

# St. Hedwig Parish Altar Server Handbook

## Eligibility & Minimum Requirements

- Students in fourth grade through high school.
- Must have received their first communion and be receiving communion on a regular basis.
- Will serve at weekend Masses and Holy Days of Obligation as scheduled. May also serve at weddings and funerals. St. Hedwig students will serve at daily (Mon - Fri) 8:30 am Mass and at School Masses.
- Must obtain a substitute when unable to fulfill a Mass assignment. Repeated no-shows will result in being dropped from service.
- Additional information about scheduling will be provided during first-time training.

## Grooming Standards

Out of reverence for the liturgy, Altar Servers are required to maintain strict grooming standards, including, but not limited to:

- Hair combed/brushed neatly - no radical hair styles such as spikes, Mohawks, wet hair, or hair tinted other than natural colors.
- Clean face - no heavy use of makeup.
- Clean hands; particular attention should be paid to removing dirt from underneath the fingernails.
- (Weekends) White shirt or t-shirt and long dark pants (no tank tops, cutoffs, or Bermuda shorts) for boys.
- (Weekends) Dresses or dress slacks and a white blouse or t-shirt (no cutoffs, Bermuda shorts, tank tops, or bare midriff blouses) for girls.
- (Weekends) Dress shoes or sandals with socks for boys and girls (no flip-flops or high heels).

## Arrival & Preparation

Promptness is extremely important in preparing to serve Mass.

- Arrive 15 minutes before your assigned Mass.
- No loud talking while in the sacristy.
- Dispose of any chewing gum, candy, etc.
- If you are carrying a cell phone or pager, it must be switched off and left in the sacristy.
- Wash your hands.
- Use the restroom if needed prior to Mass. DO NOT use the restroom during Mass, unless you are ill.
- Find an alb that fits you. An alb should touch the top of your dress shoes.
- The cincture should be properly tied around your waist and is used to blouse the alb if it needs to be raised. Twirling or swinging the cincture is not allowed at any time.
- Coordinate duties: who is responsible for the cross, candles, the Missal, etc.

## Entrance Procession

### Cross-Bearer

- Always carry the cross in front of you with respect and reverence, holding it with both hands.
- Do not carry the cross sideways with one hand next to your leg, or carry it over your shoulder.
- Hold the cross up high, not at your eye level. All the people, including those who are near the choir loft stairs or the Eucharistic Chapel, should be able to see the cross.

### Processional (Acolyte) Candles

- When there are three or more servers the processional candles always accompany the cross.
- Candles are NEVER carried without the cross. (There is no significance of the processional candles by themselves.)

### Entrance Procession

- Please allow 4 pews between servers:
  - Two servers: the server carrying the cross leads, and the second server follows four rows later with hands folded in praying position at chest level.
  - Three servers: the cross leads, and the candle bearers follow four rows later.
  - Four or more servers: the cross leads, followed four rows later by the candle bearers, followed four rows later by servers with hands folded in praying position.
- When you reach the front of the altar, pause and gently bow your head. Keep the candles straight and do not tip them, which will cause wax to spill inside the globe.

## Opening Prayer

- When the Presider says “Let us pray,” bring the Missal to him. Walk directly to the Presider. Present the Missal to him with the ribbons facing out toward him so he can easily open the Missal to the correct page. Do not move the ribbons at any time.

## Readings, Responsorial, Gospel & Homily

- Following the opening prayers sit-up straight in the pew, feet together and flat on the floor, and reverently listen to the readings that are proclaimed.
- Listen to the responsorial recited or sung and respond with the congregation.
- Keep your hands together at chest height whenever you are standing or walking. Do not gesture with the parishioners (such as extending your hands when saying "And also with you"). Keep your hands in the praying position.

## Presentation and Preparation of the Gifts

### After the Prayer of the Faithful, Take Missal, Book Stand, Chalice and Tray with Cups to Altar

#### (Weekend)

- After the Prayer of the Faithful (as the collection is taken), bring the Roman Missal, Chalice and the tray holding the cups to the Altar.
- When Fr. Chris presides he will also use a book stand.
  - Two servers take the book stand and the Missal. Place the bookstand at the left side of the Altar. Place the Missal on the stand.
  - Return together to the credence table. Get the Chalice and the tray of cups. Place the Chalice on the front-right side of the Altar and the tray above it on the right. Place nothing at the center of the Altar.
- Fr. Choi will not use the book stand, so bring the Missal, Chalice and tray with cups to the altar.

#### (Weekday)

- After the Prayer of the Faithful, take the Missal, Chalice and tray of cups to the Altar.
- Two servers: Together, take the Missal and Chalice. One server accompanies the Presider to accept the gifts. The other returns to the credence table, gets the tray of cups and takes it to the Altar. Return to the credence table and wait, holding the water.
- One server: you need to bring all three items to the altar, so you will not accompany the Presider to accept the gifts.

