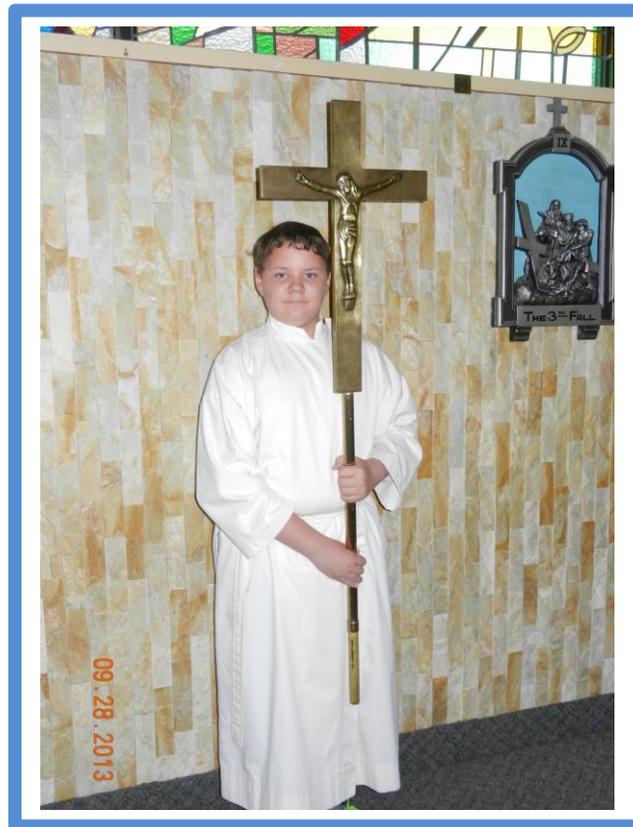




St. Justin's Parish

Altar Server Ministry

Handbook



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Welcome

Thank you for responding to God's call to serve at his table. It takes a special person to be an Altar Server and you are just that person. The Altar Server is invited by the faith community to assist the Presider (Priest Celebrant) at Mass and other liturgies of the church. This prayerful service is one of several liturgical ministries. The word ministry means service. In order to serve at the Table of the Lord there are many different jobs and roles that the server needs to learn. Some of these skills are learned through practice but others include attitude and behavior.

The Altar Server Commitment

- The primary goal of Altar Server Ministry is to serve our parish by assisting at liturgies while engaging our parish's youth in a service role.
- An important task that requires commitment, dedication and responsibility while fostering maturity and independence in the youth who serve.

Parents as Partners

- support, encourage, praise and FACILITATE your child's involvement
- be involved in our Parish with the Altar Server Committee or other capacities

Notes:

Altar Server Ministry Coordinator

Contact: Teresa Duffy email: tduffy@fanshawec.ca or 519-204-4495

Check website: www.stjustinsparish.ca Ministries/Altar Servers

Upcoming

- Commissioning Ceremony: during all masses one weekend in November
- Additional Training Sessions as necessary such as before the busy liturgical times of Christmas and Easter
- **Thank you** activity in late spring

Skills, Knowledge and Responsibility

One part of altar serving is learning the skills needed in performing these duties. These including carrying a large cross, walking in procession, sitting and standing still in front of large crowds for many minutes at a time, pouring liquids, lighting candles, holding large books and many other tasks that are part of the Catholic Liturgy.

The knowledge that the server must acquire includes becoming familiar and comfortable with all the parts of the Mass, learning by heart the major prayers of the liturgy (eg. The Lords Prayer, Gloria, Creed, etc.), knowing the vestments, vessels, and the sacred objects used for liturgy. The server will not learn all of this at the beginning, but is expected to continue to learn as they mature in this ministry.

This is a role of responsibility. Now that you are becoming a server it is very important to remember that people are counting on you. The priest, the congregation and the other servers depend on you. When you are prepared and ready your service makes a smooth celebration of the Mass.

If there is confusion or a problem, the priest, deacon or another altar server will help you. You will learn to use your own judgement as well. The parish thanks you for your willingness to serve and will be patient as you learn your new role.

Behavior in God's House

Arrival: Please arrive in time to put on your alb (robe) and cincture, sign in, and participate in the prayer before procession. Be sure to hang your alb on the correct hanger afterwards.

Dress: Neat in appearance, no gum, shoes should fit well to avoid any tripping.
(example: no flip flops, or big winter boots, bring a pair of indoor shoes)

Hands: when not in use they should be folded in front (prayerful position)



Posture: respectful and reverent movement at all times – move slowly, no running, pushing, arguing, talking on the altar

Partnership: move together/in tandem with other servers (carrying candles, water & wine, with bowl/towel & water cruet)

Pay attention

- Be alert – be ready - know what is next, know where to go next
- Never turn your back to the altar

Participate in Mass

- sing the songs
- say the responses and prayers
- share in the sign of peace

The Roles of Servers

There are three roles to be performed at each Mass.

