

Altar Servers Modified Procedures for Masses at St Paul Catholic Church - During COVID-19 Pandemic

General -

Two Altar Servers Maximum (No exceptions)

Altar Servers are highly encouraged to wear masks, but it is not mandatory

Altar will be set up for Mass as in Daily Mass (For the time being)

The Deacon and/or Sacristan will have the Roman Missal, Corporal, Wine/Water Cruets, Lavabo Dish, Finger Towel and Priest Chalice set **ON THE ALTAR PRIOR TO MASS.**

The following is an EXTRACT of the detailed Altar Server procedures found on the St Paul Parish website. The following highlights those changes in the Altar Server procedures due to the CV-19 Pandemic.

Processional – There will be NO Processional down the center aisle (weekly or weekend Masses) (For the time being):

The “Processional” will be from the Sacristy with the ringing of the Sacristy Bells.

Altar Servers will lead the Celebrant & Deacon between the two Altars, turn (left), face the Tabernacle and Genuflect when the Celebrant & Deacon do so.

After the Celebrant & Deacon turn to move to the Altar of Sacrifice (Main Altar), the Altar Servers go to their seats.

Opening Prayer – Since the Roman Missal and stand are already on the Altar the Altar Servers do NOT need to hold the Roman Missal for the Celebrant.

Prayers of the Faithful – Near the end of the Profession of Faith (Creed) the Deacon will move toward the Ambo and then one Altar Server moves to the Celebrant (stopping to bow to the Altar of Sacrifice) to assist holding the binder for the Celebrant. The Altar Server remains with the Celebrant until Deacon has completed all the Prayers of the Faithful and Celebrant reads the concluding prayer. Then the Altar Server leaves

the binder in the Deacon's Chair and returns to his/her seat (remembering to stop to bow to the Altar of Sacrifice)

Presentation of the Gifts – Suspended – Altar Server does NOT lead Ushers in Presentation of the Gifts.

Note – When the offering baskets with handles arrive the Ushers will take up collection from the Parishioners. When collected, one Usher will process the collection up the center aisle, bow and place the basket in front of the **Ambo**.

Preparation of the Altar – The Celebrant/Deacon will prepare the Altar.

The Altar Server(s) will stand by to remove the following from the Altar:

Wine Cruet – when finished use by the Deacon/Celebrant and taken to the Credence Table.

Washing of Hands:

If only one (1) Altar Server, he/she moves to the Altar and picks up the **Finger Towel** and places it over his/her left forearm.

Next, he/she picks up the **Lavabo Bowl** in one hand and the **Water Cruet** in the other hand.

At the end of the Preparation of the Altar, the Celebrant will turn to face the Altar Server(s). He will place his hands over the **Lavabo Bowl** and the Altar Server will pour a small amount of water over his fingers. Then the Altar Server will turn slightly to offer the **Finger Towel** to the Celebrant.

When the Celebrant's fingers are dry, he will return the **Finger Towel** to the Altar Server's forearm.

The Altar Server bows and returns these items to the **Credence Table**.

After which he/she moves to his or her chair.

Note - if there are two (2) Altar Servers, one Altar server takes the Lavabo Bowl and Water Cruet. The other Server takes the Finger Towel. Once the Celebrant has washed his hands the Altar Server opens the Finger Towel, so the Celebrant can dry his fingers.

Eucharistic Prayer

Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy) – At the conclusion, Altar Servers Kneel

Note – **Altar Bells** - If they are not already in position, the Altar Server who will ring the bells moves them, with the cushion they rest on, next to him/her.

Consecration - The Altar Server with the bells needs to be especially observant of the Celebrant. The ringing of bells occurs at different times depending on which of the four (4) Eucharistic Prayers is used.

The first ringing (single ring) of bells occurs when the Celebrant extends his hands, palms down, over the unconsecrated bread and wine (Known as the **Epiclesis**) **Note – be careful, the bells are NOT rung when the Celebrant makes the sign of the cross over the bread and wine.**

The second and third ringing of the **Altar Bells** is when the Celebrant elevates (raises) the Host and Chalice. **The Altar Server rings the bells three short times at the top of the elevation, NOT while the Celebrant is in the process of raising the host or chalice.**

Communion Rite

Lord's Prayer – Altar Servers do NOT hold hands.