## Reception of the Gifts and Presentation of the Wine and Water

### (Weekend)

- When the Presider stands to receive the gifts of bread, wine and the money basket, at least one server should join him. When there is a Deacon, only one server should assist.
- The money basket will be carried by the server to the credence table. Walk around the front of the sanctuary to the table.
- Do not bow to the parishioners – they are not bowing to you!
- The server with the wine flagon goes to the Credence Table. A second server takes the water, and together take water and wine to the Presider or Deacon. Wait until the empty wine flagon and the water are returned to you.
- Bow to the Presider or Deacon.
- Please note: the bread will always be kept by the Presider.

### (Weekday)

#### Two servers

- Both servers will receive the gifts. When a Deacon is present, only one server should assist.
- Water and wine should be presented together.

#### One server

- Do not receive the gifts.
- The Presider or Deacon will keep the wine. The server will bring the water.
- Wait until the empty wine flagon and the water are returned to you.

### Washing of the hands:

- After the preparation of the wine and water, servers go back to the Credence Table, set down the empty wine flagon, pick up the water bowl and towel and immediately return to the Altar.
- Do not wait for the Presider to finish his prayers: when he turns you should already be there. Present the towel unfolded to the Presider. Bow after washing his hands.

### **Eucharistic Prayer**

- Bells will now be used at all Masses. There are 3 times to ring the bells:
  - Epiclesis: when the priest places his hands over the bread and wine – you have to watch for it: in each Eucharistic Prayer it is at a different time using slightly different words, but there is no mistaking the gesture! Ring the bells approximately 1-2 seconds. **Be alert--this happens almost as soon as you kneel!**
  - Elevation of the Body of Christ: when the priest holds up the consecrated large Host. Ring bells for as long as the host is elevated.
  - Elevation of the Blood of Christ: when the priest holds up the Chalice. Ring bells for as long as the Chalice is elevated.

### **Our Father & The Sign Of Peace**

- Pray the Our Father with the Priest and congregation. The joining of hands is optional.
- Servers will **not** exchange the sign of peace with the Presider. Instead immediately bring all Ciboria from the Credence Table to the Altar and then take your place to receive Communion. You may quickly give each other the sign of peace after delivering items to the Altar.

### **Communion**

- After receiving Communion, and all vessels have been given to the Eucharistic Ministers, return the Chalice and book stand to the Credence Table and return the Missal to the bench.

## **Prayer After Communion and Dismissal**

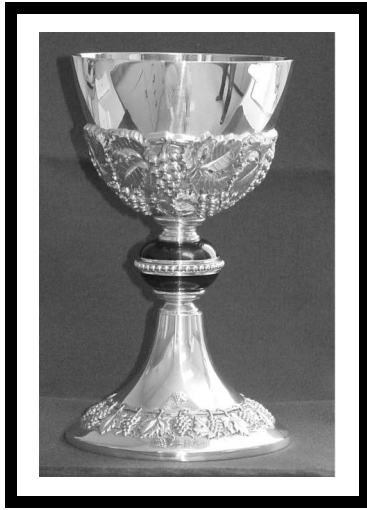
- When the Presider says “Let us pray,” bring the Missal to him. If there is a solemn blessing after the closing prayer, the Priest will ask you to remain in place. After the closing prayer or the solemn blessing, close the Missal and return to your pew.
- After the Presider or Deacon invites all to go in the peace of Christ (“Go forth, the Mass is ended,” “Go in peace,” etc), all the servers retrieve the items they brought in and proceed to the center aisle.
  - The cross always goes first, then the candles, and then the remaining servers. (EXCEPTION: When incense is being used it goes ahead of the cross.)
  - We will retain the "4 pew separation" rule as best we can when leaving. Line up in order for the procession. When the Presider bows turn and walk, letting the Cross go 4 pews, then the Candles, then any remaining servers.
- When the Priest (and Deacon) bow to the altar that is your cue to turn around and exit the church.
  - Those not carrying anything bow to the altar with the Priest (and Deacon).
  - Those carrying the cross or candles gently bow their head to the altar with the Priest (and Deacon).

## **Duties Following Mass**

1. Upon return to the sacristy, servers return all carried items to their proper place.
2. All servers assist the sacristans in retrieving and storing any items remaining on the altar and credence table.
3. Hang your alb on a hanger and place it in the closet nearest ones of a similar size.
4. Hang your cincture on the proper hook.



