

# **ST. JOSEPH'S PORT MOODY**

## **ALTAR SERVER MANUAL**



(Revised August 31st 2021)

## Dress Code

- 1) Please wear plain, light colored shirts, pants (or dresses) with no bold prints or stripes.
- 2) Please AVOID neon or bright coloured clothing that may show through the altar server robe (alb).
- 3) Please wear plain black (preferred) or dark brown closed toe dress shoes.
- 4) Please AVOID wearing runners, boat shoes, flip flops, high heels, boots or any distracting shoes.

## Posture during Mass

- 1) Anytime you are not holding anything, place your hands with palms together, in the "prayer position". Point your fingertips upward, with the right thumb over the left. Hands should be held comfortably at about the middle of your chest.

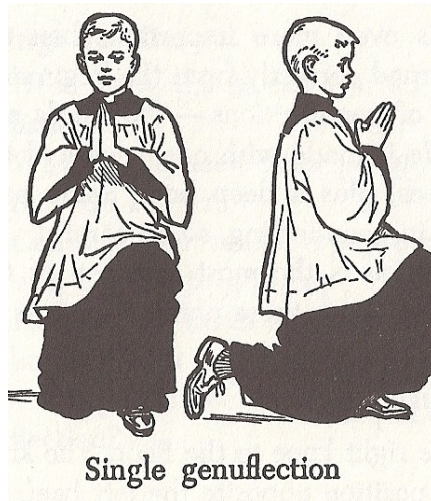


- 2) If you are holding something, hold the item firmly with one or both hands, as needed. The free hand, if you have one, should cover your heart.

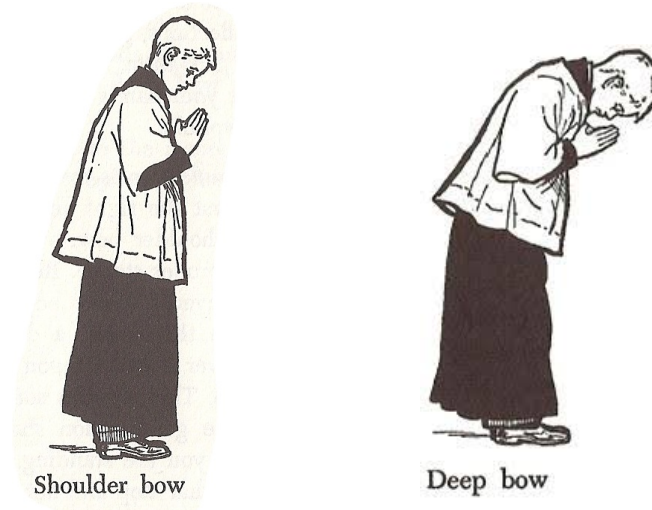


# Bowing and Genuflecting

- 1) Avoid genuflecting when holding anything in your hands.
- 2) When genuflecting, place your right knee on the ground, and have your left leg as straight as possible. (Genuflecting is your way of acknowledging that Jesus is present in the tabernacle).



- 3) When carrying the cross or holding candles, do a slight bow (shoulder bow)
- 4) Carrying something = bow your head slightly (shoulder bow) Not carrying anything = bow reverently by the waist. (deep bow)



- 5) Whenever crossing the altar during Mass, bow to the altar. (During Mass, the altar is the focus since it is where the celebration of the Eucharist occurs). When Mass is not in progress, always genuflect to the tabernacle.



- 6) Whenever you are standing next to another server, bow together. As well when you are bowing with the priest, bow at the same time as the priest.



## General Things to keep in Mind

- 1) Whenever you are walking, sitting, bowing, genuflecting, do your best to do so in unison/ together with the altar server next to you.
- 2) Keep your voice down when speaking in the sacristy. You are allowed to talk but keep in mind, that sound can easily travel from the sacristy to the people in church.
- 3) Avoid rushing or running while moving inside the church.
- 4) Do not worry if you forget something or make a mistake during Mass, it is normal and people will understand, and most people will not even notice the mistake.
- 5) The most important thing is that you are doing your best and are serving God on the altar.



