

Dear SERVERS,

Many thanks for the excellent ministry you share with our parish family by serving at the altar of the Lord! And a special thank you to those of you who offer to serve each weekend, every time you are here. Those who are the most faithful and the most reverent are those who are called for special celebrations of the Church, including weddings and funerals. We are very grateful for your time and your prayerfulness. And the fact that you are present EVERY weekend is a great example to your family and friends that you truly want to become all that God has planned for you. Here, at Mass, is the only place we can receive the Holy Eucharist and the countless blessings God gives us in this celebration.

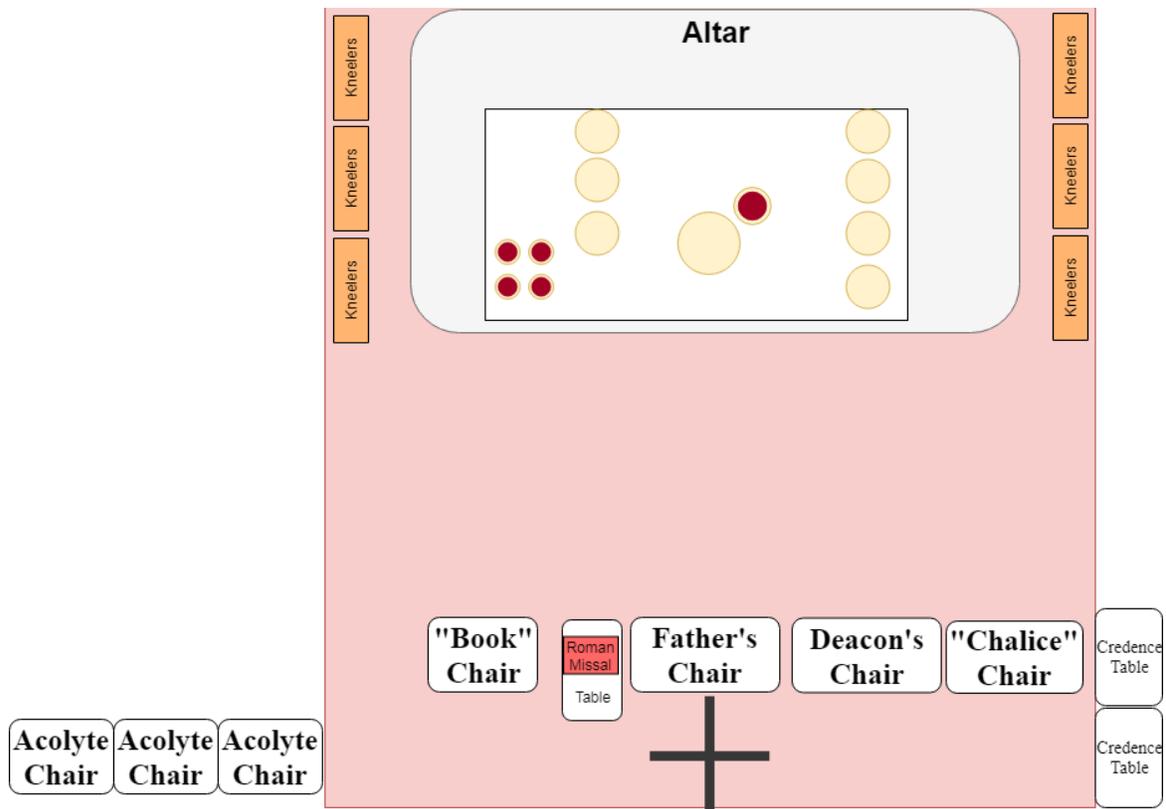
So that we can be sure we are all following the same procedures, I have put together this guideline for you. Please study it, memorize it, and use it, remembering that our service is our gift to God in joyful thanksgiving of the many gifts He gives us each moment of our lives!

