



# Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church

Ministry of Altar Servers

Handbook

### **When You Come to Church:**

1. Arrive at the church early and plan to be at church at least 15-20 minutes before Mass begins. If the weather is bad, you will probably have to leave home a bit earlier than usual.
2. Be sure to sign in on the schedule. Look in the bulletin or for emails for any special announcements.
3. Put on a server's cassock (youth) or Sunday attire. Treat these vestments with care. Be sure the cassock is not too long or too short. It should be touching the top of your shoes. After Mass the cassocks are to be hung up properly.
4. About fifteen minutes before Mass begins; a server should light the candles, unless they have already been lit. When lighting the candles, facing the Altar, light the candle right of the Tabernacle, then the candle on right side of Altar, then left side of Altar, and then finally left Tabernacle. Make sure all lights are on before returning to dressing area.
5. Be sure to check the credence table and Altar.
  1. There should be a key in the Tabernacle
  2. Verify there are purificators on each side of Altar. One of each side for Saturday Mass or two on each for Sunday Masses.
  3. On the credence table:
    - o Lavabo bowl and towel for washing of hands
    - o Chalice, Purificator, and Pall
    - o Mini water cruet
    - o Wine cups (2 cups on Saturday or 4 cups on Sunday)
    - o Sacramentary book and pillow
6. Ask the priest if there are any "special" activities taking place at that particular Mass.
7. Be quiet before mass and avoid making unnecessary noise. The priest, readers, and minister of Communion will appreciate a few moments of silence and prayer before they serve God's people at Mass. Also be sure to take a few minutes for yourself to reflect on your ministry and its importance to the parish community.

### **The Server's Task:**

We will have two Servers at every Mass: 1 Cross Bearer (CB) and 1 Book Server I (BS).

#### **Cross Bearer (CB)**

- Carries cross in processions at the beginning and end of Mass
  - o When carrying the Cross: Walking at a moderate, dignified pace...
    1. Hold the cross straight, with the corpus (body of Christ) directly forward.
    2. Bottom of the pole is waist level; right hand is throat level with the left hand twelve inches lower.
    3. Approach the altar without pausing and proceed to the back to place the cross up.
  - o Always treat the cross with reverence including before and after Mass.
- Leads the procession of the Gifts
- Rings the bells at the Calling of the Holy Spirit, Elevation of the Host and the Chalice
  - o The Calling of the Holy Spirit – 1 short ring
  - o Elevation of Host-3 short consecutive rings
  - o Elevation of Chalice-3 short consecutive rings

#### **Book Server (BS)**

- Holds Sacramentary Book for Priest during opening and closing prayers

- Prepares Altar for Liturgy of Eucharist
- Brings water cruet to Deacon/Priest
- Brings Lavabo bowl and towel at preparation of gifts
- Remove items from Altar during Communion

### **Parts of the Mass & Instructions during Mass**

- Introductory Rites
- Liturgy of the Word-includes readings, psalm, gospel acclamation, gospel, homily and general intercessions
- Liturgy of the Eucharist-includes preparation of altar, Eucharistic prayer, communion
- Concluding Rites

#### **Introductory Rite**

- Servers should line up at the rear of the church, Cross Bearer should be first standing at first pew from rear, then Book Server. Once the music starts and the Cantor begins to sing process to the Altar maintaining at least one pew distance between each server.
  - Once at the Altar the Cross Bearer should continue upon the Altar (without bowing) and continue to behind the Altar where the Procession Cross is place in stand. When done, the Cross Bearer should wait in the opening until Father genuflects and proceeds onto Altar.
  - When the Book Server reaches the Altar in the procession, they should move to the left land wait (leave enough room for others to stand). As Father genuflects, the Book Server (or anyone standing in front of the Altar) should genuflect with him and then proceed to your seat.
- Once Father says, ‘Let us pray’, the Book Server should retrieve the Sacramentary Book for the opening prayer. The Book Server should stand on Father’s left (or Tabernacle side of Father). When done, return the book to the table and be seated for readings.

#### **Liturgy of the Eucharist**

- As the Ushers start the collection of the offerings (about 2 to 3 pews), the Cross Bearer should go to the rear of the church for the Presentation of Gifts. Once the Cross Bearer leaves the Altar, they should turn and bow toward the Altar then proceed to the rear of church by going down the side aisle. When the Gift Bearers and Usher are ready; and Father begins to stand to collect the Gifts the procession of Gifts should start with the Cross Bearer leading the way.
- Immediately after the Intentions or Universal Prayer, setting of the Altar should begin. The Book Server will prepare the Altar. Place the Sacramentary Book and pillow on left side of Altar. Remove the Gospel Book stand from Altar and place in the back behind Altar. Place the Chalice in the center of the Altar on the Corporal, Next place the Communion Cups (2 on Saturday/4 on Sunday) on the right side of Altar and then finally place the cruet of water on the Altar next to cups (remove the top of the cruet before bringing it to the Altar). After this is complete return to chair and wait for Father to stand for precession of Gifts. Follow Father to front to assist with gifts.
- Onto reaching the Altar in the procession, the Cross Bearer should turn to face the congregation and assist Father. Father will hand each of server a vessel, bow when Father

bows and then take the items to your side of the Altar. The Ciborium and Decanter should be given to the Priest/Deacon or placed on Altar.

This Section is different depending on which Deacon is serving at Mass. You will have to pay attention to whether the Deacon pours the water in the Decanter or not. If he does, then you can take water cruet back to table once he finishes using it otherwise you may have to carry both water cruet and decanter back to table at the same time.

- The Book Server should remain next to Altar to collect the water cruet from the Altar, bow and return item to the table, next return to Altar to get the Decanter from Altar when it has been emptied. The decanter should be placed in the back to leave more room on the table. (This can be done after the washing of the hands depending on timing.) After Father blesses the bread and wine, the Book Server should get the Lavabo bowl and towel and return to the altar. When Father is done washing hands bow and return items to table. (This is a good time to move the decanter to back and place on right side of sink.)

### **Communion Rite**

- When the congregation kneels for the Eucharistic Prayer, you should kneel on the kneeler in front of the chair.
- This is the cross bearer's (CB) cue to prepare to ring the bells. Each Eucharistic Prayer is different, so you need to know the beginning of each to know when to ring the bells.
- Rings the bells at the Calling of the Holy Spirit, Elevation of the Host and the Chalice
  - The Calling of the Holy Spirit – 1 short ring. Father will call down the Holy Spirit crossing his hands and then make the sign of cross.
  - Elevation of Host-3 short consecutive rings
  - Elevation of Chalice-3 short consecutive rings
- After the Sign of Peace and when the Eucharistic Ministers begin start to come to the Altar the Book Server can get the hand sanitizer and place on corner of the Altar near candle.
- During communion (about halfway through) the Book Server should remove the Book and pillow from the Altar. Place the pillow on the table and the Book on your chair to hold later (This will give Deacon more room when cleaning the vessels). Secondly, remove the Pall (square board) and hand sanitizer from the Altar and place on table. Return to chair.

### **Concluding Rite**

- When Father says "Let us pray", Book Server will bring the Lectionary Book for the Closing Prayer.
- After the closing prayer and Sign of Cross is done the Cross bearer retrieves the Procession Cross and waits in the opening until Father moves to kiss the Altar. Once Father moves the Cross Bearer can proceed to the 1<sup>st</sup> pew. Book Server can also proceed to the edge of Altar where they wait on Father to genuflect. Process to the back of church and wait for mass to end.

Father may give a blessing after Mass, so try to stay together after procession.