

ST. PAUL MINISTRIES

HOSPITALITY



PRAYER



DISCIPLESHIP



MINISTRY



----- **ALTAR SERVERS** -----

MINISTRY COMMITMENT

Thank you for accepting the invitation from your Church family to become a Minister "Around the Table." Serving in this special way has a profound impact on the way our St. Paul Mission Statement, "To Live As The Body Of Christ," comes to life.

The purpose of the Eucharistic Liturgy, as well as all Sacraments, is to make us holy, to build up the Body of Christ and to worship God. The Liturgy "nourishes, strengthens and expresses faith." (CCC 1123)

By saying, "Yes" to this calling, I agree to the following:

- ✓ I commit to serve in this one Liturgical Ministry for a two-year period.
- ✓ I understand the importance of my ministry in the overall mission of our Parish "To Live As The Body Of Christ."
- ✓ I will approach the Celebration of the Eucharist with a spirit of the Joy of Christ.
- ✓ I will prepare myself during the week being reflective of the upcoming Readings so that I will be prepared spiritually, physically and emotionally.
- ✓ I will arrive on time and dress appropriately when I am scheduled to serve.
- ✓ I will find a replacement in the event I cannot serve at my scheduled time.
- ✓ When I am not scheduled to serve, I will be a better participant in the pew by being attentive, listening, and responding enthusiastically.

By signing below, I agree to all of the above statements:

Ministry: _____

Mass preference: (circle one) 5:30 8:00 10:30

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

PURPOSE

This Ministry Manual is being provided to all Ministers "Around the Table" to create a better understanding and zeal for authentic worship at St. Paul Parish. This information is not only instruction of *how* to carry out the ministry, but to better understand *why* we worship the way we do.

We want to rejuvenate the deep, spiritual meaning of being a participant in Mass. As St. Augustine said, "Behold what you are. Become who you receive." Every time we celebrate the Sacred Banquet together, we are fulfilling Jesus' command to "Do this in memory of Me." We believe that the Risen Christ is truly present in the Liturgy in the Presider; in the Holy Eucharist as His real presence of Body and Blood; in the Word proclaimed from the Sacred Scriptures; and in the Community gathered in His Name.

We want to rediscover the importance of celebrating with joy, reverence, and essence of the Paschal Mystery. From the time of the apostles, Christians have continually come together to celebrate, to listen to Scripture, and to offer Thanksgiving. The Liturgy is a communal encounter of Christ that brings us all together as a St. Paul Family.

Our main goal is to foster full, active and conscious participation in the Liturgical Celebration in order to encounter the Living God in the Word and Eucharist, then return to the world fulfilling our baptismal call to discipleship. As trained, prayerful Liturgical Ministers, we will help plant that which God will grow.

We do not need to reinvent anything. We do not need to decide what Liturgy will be. The Church has already planned the Liturgy. It is not a show or performance that people come to observe. The Liturgy is a Sacred Celebration of the Paschal Mystery through which the Mystery of Christ among us comes alive in all the people present.

Therefore, we want to make our preparation and attainment of the experience of Liturgy at St. Paul a priority, not a last-minute execution of duties and tasks. CCC 1070 states, "...every Liturgical Celebration is an action of Christ the priest and of this Body which is the Church, is a sacred action surpassing all others."

We want to recognize every person who joins our Celebration as equal, necessary members of the Body of Christ. We want each and every person to be received with Joy. We, as Ministers, will serve them with Joy. We want to always be aware that Jesus Christ, our Risen Lord, is indeed presiding at each Mass, proclaiming His Word, sharing His Body and Blood, and sitting next to us extending His Hand in the sign of peace.

First, we ask you to personally pray regularly for the success, grace and insight to move in the Divine Flow of meeting Christ in a real, personal way as a Minister of our Parish. **Prayer will always be the heart of Ministry. Prayer serves to continually renew and strengthen us to serve our brothers and sisters.**

An awareness of the sacredness of your Ministry will naturally follow. We are privileged to have been called and invited to serve in this special way.

The great result will be a continual renewal of our love for the Eucharist and the Sacraments, and a fruitful weekly experience of Liturgy.

THE MINISTRY OF ALTAR SERVER

Altar Servers are a very important part of the Liturgy as they assist the priest on the Altar during the Sunday Masses and Holy Days throughout the year. Boys and girls who have received the Sacrament of First Holy Communion serve in this Ministry.

History

Altar Servers have been a vital part of Church History since the earliest of times. Jesus, Himself, sent two of His disciples to prepare the Passover Meal. Historically, this role was reserved for males only, who actually were serving in ordained ministry in the minor order of Acolyte, and would ultimately work toward ordination as a Deacon and finally a Priest. Since Vatican II, it has become more a Ministry of the youth, both male and female.