Before Mass and General Notes:

1. Just a reminder that you should dress for the Lord's Supper! **Please wear your dress/school shoes.** Please also wear a plain shirt or blouse because designs show through the material of the albs.
2. If there are 4 servers instead of 5, the Cross-Bearer is the same as the chalice server. After clearing the altar, you will go to the sacristy to get the cross and line up.
3. With an eye to exemplifying reverence, please use "First Communion hands" at all times. And your attention **AT ALL TIMES** is on the altar or the ambo.
4. Be sure to arrive 15 minutes before Mass. This not only helps the person who is organizing the ministries, but it gives you plenty of time to vest and to visit the Blessed Sacrament to pray and offer your service to Jesus. *Once you are vested, go to the tabernacle and pray. Then go to line up. This is not a time for fooling around and chatting – it is a time to prepare for the great privilege of serving at the Table of the Lord.*
5. It is important to enter into a spirit of reflection and prayer. Once Father begins announcements, you should be lined up and silent, listening to the announcements. Only talk to each other when necessary.
6. Please look at yourself in the full-length mirror to be sure your alb comes to your ankles. And please be sure you are carefully hanging your alb under the correct size designation at the end of Mass, and hang your cincture neatly.
7. **You do not ever leave the sanctuary during Mass UNLESS Father has asked you to do something OR you are sick. DO NOT LEAVE FOR A DRINK of water!**
8. **Acolytes** – during Sunday and School Masses, apart from your actual "duties," you are to **WATCH AND LEARN** from the servers so that you will be able to fulfill those roles when it is your turn.
9. High School servers, as well as our 7th and 8th graders, are placed in important roles for our weekend and School Masses. They are also there to direct you and assist you. Please listen to them. They are in this position because they have proven themselves with many years of experience as servers. They can help you to become the best server you can be so that, one day, you can also help train younger servers to this wonderful ministry.

The Introductory Rites:

10. For the **entrance procession**, those carrying cross and candles are to walk at an even and reverent pace.
11. When you process, **those who are NOT carrying candles and cross** will carry a hymnal and **sing** the opening hymn as you process in. Pause in front of the Baptismal font and wait for the Acolytes to reach the dark line in the aisle. When they reach the line, begin walking, matching their pace. Once you reach the foot of the 1st steps, pause and bow your head to the Altar.
12. In the entrance procession, you ascend the steps before facing the tabernacle; at the closing, you descend the steps before facing the tabernacle.
13. Servers always GENUFLECT toward the tabernacle (unless you are carrying candles or cross), *even if the celebrant bows*. You also GENUFLECT with Father at the end of Mass when he is going to carry the Blessed Sacrament to the chapel for adoration. Remember that we genuflect only to Jesus, and when Father has the monstrance for adoration, he is genuflecting to Jesus in the monstrance, rather than in the tabernacle. That's why, on **Tuesdays and First Fridays when the Blessed Sacrament will be carried to the chapel, you will genuflect from your side altar positions** at the end of Mass, and you will immediately process down the aisle ahead of Father once you have gone down the steps.
14. We do NOT make the Sign of the Cross when we genuflect.
15. Servers will stand at their kneelers and bow at the beginning of Mass while Father reverences the altar. All servers proceed to their chairs as shown. Take special note not to sit in the Deacon's chair. Even if he is not ministering at Mass, the chair is only for him.



16. Please take your time when you are moving in the sanctuary – there is no rush – we are on God’s time! Remember that, at Mass, Christ becomes present to us AS HE WAS TO THE APOSTLES. Not only that, but all the angels and saints are at the altar, worshipping with us – that includes any of your own loved ones who are in heaven! There is no hurry! And SMILE!
17. The sanctuary is a place for your best posture. When you are seated, please sit still. If your feet reach the floor, they should be planted in one place. If yours do not reach the floor, keep your feet still. Whenever you are not holding a missal and singing, your hands should either be folded or resting, one on each knee. When you are standing, please try to refrain from rocking, as any movement that does not assist the celebration detracts from it. Keep your hands folded, your eyes on the altar, and your mouth reciting or singing.
18. When Father says “**Let us pray**” the Book-Bearer grabs the Roman Missal from the table next to him and steps down to stand in front of Father. Be sure to hold the book up high enough for Father to read. You will close the Missal when Father brings his hands together. Put the book back on the table and sit down.
19. It is extremely important that you know and loudly recite the prayers of the Mass. There are missals on the lower shelf of the tables at either side of the altar. If you cannot sing the Gloria or recite the Creed by heart, pick up a missal and recite and sing with gusto!