# Getting Ready

- 1) Arrive at the sacristy no later than 10 minutes before Mass. This allows for time to get dressed, pray, and prepare/decide on roles for Mass. Rushing to the sacristy a few minutes before Mass is discouraged as it can be distracting to those praying in the church and can delay the start time of Mass.
- 2) Upon arriving in the sacristy, put on an appropriately sized alb and cincture. The alb should come to the ankle after tying the cincture.

## HOW TO TIE A ROPE CINCTURE



Fold cincture in half



Wrap around waist with knots on your right side



Grab end of loop made by the fold and overlap as shown



Using right hand, slip loop over left hand, keeping hold of cincture



Grab knotted end with your right hand



Slip knotted ends through loop (where left hand is making sure that single loop is on top of double cincture.) Feed knotted ends through loop from top to bottom



Drop loop and then tighten around waist



Knot is on left hip

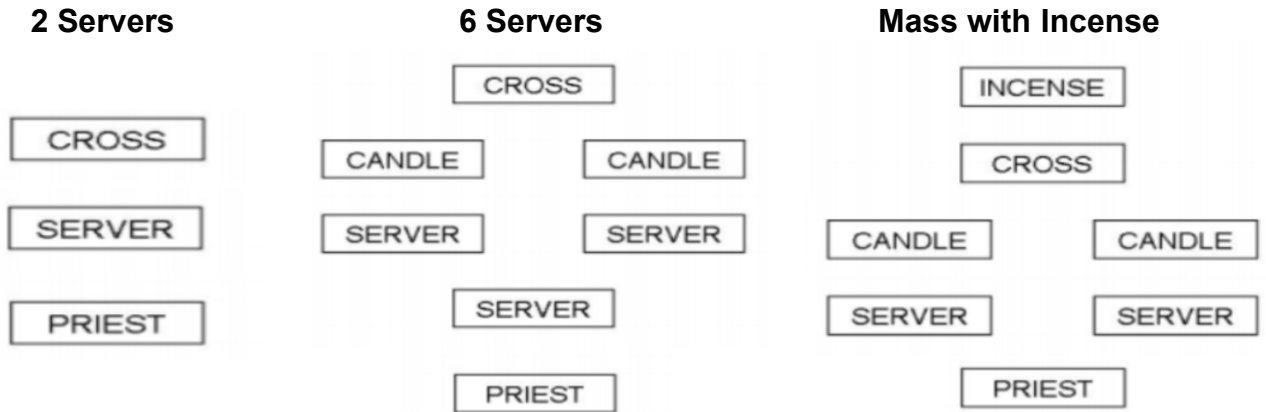
- 3) Once you are dressed, check that the candles have been lit and, if possible, light them 15 minutes before Mass.
- 4) Once everyone is dressed, and before you leave the sacristy, pray '*The Server's Prayer Before Mass*' together. (It is a good practice to end the prayer with the phrase "St. Joseph....Pray for us!")
- 5) 5 -10 minutes before Mass starts, grab the processional candles and processional Cross, and walk to the entrance area of the church (Narthex).
- 6) Once in the entrance area, wait on the side next to the baptistry for Mass to begin. Avoid blocking or crowding around the entrance.



- 7) When the '*Prayer for Reverence for Life*' is being said, start lining up to prepare for the procession.



# Examples of Entrance Procession Formations.



## Procession

- 1) Once the singing begins, start walking towards the altar. Do NOT start walking when only the music/instruments are playing. When walking towards the altar, walk at a moderate pace.
- 2) Servers take their positions in front of the altar. The Cross bearer stands directly in front of the ambo, candle bearers stand directly in front of the candles beside the altar. Other servers split off and stand on the outside of the cross or candle bearers. Avoid standing on the carpeted area.
- 3) Servers will wait in their positions in front of the altar for the priest to genuflect. Servers carrying a cross or candle will bow, while servers without anything in their hands will genuflect with the priest.





- 4) After the altar servers bow or genuflect, the cross and candle bearers will go and place the cross and candles on their stands, and the other servers will take their place at the bench.