1. Cross Bearer

- carry the cross during the Processional and Recessional
- carry the cross to lead the Presentation of Gifts/Offeratory
- guard the Sacramentary (large red book)
 - hold for the Priest for the Opening Prayer (right after the Gloria)
 - place on the Altar Table before the Eucharist
 - remove from the Altar Table once Communion has begun (also remove wooden holder)
 - hold for the Priest for the Prayer after Communion

Note:

The Sacramentary should be cared for with respect and never placed on the floor.



**The Altar Table
should be set like this**

2. Candle Bearer A

- carry one of the candles to and from the Ambo (Podium)
- walk with the candle before the Gospel, stand at the Ambo during the Gospel, place in holder and keep your hands in prayer position.
- **light the Altar Table candles when preparing the Altar**
- stand next to the Presider at the Presentation of Gifts, carry the wine cruet to the credence table or the ciborium to the Altar Table.
- ***Acolyte**: bring the cruet of water or wine to the Presider
- ***Acolyte**: bring the cruet of water or bowl and towel to the Presider
- **ring the bells during the Preparation of the Eucharist**

3. Candle Bearer B

- carry one of the candles to and from the Ambo (Podium)
- walk with the candle before the Gospel, stand at the Ambo during the Gospel, place in holder and keep your hands in prayer position.
- **set the Altar Table with the Chalice, 4 Goblets and any Ciboria**
- stand next to the Presider at the Presentation of Gifts, carry the wine cruet to the credence table or the ciborium to the Altar Table.
- ***Acolyte**: bring the cruet of water or wine to the Presider
- ***Acolyte**: bring the cruet of water or bowl and towel to the Presider
- **during communion clear the Altar; bring the Chalice to the Credence Table**



NEW!
Place the large Pall (cover) over these chalices



Setting the Altar



Clear the Altar – except for the silver tray

*Candle Bearers A & B are also the Acolytes for the Eucharist

Acolytes stand at the credence table during the preparation of the Eucharist. All other servers should stand at the bottom of the steps in prayer position.

Credence Table



Acolytes for the Eucharist

- one server carry the water, the other the wine and walk together all the way to the altar (if there is a Deacon, bring to him) handles of the cruets turned out, BOW, and then walk back to the table together

- one sever carry the towel (over left arm) and lavabo (bowl)

- the other carry the water standing on the right side of the other server

- walk together all the way to the altar, close enough so the priest doesn't have to come to you or reach for the towel, BOW, then return together

Remember to **BOW** before going back



Other Servers: *there may be more than three servers at a Mass.*

- new servers may begin as a server by observing and becoming comfortable
- a team may have more than 3 servers and additional servers may act as an “extra” and assist as needed
- “extra” servers may assist at the Presentation of the Gifts when the Presider receives the Wine and Ciboria (large bowl), the server may place the wine on the credence table and the Ciboria on the Altar Table. The server may help with the silver tray.

Roles at a Glance

ROLES for 3 or more servers:

- 1 Cross Bearer & Sacramentary Holder: the large red book that sits on the altar
 - 2 Candle Bearer A & Acolyte, light altar table candles and ring bell
 - 3 Candle Bearer B & Acolyte, sets and clears the Altar for the Eucharist
- Additional servers are observers/or assist as needed.

ROLES if you do NOT have 3 servers:

- 1 server only: -bring candles to the front before mass
 -**carry the cross in the procession/recessional only**
 -hold the Sacramentary, act as both Acolyte A & B
- 2 servers: - bring candles to the front before mass
 -One of you is the Cross Bearer and Candle Bearer B
 -One of you is the Candle Bearer A



The Altar Server Table holds information for servers including:

- Sign in sheet for each Mass
- Role Descriptions
- Schedule -Special announcements

Parts of the Mass

Server parts are in bold and italics

1. Introductory Rite

Entrance Procession

Greeting

Blessing and Sprinkling of Holy Water

Penitential Rite

Gloria

Opening Prayer

2. Liturgy of the Word

First Reading, Responsorial Psalm, Second Reading

Gospel Acclamation

Reading of the Gospel

Homily

Creed

General Intercessions (Prayers of the Faithful)

3. Liturgy of the Eucharist

Preparation of the Gifts

Eucharist Prayer

4. Communion Rite

Our Father

Peace

Lamb of God

Prayer after Communion

4. Dismissal

Announcements

Final Blessing

Recessional

Prayers

http://www.catholicbridge.com/catholic/catholic_mass_full_text.php#penitential_rite

Confiteor

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,
And, striking their breast, they say:
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.