The Liturgy of the Word:

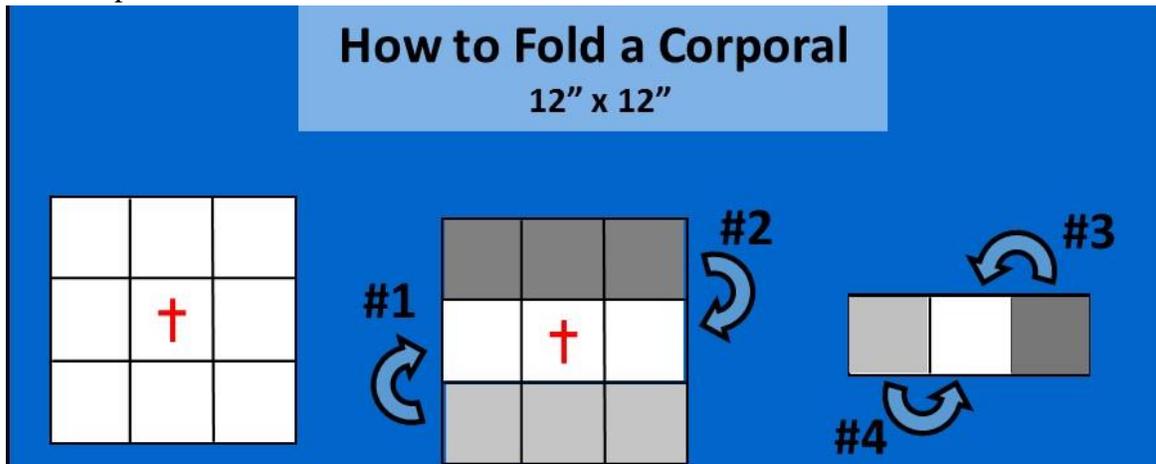
20. Be attentive! Listen to what Father and the lector are saying – this is God speaking to you! Father’s prayers are ourselves speaking to God.
21. Remember that, during the readings and petitions, your face or body and attention should be directed towards the ambo, exemplifying to the congregation that you are listening to the Word of God.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist:

22. Acolytes and cross-bearer leave to pick up your assigned sacramentals as soon as the petitions begin. You lead the gift-bearers to the sanctuary when Father comes down the steps to receive the gifts. As you reach the steps, turn towards the gifts until they are received by Father and the two servers, then you go to the sacristy to return candles and cross, and return to your seat.
23. Acolytes and cross-bearers should be SINGING as you return to your places.
24. As soon as Father finishes praying after the petitions, the Book-Bearer will grab the book from the table next to him. The Book-Bearer and the Chalice-Bearer step down from the top step with Father and bow with him. The Book-Bearer steps forward and places the Roman Missal on the Altar. Both servers then go to the Credence table.
25. The Chalice-Bearer brings the Chalice to the Altar. Ms. Chatlos will hand the Book-Bearer a tray with Ciborium on it. Carry the tray to Altar and stand next to Father or Deacon. Father or Deacon will remove all of the vessels from the tray. Once the tray is empty, place it on the lower shelf of the credence table.