- 5) ***\*For special Masses: i.e Mass with incense or with more than 2 priests celebrating Mass or with the Archbishop, servers will immediately bow or genuflect once at the front of the altar and immediately head towards their seats. Do NOT wait at the front of the altar for the priests.\****

## Gospel Procession

- 1) When the music starts for the Gospel Acclamation (“Alleluia” or “Praise to You” during Lent), the candle bearers stand, grab their candles and walk to the front of the altar to meet the priest.



- 2) The candle bearers will wait at the front of the altar with the priest until he bows, and will bow with the priest.



- 3) After bowing, the candle bearers will then walk to the ambo with one candle bearer leading the priest, and the other following the priest. The candle bearer leading will end up on the left side of the ambo (closest to the altar) while the follower will end up on the right (farthest from the altar).





- 4) After the gospel reading is finished, both candle bearers will make their way back to their seats. The candle bearer on the right side of the ambo will wait at the bottom of the steps for the other candle bearer and they will both bow towards the altar together before returning their candles.

## Offertory

- 1) After *The Prayers of the Faithful* (Intentions) are finished, all altar servers EXCEPT the Cross Bearer will take their seat.
- 2) The Cross Bearer will grab their cross and make their way to the back of the church to lead the people bringing up the gifts to the altar (water, wine, and bread).  
***\*If you are the only Altar Server at the Mass, walk to the back of the Church without a Cross, and be prepared to help the priest receive the gifts at the front of the altar\****
- 3) The Cross Bearer will wait at the back of the church until the priest is finished setting up the altar. The cross bearer will then lead the gift bearers to the altar.



***The sign that the priest is finished and to start walking towards the altar is when you see the priest bow.***

- 4) The moment the priest is about to begin to walk down to receive the gifts, another server will come and stand next to the priest to help receive the gifts. Once the cross bearer is at the front, he will stand next to the other altar server assisting the priest.

## Preparation of the Gifts

- 1) After the gifts have been received, the water and wine are then brought to the credence table.



- 2) 2 altar servers will grab the water and wine cruet and wait at the bottom of the steps to hand the priest the cruets when he needs it. The sign to start walking towards the priest is when he bows.



***\*Make sure the handle is facing outward and the cap is removed. Also the first thing the priest will grab should be on the priest's left side (the side closest to the people in church)\****

- 3) After the priest is done with the water and wine cruets. Bow in unison towards the priest before leaving.



- 4) The next thing is to grab the lavabo (crystal bowl) and the finger towel. Do the same process as you did with the water and wine.



**\*For Masses with incense, the lavabo and the finger towel are brought up after the priest has incensed the altar and the thurifer has incensed the priest\***

## **Celebration of the Eucharist**

- 1) At the 'Holy, Holy, Holy' (Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus) all altar servers will begin walking to the bottom step near the altar. Remain standing until everyone in the church kneels. (Do NOT begin walking until the first word of the Holy Holy Holy is spoken or sung).
- 2) When walking to the bottom step, do not rush, and if there is a server next to you, try to walk together with them.
- 3) One server will ring the bell during the Eucharistic prayer. There are 4 times where the server will need to ring. **1)** When the priest extends his hand over the gifts, **2)** When the priest raises the bread, **3)** When the priest raises the chalice, **4)** When the priest drinks from the chalice.





**Ring once for ~2s**



**Ring 3x / ~3s each**



**Ring 3x / ~3s each**



**Ring once for ~2s**

## **Communion**

- 1) After the altar servers have received communion, either 1 or 2 servers will grab a paten and head to the front of the altar (This depends on how many are distributing communion). Servers should stand on the outside of the person giving out communion (side closest to the wall).





- 2) When holding a paten, keep it as flat as possible, and hold it in a way so that if a person drops the host from their hands, or mouth the paten will catch it.
- 3) Servers who are not helping with communion should go to the servers bench and kneel. Remain kneeling until the priest has placed the Eucharist in the tabernacle, and bow as the priest genuflects. Afterwards you can take a seat.



