

Altar Server Ministry Policies & Procedures

2019-2020

The purpose of the Altar Server is to assist the Celebrant, serve the Parish and to be a role model for the Parish youth at St. Michael's Church. Altar Serving is a privilege and a commitment to our Parish and all servers should conduct themselves in a reverent manner at all times in their actions and words.

General Dress Code

- General appearance should be clean and neat. In the event of a no-show, Altar Servers must come dressed to serve at any Mass they attend.
- No unconventional hair colors/styles and hair should be washed and combed away from the face.
- No shorts, capris, jeans or athletic shoes. Exception – SMS students serving Daily Mass on PE days only.
- No printed socks or bright colored socks that would be distracting to the congregation while sitting on the bench.

For Girls:

- Hair should be pulled away from the face and secured in back. Hair should not be secured on the side so that it hangs down over the shoulder to the front.
- No dark nail polish or tattoos.
- No piercings, except girls' earrings: Earrings shall be small studs only-no hoops or dangling earrings. No large, obvious, distracting jewelry.
- Shoes must be clean **black** flats.
- Attire must be church-appropriate dress or skirt.

For Boys:

- Hair should be styled so not to hang in the face, over the ears, or on the neck.
- No dark nail polish or tattoos.
- No piercings.
- Shoes must be clean, **black**, hard-soled shoes.
- Attire must be church-appropriate dark pants (dark blue, brown, khaki/tan, and black) and collared shirt.

Conduct

- Servers must arrive at Mass at least **20** minutes early when serving. When not serving, Servers should check in at the Altar Server Sacristy and find out if a server is needed.
- Servers must participate in the Mass at ALL times. This means saying the prayers aloud with the congregation and singing with the choir (when the song is known).
- Servers must not do, say or wear anything that draws attention.
- No laughing at inappropriate times or signaling to friends in the congregation.
- When seated, knees should be together and hands folded in the lap. Sit up straight!
- When standing, hands must be held together in prayer, fingers pointed upward.
- MC holds the leadership position! The MC should be aware at all times and should check to make sure all Servers are doing their duties at the appropriate time.
- Parents should take concerns with Committee members to Father Mel.

Meetings

In general, we have 2 meetings and 2 parties each year that occur in September (meeting), December (Christmas party), March (meeting), and May (Senior Party). Servers are required to attend all meetings. RSVPs are REQUIRED so that we have an accurate account for the snacks provided. You will only be excused from these meetings if you have a VERY GOOD excuse. We have reduced the number of meetings to 2 per year in hopes of having 100% attendance. Please help us achieve that goal!

Schedules/Providing Conflict Information

It is the Server's responsibility to obtain a schedule from Ministry Scheduler Pro (MSP). Weekly reminders are sent and not knowing your schedule is NOT a valid reason for missing a Mass assignment.

- Saturday evening, Sunday Mass, Daily Mass, and Benediction assignments are scheduled every 2 months.
- Every server is asked to serve at least one 7:15 am or one 12:30 pm Mass per year.
- Conflict information needs to be provided as requested.
- For the Altar Servers who are in their Junior and Senior year of high school, they have the privilege of choosing their Mass time and day.
- The committee works very hard to honor conflicts and uses any prior knowledge about family preferences or EM/Lector schedules so that Altar Serving does not conflict with other family commitments.

Substitutes

When the schedule is online and you are scheduled for a Mass you cannot make, then **it is your responsibility to find a replacement**. You may request a substitute or trade through MSP or you may contact a fellow server direct by **phone/email**. In the event, you cannot find a substitute, **the server is still responsible to serve if no one is found**.

Sickness

If you are sick on the day you are scheduled to serve or if you have been unable to find a replacement for a conflict, **PLEASE CALL THE MC WITH WHOM YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO SERVE**. In that way, when the MC arrives at Mass, a replacement Server can be found in the congregation immediately.

Missed Mass/Unexcused Absence

If you miss an assigned Mass, you will receive an e-mail reminder. We consider a Missed Mass as an Unexcused Absence.

Three STRIKES rule

Servers will receive a “strike” for the following reasons:

- Missed Mass
- Missed Meetings: No RSVP and No attendance
 RSVP yes but No attendance
 RSVP No without a valid reason
 Unacceptable attitude toward a Committee Member
- Improper dress code

Strikes can be removed by substituting for another server or by providing the committee an acceptable response to the Missed Mass Reminder that will be issued. The Server will receive an email with each strike. On the third strike, the server will be placed on inactive status and will not be assigned to the schedule until the Server and their parent(s) have met with Father Mel to reconfirm their family commitment to Altar Serving. This meeting must take place within 30 days of receiving the 3rd strike notice.

Special Liturgies

Special Liturgies include Weddings, Funerals, Memorial Services, Confirmation, First Communion, Christmas Concert, Graduation, SMS Alumni Mass, and Religious Education Masses. These liturgies are scheduled separately and your willingness to participate in these Liturgies is greatly appreciated!