26. **Remember to bow whenever you cross the altar** – this is a sign of reverence because of the sacrifice that occurs on that altar. Remember your “two steps” whenever you come from your chair as a server.
27. When Father is finished setting the Altar, you will go with him, flanking on either side, to receive the offertory gifts. He will hand you the gifts. Walk around to the Mary side of the sanctuary with the water and wine cruets.
28. **When waiting to hand Father the water and wine, wait at the foot of the top step up to the sanctuary.** When Father/Deacon turns to you, step up and hand him the water & wine. When he hands them back, step back down together. The server with the water will remain at the foot of the top step while the server with the wine returns the wine to the credence table and takes the bowl and towel. Both stand together below the top step and wait for Father to turn to you to watch his hands. Then go up the step to wash his hands. Return items to credence table afterwards.
29. If you are the book person, then, when it is time for Father to wash his hands, you will carry and hold the bowl. The chalice person will bring the water to pour AND the towel. Also remember that, if you have one hand free, it should be placed upon your heart.
30. Both servers are to stay together when “setting” or “clearing;” if your partner is not ready to move, you wait so that you can stay together.
31. **Acolytes and Cross-Bearer** will move from your chairs to the cushions after Father has washed his hands. The congregation stands, and you come to stand by your kneelers.
32. If you are the bell person, please kneel UP STRAIGHT and ring the bells with authority, for the entire time that Father elevates the Body and the Blood. Also, be sure that you can reach the bells with your dominant hand (the one you use for eating) – that makes it much easier to ring the bells well.
33. After all of the ministers have left the Sanctuary, the Candle and Cross-Bearers stand at their chairs. The Book-Bearer and Chalice-Bearer go behind the Altar and bow in unison. The Book-Bearer closes the Roman Missal and returns it to the table. The Chalice-Bearer checks if there is any Precious Blood remaining in the Chalice on the Altar. **If it is empty**, the Chalice-Bearer places the Pall (the small white square) on top of the Chalice, the purificatory (the small white cloth used to wipe the Chalice) and carefully sets them on the credence table, next to the cruets of water and wine. The Chalice-Bearer returns, bowing at the Altar, then both stand in front of their chairs during Communion. **If there is still Precious Blood remaining**, simply leave the Chalice on the Altar and return to your seat.
34. **At Communion time, SING the hymn. Pick up the hymnal and sing with the congregation. You are a very visible minister and must exhibit great example. We are at Mass to praise and worship God, and that includes praying and singing every prayer and every song that is the congregation’s to pray and sing.**
35. Once everyone has received Communion, all of the vessels are removed from the Altar, and Father is standing at the credence table to purify the vessels, **the Chalice-Bearer will step down, bow to the Altar, and fold up the Corporal** (the white cloth that is on the Altar). The corporal is meant to be a place to catch any particles of the Eucharist that may fall on it when Father is fractioning the Host. **It is very important that you fold the corporal properly** so that none of the particles fall off. Use the following step-by-step that shows

how to do so. Please feel free to ask a sacristan or Father to practice. Once folded, return the corporal to the credence table.



36. After taking the corporal to the credence table, bow to the Altar and sit in your chair.

The Concluding Rites:

37. For Sunday and School Masses, when Father says, “Let us pray”, the Cross and Candle Bearers go back into the sacristy for your candles and cross and lineup in the hallway. The Mass servers will line up when Father is finished with the Roman Missal. Cross-bearer and acolytes return to the sanctuary to take your place for the closing procession as soon as Father gives the final blessing.
38. At the end of Mass, when Father reverences the altar, Book and Chalice-Bearers bow at your places at the side kneelers. Then move around the altar and down the steps, facing the tabernacle (except on Tuesdays and First Fridays). If you serve for Fr. Dan, you will face the altar and bow BEFORE turning to genuflect.

After Mass:

39. After Mass, the BOOK person will wash and dry the BOWL and return it to the credence table. The CHALICE person will extinguish the CANDLES at the altar and tabernacle. Servers should then check with the sacristan to see if you can help in any other way.
40. Members of the SJS Server Council are responsible to organize the robing closet – seeing that the albs and cinctures are hanging properly, and checking once a week to be sure that everything is still in order. I would appreciate if the oldest server at each Mass would take this responsibility before leaving the sacristy. If you are the last one, you should close the closet doors and turn off the lights.

If you have any questions at all, please ask! No question is stupid, and we want you to be relaxed and joyful in serving the Lord and His people in such an important way. Remember that serving is a privilege! **Show your joy as you serve** – that also is a great example – not only to the congregation, but also to those younger children who might be thinking that they, too, would also like to serve.

Again, thank you so much for your beautiful, dedicated service. Our parish is very grateful to and for you! Please let me know if there is any way at all in which I can help you to be what God has created you to be.

With love, in His service,

Miss Lorrie music@stjosephavonlake.org; cell 440-897-0894