side
  - Cross bearer, and 4<sup>th</sup> server, stand on Presider side
  - Whenever crossing in front of or behind the Altar, reverently bow
- Lector 2 (or Deacon) places the Book of the Gospels face down on the Altar and goes to their place in the assembly. The Deacon waits at the Altar for the Presider to reverence the Altar.
- If there is a Deacon, Lector 2 still processes in with the line, taking the position in front of the Deacon.

- Presider and remaining server(s) reverence the Altar and go to their places.
- Music Ministers should endeavor to end the opening hymn/song once all ministers are in place.
- After the Gloria (or the Penitential Act during Advent and Lent), the Server designated for the book goes to the Presider and holds the Roman Missal or binder for the Collect (Opening Prayer).

## The Liturgy of the Eucharist

### Altar Servers

- Once the Prayer of the Faithful is finished and the assembly is seated, as soon as the offertory music begins, the Cross Bearer retrieves the Cross and proceeds to lead the gift procession. The gift presenters meet the Cross Bearer at the table at the break between the front and back sections of the church. The Cross Bearer starts the procession as soon as the Presider reaches the bottom step. The gift bearers follow, hand the gifts to the Presider, bow and then return to their pew. The Cross Bearer returns the cross to its stand.
- The remaining servers set up the Altar at the beginning of the Preparation Rite.
- The corporal (small red cross placed at the bottom center) will have been placed on the Altar by the Sacristan before Mass.
- Designated server brings the chalice, pall & purificator from the Credence Table to the Altar and places the purificator and pall, to the right of the corporal.



- The chalice is placed on the corporal.
- Cruet of water is placed on or to the right of the corporal.
- **Brings the trays of ciboria and cups from the Credence Table to the front of the Altar. Tray of ciboria go on the Ambo side of the Altar; tray of cups go on the presider chair side of the Altar.**
- The servers then join the Presider at the foot of the Sanctuary to assist in reception of the gifts.
- The server with the paten, and any additional ciboria, place them on the Altar. The server with the cruet of wine holds it in order to hand to the Presider to fill the chalice.
- As the Holy, Holy, Holy is sung; all Altar Servers move in a solemn and dignified manner

down the steps and stand in front of the Altar. When the Holy, Holy, Holy is over, they kneel and remain there until the "Great Amen" is sung.

- Following the "Great Amen," the servers stand in place.

## Communion Rite

### **Altar Servers**

- Once the Eucharistic Ministers begin to receive Holy Communion, the servers stand and take their place in line to receive Holy Communion at Station A (see diagram at left).\*
  - \*Fr. Metzger has the altar servers come to the altar to receive Communion
- After all servers have received Holy Communion and the EMs have left the Sanctuary, designated server returns the small cruet of water to the right side of the Altar.
- Servers move to their seats in a solemn and dignified manner. They remain standing, hands folded, until the Eucharist is placed in the Tabernacle.
- After the Presider (or Deacon) has purified the vessels and the Sacristan has returned Jesus to the Tabernacle, a server reverently reassembles **all** communion vessels—corporal, chalice, purificator and pall—and any other items remaining on the Altar, and places them on the Credence Table and returns to their seat.
- During the dressing/undressing of the Altar, if there is any crossing behind the Altar, Altar Server will bow in reverence to the Altar before returning to their seat.
- If the Deacon is present, he places all items on the Credence Table where he will purify the vessels.

## The Concluding Rites

- The server designated for the book goes to the Presider and holds the Roman Missal or binder for the Prayer after Communion (and the announcements).
- The Cross Bearer collects the cross and proceeds to the center aisle where the remaining servers will meet.
- For the recessional, the servers proceed to the center aisle. The Presider (and Deacon) reverence the Altar and join the servers at the foot of the Sanctuary facing the Sanctuary. After the second verse (or longer at the discretion of the Presider), the procession turns and heads to the Narthex.

## **After Mass**

### ***Altar Servers***

- Cross bearer returns cross to stand in the Nave, located by the Tabernacle.
- Unvest, rehang Alb and hang it up in the correct size location. Place the cincture (cord) on the hook.
- Return to the church and offer assistance to Sacristan to extinguish candles and/or carry vessels to Work Sacristy for purifying and washing.

For additional questions, please contact Cheryl Jones, [cjones@olgcva.org](mailto:cjones@olgcva.org) or Charles Fulghum, [cfulghum@olgcva.org](mailto:cfulghum@olgcva.org).