- 4) After the distribution of communion, the priest will begin cleaning the chalice and other vessels. One server should get the water cruet ready, and if possible another server should be ready to assist clearing the altar and placing them on the credence table. The two servers should walk up together.





***Similar to when preparation of the gifts, the servers should bow together in unison towards the priests before leaving.***

## **Recessional/Dismissal**

- 1) At the dismissal the cross bearer and candle bearers will grab the cross and candles. Other servers will wait for the cross and candle bearers to lead them to the aisle.
- 2) When standing in front of the altar, all the servers should stand in the aisle, facing towards the altar.
- 3) Everyone turns to face, and moves to the back of the church when the priest turns around.
- 4) Walk at a moderate speed when heading to the back of the church.
- 5) Once at the back of the church, the cross bearer will turn around, and all altar servers, and priest will bow to the cross, and say the phrase “Deus Gratias (Thanks be to God)”



## End of Mass

- 1) After everyone has bowed to the cross, you may head back to the sacristy
- 2) Once in the sacristy, do not remove your alb until you have prayed together the '*Server's Prayer After Mass*'. (It is a good practice to end the prayer with the phrase "St. Joseph....Pray for us!")
- 3) After the prayer, if needed it is a good time for the senior altar server to debrief with the newer altar servers if any mistakes or reminders need to be said.
- 4) One server should help in extinguishing the candles on the altar.

## Mass with Incense (to be added later)

### Getting Ready

- 1) The incense should be prepared at least 15 minutes before Mass begins.
- 2)

## Altar Serving Definitions

**Alb**- White ankle-length garment worn by priests, deacons, and by altar servers.

**Ambo** - The place where the scriptures are proclaimed. Also called a lectern and pulpit.

**Amice** - Square white cloth with tapes, worn around the neck of priests during Mass.

**Boat**- container for incense used in conjunction with thurible

**Bowl Paten/Ciborium bowl** - Bowl used at Mass to hold the bread which the priest consecrates.

**Burse** - Square stiff "envelope" for holding the corporal.

**Chalice** - Cup used at Mass to hold the wine which the priests consecrates

**Chasuble** - is the outermost liturgical vestment worn by priests during Mass.



**Ciborium** - Chalice-shaped vessel with lid used to store consecrated Hosts.

**Cincture** - rope, cord, or band worn around the waist.

**Cope** - Cape worn by a priest at certain liturgical functions, (i.e During Benediction.)

**Corporal** - Square, stiff linen cloth on which sacred vessels are set when in use or when being purified. Often has a cross embroidered in the centre or on the bottom.

**Cruets** - Vessels/Containers for water and wine at Mass.

**Credence Table** - a small side table in the sanctuary of the church where the cruets and sacred vessels can be placed on.

**Dalmatic** - Garment with sleeves worn as deacon's outer vestment at Mass.

**Finger Towel** - Linen Cloth to dry celebrant's fingers after washing of hands at Mass.

**Follower** - brass cone fitted to the top of a candle to prevent drips

**Humeral Veil** - Cloth worn over shoulders (i.e by a priest at Benediction)

**Lavabo Bowl** - Bowl used for washing of hands at Mass

**Lectionary** - Book of the readings for Mass

**Missal** - Also referred to as the Roman Missal. The book for principal celebration at Mass.

**Monstrance** - Repository for the Blessed Sacrament with a glass centre so that the Blessed Sacrament can be seen.

**Pall** - Stiff square which goes on top of the chalice

**Paten** - Plate or bowl used at Mass to hold the Bread which the priest consecrates. (N.B. Altar servers also hold a Paten during communion to catch any fragments of the Eucharist.

**Purificator** - Linen Cloth used for cleaning sacred vessels after the Mass.

**Stole** - Band-like garment worn hanging from the neck by priests - worn under chasuble.

**Tabernacle** - Large golden box behind the altar where Jesus resides. Excess consecrated hosts from previous masses are stored here, as well as the special Large host that is used during adoration. (N.B There the body of Christ is always stored in the Tabernacle, so that it is always present in the Church)

**Thurible** - Container with chains used to incense. Also called a censer. (N.B Thurifer is the thing, thurifer is the person who uses it).