# 1. SACRED VESSELS & OTHER LITURGICAL ITEMS



**CHALICE**



**CHALICE, PURIFICATOR & PALL**



**CUP**



**LARGE CIBORIUM**

**SMALL CIBORIUM**





**BOOK OF GOSPELS  
STAND**



**TABERNACLE**



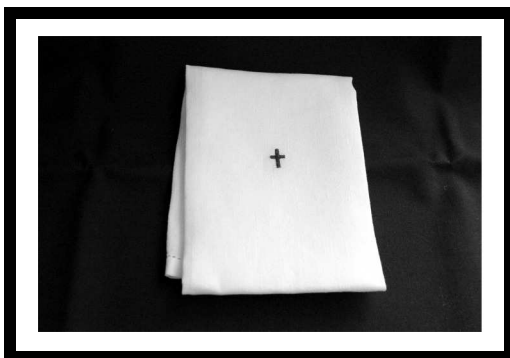
**MONSTRANCE**



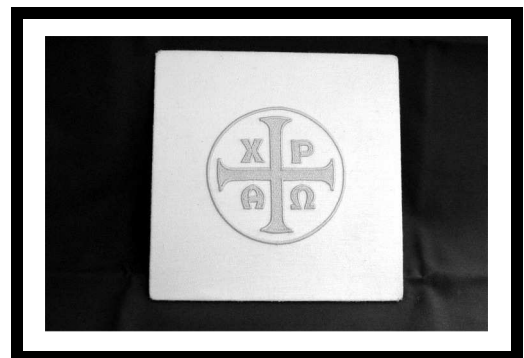
**WATER CRUET & BOWL**



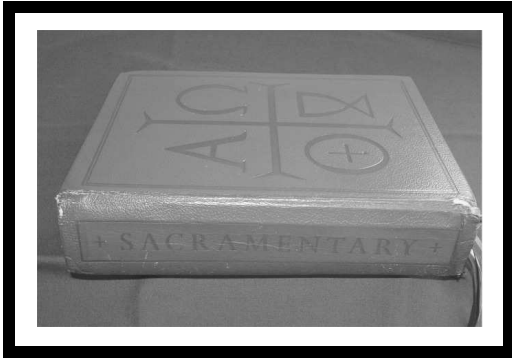
**TOWEL**



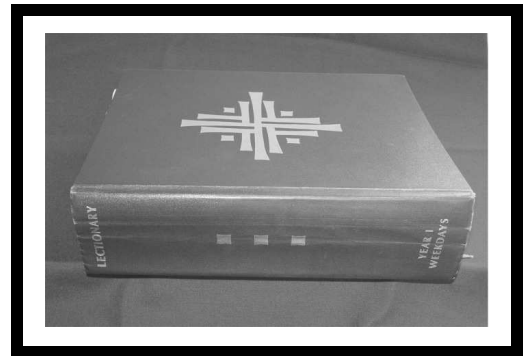
**PURIFICATOR**



**PALL**



**Roman Missal**



**LECTIONARY**



**THURIBLE (or Censer) & BOAT**

## 2. GLOSSARY

<u>Term</u>	<u>Definition</u>
<b>Alb</b>	The long off-white garment worn by servers during Mass
<b>Boat</b>	The small metal container which holds the incense to be placed into the thurible
<b>Book of Gospels Stand</b>	The stand placed at the center of the altar, and on which the Lector places the Book of Gospels
<b>Chalice</b>	The vessel used by the Priest to hold the wine that becomes the Blood of Christ
<b>Ciborium</b>	The round bowl-like vessel containing the hosts that become the Body of Christ
<b>Cincture</b>	The belt-like rope placed around the server's waist
<b>Corporal</b>	The white linen cloth on top of the altar where the vessels containing the bread and wine are placed during Mass
<b>Credence Table</b>	The small table at the cross-side of the altar
<b>Cup</b>	The vessel into which the Blood of Christ is placed for distribution to the congregation
<b>Lectionary</b>	The book containing the Scripture readings for Mass, which is placed at the Ambo to the cross-side of the altar
<b>Luna</b>	The vessel containing the Blessed Sacrament, which is placed inside of the Monstrance for Benediction or adoration
<b>Monstrance</b>	A large ornate vessel into which the Luna, containing the Blessed Sacrament, is placed for Benediction or adoration
<b>Pall</b>	The stiff square white cover placed over the Chalice to protect its content
<b>Purificator</b>	A triple-folded white cloth used to clean the Chalice and/or cups
<b>Sacramentary</b>	The book which contains the prayers the Priest uses during Mass, except the readings
<b>Tabernacle</b>	The locked cabinet in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel containing the Blessed Sacrament

<b>Thurible (or Censer)</b>	The metal container in which the charcoal and incense are burned
<b>Towel</b>	A folded rectangular cloth used to dry the Priest's fingers
<b>Water Cruet</b>	A small pitcher used to hold water