Exchange of Peace – Altar Servers do NOT exchange Sign of Peace.

Holy Communion – once the Celebrant has received the Eucharist, the Altar Servers stand and await the Celebrant to come to offer them the Eucharist.

Once the Celebrant moves to offer the Eucharist to Parishioners THE ALTAR SERVERS DO NOT REMOVE THE ROMAN MISSAL AND STAND FROM THE ALTAR (CHANGE).

Post Communion Responsibilities When the Celebrant returns to the Sanctuary after distribution of Holy Communion, he (or the Deacon) returns the **Ciborium** to the **Tabernacle, opens the door, Genuflects** and closes the door.

At this point the **Altar Servers should stand with hands folded and be ready to assist with the removal of items from the altar.**

One Altar Server immediately goes to the **Credence table**, removes the stopper from the **Water Cruet**, and returns to the Altar with the **Water Cruet**. The server stands at the side of the Altar. The water is needed for the purification (cleaning) process of the **Sacred Vessels**. The Celebrant may have you pour water into the Celebrant's **Chalice**. The Altar Server bows when done.

Return the **Water Cruet** to the **Credence Table** and **replace the stopper**.

Then the Altar Servers should stand at the side of the Altar and, if more than one Altar Server, working as a team, accept the items that the Celebrant will hand you and return them to the **Credence Table**.

Normally, the last items to be removed from the Altar will be the **Celebrant's Chalice, Purificator, Paten, Pall and Corporal**. (Note: some Celebrant's will also place the **Tabernacle Key** on top of the **Corporal**). The Altar Server should step forward and take them from the Celebrant. Hold them with one hand by the node on the **Chalice** and place your other hand flat on the **Corporal** (so the stack of **Sacred Objects** is secure). Return them to the **Credence Table** and take your seats.

Do not remove items from the altar unless they are **handed to you or you are instructed to do so**.

Prayer after Communion – When the Celebrant and Deacon stand for the Prayer after Communion, the Altar Servers stand.

CONCLUDING RITES

Any general announcements are made by the lector or Celebrant at this time.

Final Blessing – As the Roman Missal is already on the Altar, the Altar Servers remain standing. (Change).

Dismissal - The deacon dismisses the congregation.

Prayer of St Michael the Archangel.

Recessional –

The Recessional Hymn - The Celebrant generally waits for the first verse of the Recessional Hymn to conclude before he Venerates (kisses) the Main Altar.

Veneration of the Altar - The Celebrant (and the Deacon) will turn to face the Tabernacle the Altar Servers then move to the side of the Celebrant and Deacon. and when the Celebrant genuflects, they do likewise. The Celebrant and the Deacon with face about and the Celebrant will Venerate the Main Altar.

Then the Procession turns right to face the Sacristy the process to Sacristy.

Once in the Sacristy, the Celebrant will say “**Pro sit...**” in Latin (“**May it [the Mass] be for your benefit**”)

The servers respond in Latin “**Et Omnibus et singulis.**” (“**For all and each [person]**”). (et OM-nee-boos et SING-oo-lees).

Extinguishing the Candles - Extinguish the candles, as a team if possible, in reverse order. (**See Things to Know and Master Pages 2-5 for more details**)

Return to the Altar Server vestment room and NEATLY hang up your **Cassock** and **Surplice** on the hangers.

Depart the Sanctuary - remembering to **Genuflect** as you depart.

There are people counting on you.

First, the Celebrant and Deacon depend on you. They need to know that you will be there on time and prepared. You help them a great deal to ensure that things go smoothly.

Also, remember that the congregation counts on you. Without you, an important part of the prayer leadership is missing. Without you, things can get sloppy. And no celebration of the Mass should be sloppy. A good server keeps things going smoothly.

No matter how well you are prepared, occasionally things go wrong. When something does go wrong, stay calm. Quick movements are distracting and can lead to tripping and other troublesome mistakes. When there is a problem, think about it for a moment; then, if possible, do what is necessary to correct the problem.

Finally, be responsible, stay focused and be calm. You have been called to serve. Your parish is grateful that you have responded to this call with a real sense of dedication to service.