Gloria

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you, we bless you,
we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

Prayer for Altar Servers

Father in heaven,
your Son, Jesus Christ showed his love for you
by serving his needy brother and sisters.
I now ask you to give me your help
as I serve you and your people.
Open my mouth to praise you in word and song.
Open my ears to hear your Word.
Open my hands to do your work well.
Take from my heart all distracting thoughts.
Help me know what I should do, and do it well.
Help me to serve reverently at your holy altar,
and so give you praise and glory,
now and forever.
Amen.

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
At the words that follow, up to and including
the Virgin Mary, **Bow**
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

Preparation of the Gifts

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.

Holy Holy

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 Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come, thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

The Sanctuary

The sanctuary is the space at the front of the church in which most of the action of the Mass takes place. The word means “holy place”.

1. Altar Table

This is the large, high table usually located in the middle of the sanctuary.

2. Ambo

This is the place where the Readings, Psalm, the Gospel and Prayers of the Faithful are proclaimed.

3. Credence Table

This is the smaller table to the side of the sanctuary. On this table the following items are placed: chalice, ciborium, water cruet, finger bowl, towel and other items as needed.

4. Tabernacle

This is the safe-like container in which the Eucharist is kept. It is located to the side of the main altar with a candle or light to show the presence of the Eucharist.

When passing in front of the Tabernacle servers should bow or genuflect.

The Sacristy

The sacristy is the room where the Vestments are kept.

You will find the Altar Server Robes arranged on hangers from XSmall to XLarge. Please return your alb to its proper hanger. The hanger and the alb are labeled.

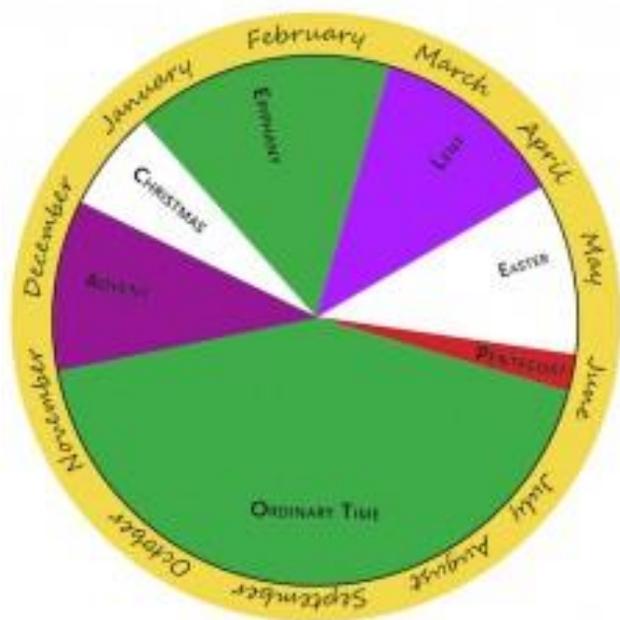
Cinctures (ropes/belts) are on the hooks. The farthest right hook will have the colour for the Mass.



Liturgical Calendar

The liturgical year encompasses the rites, celebrations, and feasts that take place during the Church year and are highlighted in the Scripture readings and prayers of the Mass.

The seasons of the Church year revolve around the principal events in the life of Christ: his birth and his death.



Please note that the our servers wear a **white cincture during ordinary time instead of green**. This is because we have a good supply of the white cincture and it provides a well-groomed appearance.

Seasons are represented by different colours.

- | | |
|--------|--|
| Green | Ordinary Time |
| Red | Feasts of Martyrs, Pentecost, Good Friday, Feasts of the Holy Spirit |
| White | Christmas, Easter, Sacraments and Feasts of Saints |
| Purple | Advent, Lent and the Sacrament of Reconciliation |

Sacred Vessels



Chalice: cup for the precious blood
Corporal: a large white cloth
Pall: Square cover for chalice



Chalices



Ciboria: for body of Christ, may have a cover



Stacking Ciborium-only bring to Altar table with hosts inside



Wine & Water Cruets



Linens / Purificators – for “cleaning” purificating vessels

Additional Opportunities

School Masses

The schools of Sir Arthur Carty, St. Francis and St. Anthony celebrate liturgies throughout the school year at St. Justin's Church.

As a St. Justin's Server, you are ready to serve at your school masses.

Weddings

St. Justin's has many weddings during the spring, summer and fall usually on a Saturday at 1:00 or 3:00. A wedding with mass (communion) will need two servers. Only experienced servers will be asked to assist in this important occasion. There are special guidelines for serving at weddings.

To show their appreciation the wedding party usually offers each altar server a gift such as \$10 for serving at the wedding.