Why

Altar Servers are needed to carry items, set the Altar, and assist the priest throughout the Mass. You are also expected to participate fully and joyfully in the Mass by praying, responding and singing. Please be aware that you are setting an example to the people seated in the pews by your attentiveness, respectfulness, and participation in the Mass.

How

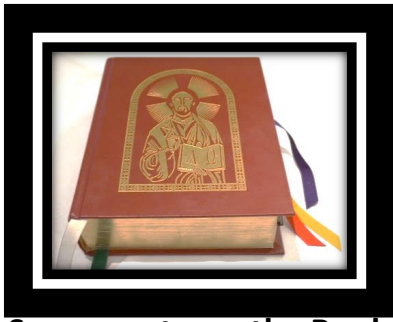
Before Mass

1. During the course of the week, read the Sunday Readings so you are familiar with the Word to be proclaimed and the theme of the Liturgy.
2. Dress appropriately since you are serving at the Table of the Lord. Please do not wear blue jeans, shorts, or casual footwear.
3. Dispose of any gum or candy.
4. Arrive 15 minutes before Mass time, put a checkmark by your name on the schedule, use the rest room, wash your hands, and dress in your robe. Check the calendar for the color belt to wear.
5. *If you do not check in by 10 minutes before Mass time, the Sacristan will find a replacement. If your name is marked through on the posted schedule, someone else has already been selected to serve in your place. You will not serve this Mass.*
6. Once you are robed and ready, decide which server will be responsible for the "Book" and which will be responsible for the "Bells."
7. Remain in the Sacristy to pray with Father and all the Ministers.

During Mass

1. Stand one on each side of Father, erect and ready for the Entrance Procession.
2. As you process to the Altar, hold your hands in prayer position.
3. Try to anticipate Father's invocation "let us pray" by getting the book ready.

4. When setting the Altar at the Offertory, the "Bells" Server lights the candles then places Father's Chalice with the Host and Paten on the Altar. The "Book" Server places the Book on the Altar, and sets the four chalices and purificators on the Altar. Both Servers then join Father at the steps to receive the gifts.
5. If you receive the Ciborium, place it on the Altar and remove the lid. Place the lid on the Credence Table, pick up the small cruet of water, and stand in place to Father's right side at the Altar. If you receive the wine decanter, move to your place at Father's right side also, and ***wait for Father to empty it and hand it back to you.*** Both return to the Credence Table.
6. One Server picks up the towel, and the other picks up the water jug and bowl. Go to Father for the washing of his hands, then return those items to the Credence Table.
7. At this time, the "Book" Server stands on the "Book" side of the Altar to Father's left. The "Bells" Server will stand on the "Bells" side of the Altar to Father's right.
8. During the Eucharistic Prayer kneel on both knees facing the Altar and Father to draw everyone's focus to the Eucharist. Watch attentively and respond enthusiastically.
9. The Bells are rung at three points, with three rings:
 - a. When Father holds his hands over the gifts of bread and wine, and says, "Let Your Spirit come upon these gifts."
 - b. After Father says, "This is My Body which will be given up for You."
 - c. After Father says, "Do this in memory of Me."
10. Stand behind Father with the Eucharistic Ministers and reverently receive Communion. Once they move to the front to distribute Communion, return to your seats and remain seated during Communion. Sing with the Congregation--no chatting.
11. When the Eucharistic Ministers return to their seats, return to the Altar and help Father finish clearing it, returning everything to the Credence Table. The Book is the last item to be removed from the Altar. The "Book" Server should carry it straight to Father for the Closing Prayer.
12. For the Recessional, both Servers proceed to the Altar with Father, one on each side, and ***bow when he kisses the Altar.*** The "Book" Server will pick up the collection basket and carry it to the Ushers.
13. Please hang up your robe carefully in the closet. Return to the Altar and extinguish the candles.



**Sacramentary - the Book
the Priest uses during Mass**



**Cup - holds the
Blood of Christ**



**Purificators - used to
wipe the Cup when
serving the Blood of Christ**



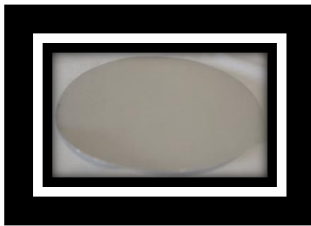
Chalice with paten and host



Wine Decanter



**Tabernacle and
Red Sacristy Light**



Paten - plate for the Host



Cruet for water



**Large Host - To be placed
on Father's paten**



**Corporal - Placed on
the Altar**



**Monstrance - Holds the
Blessed Sacrament for
Exposition of the Eucharist**



**Ciborium - holds the
Body of Christ**