

# The Ministry of Altar Server

## An Introduction to the New Words of the Mass

### Ashbourne-Donaghmore Parish



Thank you Servers!! - Boys & Girls you have answered God's calling in your lives to serve Him and His People at Mass. In doing so you are helping the People of God, your family, neighbours and friends, who gather for Mass to understand the Mass better and make their love for God stronger. This is what makes serving Mass worth doing, and worth doing well. One of the most rewarding ministries a young person can be a part of in the Church is altar serving. Altar servers assist the priest and other ministers during our liturgical celebrations.

Altar servers must have a deep sense of the spirit of the liturgy and be trained to perform their functions in a correct and orderly manner. People are not so interested to see if you make mistakes, but they like to see what it means to be really involved in the Mass. People will take more interest in the Mass if they see you taking more interest in it while you serve.

The Mass is where Jesus, our friend, makes Himself really present to us everyday and we are nourished by Him in His Word [the Scripture readings] and in the Eucharist [Holy Communion].

**A**re you aware that the prayers and words of the Mass are changing this year?  
As an altar server this change will not effect your serving-jobs. *It's just the words and responses that are changing not your jobs.* You will continue your duties as usual.

#### Things you can think about:

1. Will I have to change anything I do?
  - A. Your jobs remain the same. However, you will need to know the same changes as everyone else.
2. Are there any texts in the Mass that speak especially to my ministry?

Several texts from the Eucharistic Prayers have a strong connection with your ministry.

In Eucharistic Prayer II:  
We offer you, Lord,  
the Bread of life and the Chalice of salvation,  
giving thanks that you have held us worthy  
to be in your presence and minister to you.

In Eucharistic Prayer IV:  
In your presence are countless hosts of Angels,  
who serve you day and night  
and, gazing upon the glory of your face,  
glorify you without ceasing.

3. What other aspects of my ministry could I look at?

Areas where we often need to keep brushing up our skills include:

Hands: Be sure you have a firm grip on whatever you are carrying. If one or both hands are free, they should be kept in front of you, clasped together at waist level. If you are carrying something in one hand, the other hand should be held flat against your body, at waist level.

Eyes: Always look where the action is, for example, at the altar, ambo, presider's chair, or the direction in which you are walking.

Standing: Always stand up straight with both feet firmly on the floor; do not slouch. Do not lean on one leg or on anything else.

Sitting & Kneeling: You should maintain a straight formal posture. In the standing and kneeling positions your hands should be held in the praying position. When sitting the hands should be held on your lap. Sit up straight and keep your knees together. Do not cross your legs or tap your feet. Feet should never be swinging! When kneeling do so in an upright manner, never slouching or sitting back on your legs.

Genuflection & Bowing: Servers should genuflect [The right knee touches the floor, pause and bow your head to Jesus.] before the sanctuary or passing in front of the tabernacle, they should face the tabernacle and genuflect/bow. The exception is when carrying things like crosses, sacred vessels, books or candles you do not genuflect.

Attire: Dress neat; remove any huddies, bulky clothes or coats before Mass. Black shoes should be worn whenever possible.

Walking: Always take your time. When servers walk together, they should always remain together, side-by-side, walking at the same pace. When walking hands should be joined in front.

Participation: Listen attentively to the readings, and join in with the prayers and singing with everyone else.

As mentioned the primary role of the altar server is to assist the priest in the celebration of the liturgy during Mass. This is done through specific actions and by setting an example to the congregation by active participation in the liturgy (hymns, responses, etc.), by looking alert and sitting or standing at the appropriate times.

The new translation seeks to reclaim the richness of the original Latin texts and will use a more formal style than we use in everyday conversation. As with all change, it will take time, but it should help us better appreciate the meaning of the faith we declare in the Mass. These changes will involve a certain amount of change for everyone in the life of our parish. This sheet will help you in your ministry of altar server.

*Thank you for responding to God in this special ministry.*

#### Useful resources:

- ⇒ <http://guildofstephen.all-catholic.net/>
- ⇒ [www.thesacredheart.com/altguide.htm](http://www.thesacredheart.com/altguide.htm)
- ⇒ Parish New Translation Booklet, 2011
- ⇒ Guide for Servers, LTP, ISBN978-1-56854-803-6 [available from McCrimmons]

## Additional New Responses at Mass

### THE GREETING & PENITENTIAL ACT

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Or: Grace to you and peace from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Or: The Lord be with you.

**And with your spirit.**

I confess to almighty God  
and to you, my brothers and sisters,  
that I have greatly sinned,  
in my thoughts and in my words,  
in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,  
through my fault, through my fault,  
through my most grievous fault;  
therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,  
all the Angels and Saints,  
and you, my brothers and sisters,  
to pray for me to the Lord our God.



### THE GOSPEL

The Lord be with you.

**And with your spirit.**

### LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST, PREFACE, SANCTUS

Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters), that my sacrifice  
and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

**May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands  
for the praise and glory of his name,  
for our good and the good of all his holy Church.**

The Lord be with you.

**And with your spirit.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right and just.**

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

### THE MYSTERY OF FAITH

The mystery of faith.

**We proclaim your Death, O Lord,  
and profess your Resurrection until you come again.**

Or: **When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup,  
we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.**

Or: **Save us, Saviour of the world,  
for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.**

### THE COMMUNION RITE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**And with your spirit.**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
behold him who takes away the sins of the world.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.  
**Lord, I am not worthy  
that you should enter under my roof,  
but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.**

### THE FINAL BLESSING

The Lord be with you.

**And with your spirit.**

May almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**