

September 20, 2016

Dear Altar Servers and Parents:

I hope that you are well. **Thanks so much for your service.** A few pointers:

1. Please be in the sacristy no later than 10 minutes before your mass is scheduled to begin. This is important so that you can sign in, find an appropriately-sized alb, and tie your cincture. If you cannot be present for a scheduled assignment, we rely on you to find a substitute.
2. Please remember that your robe should come down between your ankle and your knee; especially if you are wearing shorts or a skirt, the robe should come down closer to your ankle.
3. Please remember that bowing is a 3 Step Process—1-Come to a complete stop. 2- Bow from your waist to a 90 degree angle. 3- Begin to move again. (When you are carrying something, for example the cross, you do NOT bow.)
4. When you are walking with a partner, please make sure that you are really walking along side them. When you are bowing with a partner, please stop and bow at the same time.
5. Please remember our footwear dress code—dress shoes; clean, dressy sneakers; or dress sandals. Flip flops, high heels, and worn, dirty sneakers are never appropriate while serving.
6. If you see that there are not enough altar servers at a mass you are attending, please come up and help.
7. Please remember to return your Scheduling Request / Preference Form for every scheduling period. Please read all email that we send you.
8. The Altar Server Schedule and Guidelines are attached below and are always available on our parish web site ([www.olphbernardsville.org](http://www.olphbernardsville.org)); please click on the Ministries tab at the top.

God bless,

Father John

# Our Lady of Perpetual Help Altar Servers

## ***When***

## ***What to do***

### ***When you arrive***

- 1.) Please arrive at least 10 minutes before the time mass is scheduled to begin.
- 2.) Please sign in the scheduling book.
- 3.) Please put on your robes.
- 4.) Ask the priest or deacon if there is anything else you should do.

### ***When Mass is ready to begin***

- 1.) When the priest is ready, one altar server takes the cross to the back of the church. The other altar servers also go to the back of the church and line up behind the person with the cross.
- 2.) When the second verse of the Entrance Hymn begins (or when the priest or deacon tell you), the cross bearer begins to walk up the aisle nice and slowly. The other altar servers walk behind the person with the cross– please stay together and keep your hands folded.
- 3.) When the cross bearer reaches the front step, he or she should proceed directly to the sacristy– the cross bearer should NOT stop or bow. When taking the cross to the sacristy, please be sure to hold it upright all the way to the sacristy door. After the cross bearer has placed the cross in the sacristy, he or she should go immediately to his or her place in the sanctuary.
- 4.) When the altar servers who are not carrying the cross reach the front step, they should together (1) stop, (2) bow, and then (3) proceed immediately to their places.

### ***During Mass***

- 1.) Unless there are other instructions, the altar servers should participate in the mass, praying with the people, singing during the songs, and listening during the readings. Please stand, sit, or kneel when appropriate.

***During the Offertory/ when  
the collection is taken up***

- 1.) When the collection is being taken up, one altar server takes the cross to the back of the church to lead the procession forward. As soon as you leave the sacristy, the cross should be held upright. When the people in back are ready, the cross bearer then leads the procession forward. When the cross bearer reaches the front step, please just proceed directly to the sacristy—remember to keep the cross upright all the way to the sacristy door.
- 2.) The other altar servers should set up the altar (if there is a deacon at the mass, you will help him do this). The big red book goes on the far left side of the altar (the side closest to the priest's chair). The chalices, water, and altar linens are then placed on the glass sheet on the far right side of the altar. Nothing is ever placed on the center part of the altar.
- 3.) When the priest stands in front of the altar, the altar servers go with him. When the priest hands you the bread or the wine, please put it on the glass sheet on the altar.
- 4.) Once the priest has gone to the altar, please be prepared to take the water and flagon from him when he is finished using them. Sometimes he will hand them directly to you; other times, he will just put them back down on the glass sheet.
- 5.) Two altar servers should then come over to wash the priest's hands. Please bring the pitcher, small bowl, and a cloth to dry the priest's hands. When finished, return these to the small table.

***During the Sign of Peace***

- 1.) Shake hands with the priest, deacon, and other altar servers.

***When people begin to sing  
the Lamb of God***

- 1.) If there is a small tray with pyxes on it on the side table, please bring it to the altar and place it on the glass sheet.
- 2.) Line up to receive Communion.
- 3.) When the priests, deacons, and Eucharistic ministers have gone to distribute Holy Communion to the people, the altar servers should clear the altar. Please take the big red book away, remove any extra cloths, etc. The only thing that should remain on the altar is the small tray with the pyxes.

***When it is time for Mass to end***

- 1.) As soon as the words of the Closing Hymn begin, the cross bearer should go to the sacristy, get the cross, and then bring it to the center aisle facing the altar. When the cross bearer is in place, the other altar servers should go to the center aisle and stand in front of him or her, facing the altar.
- 2.) When the priest bows to the altar, the altar servers who are not carrying the cross should bow with him. Then the cross bearer and altar servers should turn and process out of the church.

***After Mass***

- 1.) Please place your robes neatly on the hangers in the sacristy closet.

***Some extras***

- 1.) If you are ever unsure of what to do, always feel free to ask the priest or deacon.
- 2.) If there is anything special happening at the Mass you are scheduled to serve, the priest or deacon will explain it to you before mass.
- 3.) **Thank you so much for all your help!!!**

**Revised, 9/20/2016.**