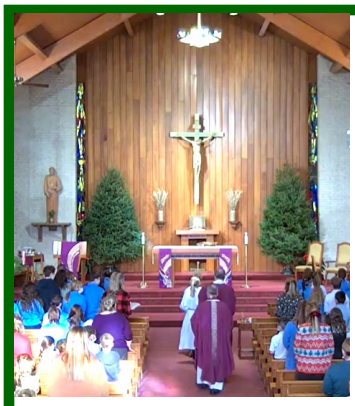
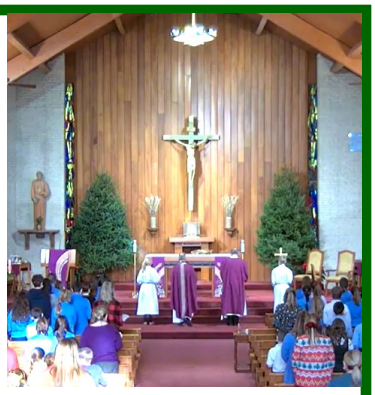
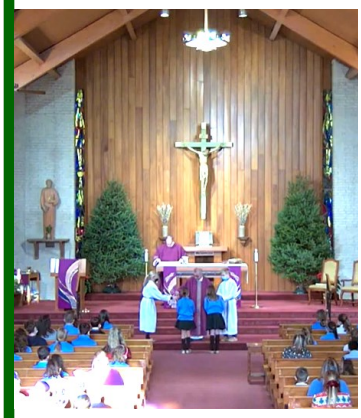


The Altar Server



Altar servers will be found at most Masses around the world; their role is universal. Servers are invited to this ministry after they have received Holy Communion and when they are mature enough to understand their responsibilities and to carry them out well and with appropriate reverence.



Since the role of server is integral to the normal celebration of the Mass, at least one server should assist the priest. On Sundays and other more important occasions, two or more servers should carry out the various functions of this ministry.

Altar servers wear an alb during Mass.

At Mass, they carry the cross and the processional candles, when used, for the entrance procession. They hold the Roman Missal for the priest celebrant when he is not at the altar. The altar servers assist in receiving the gifts from the people and then present the bread, wine and water to the priest during the preparation of the gifts. The altar server assist in the ceremonial washing of the priest's hands. During the Eucharistic prayer, if bells are customary at the celebration of the church's Mass, the altar server will ring the bells at the time of the consecration. They will assist the priest celebrant and deacon as necessary, including carrying incense and the censer, when used.





Servers respond to the prayers and dialogues of the priest along with the congregation. They also join in singing the hymns and other chants of the liturgy.

They are seated in a place from which they can easily assist the priest celebrant and deacon but not immediately next to the priest as that is normally reserved for those with holy orders, such as the deacon.

Servers may not distribute holy communion unless they have been mandated for this function by the bishop.





Source: USCCB