

Altar Server

6650 Carolina Beach Rd., Wilmington, NC 28412

Phone 910-791-1003 Fax 910-791-0081

We who are called to serve at the altar share in a ministry that has a long history in the worship of the Church. Although this ministry may be described in terms of service to the presider, in reality, our service is to the community. Our actions help the community to celebrate the mysteries of our faith with lasting good effect in our lives. As with the other liturgical ministers, our posture and attitude set the tone and the example for others in the community. Our purposeful motion speaks of liturgy that was prepared with care, a celebration in which each person in the assembly assumes an active role. Our good deportment reflects a prayerful spirit, and the care of a humble servant.

(Liturgical Ministry: A Practical Guide to Spirituality by Donna M. Cole)

All liturgical ministers are registered parishioners in good standing with the Catholic Church. The guidelines that follow conform to the theological and liturgical principles in the diocesan guidelines.

Attire and Behavior

By dressing appropriately, liturgical ministers assist the assembly's focus on the ministry rather than on a minister's personal appearance. Liturgical Ministers, regardless of age, dress in "business casual" attire. Sneakers/athletic shoes, flip-flops, jeans, T-shirts, sweat/jogging suits, shorts, and skimpy clothing (e.g. spaghetti straps or strapless tops/dresses) of any type are not appropriate, as well as buttons/pins advertising personal agendas, (e.g. political/sports).

Wearing of the liturgical color of the day is encouraged. The liturgical color is listed in the bulletin at the bottom of the upcoming week's calendar. Liturgical ministers may be called upon to serve at any liturgy, so always come prepared and dressed appropriately.

Liturgical ministers model a respectful and reverent attitude by arriving on time, avoiding distracting behavior during the liturgy (e.g. talking with others), and participating in the entire liturgy.

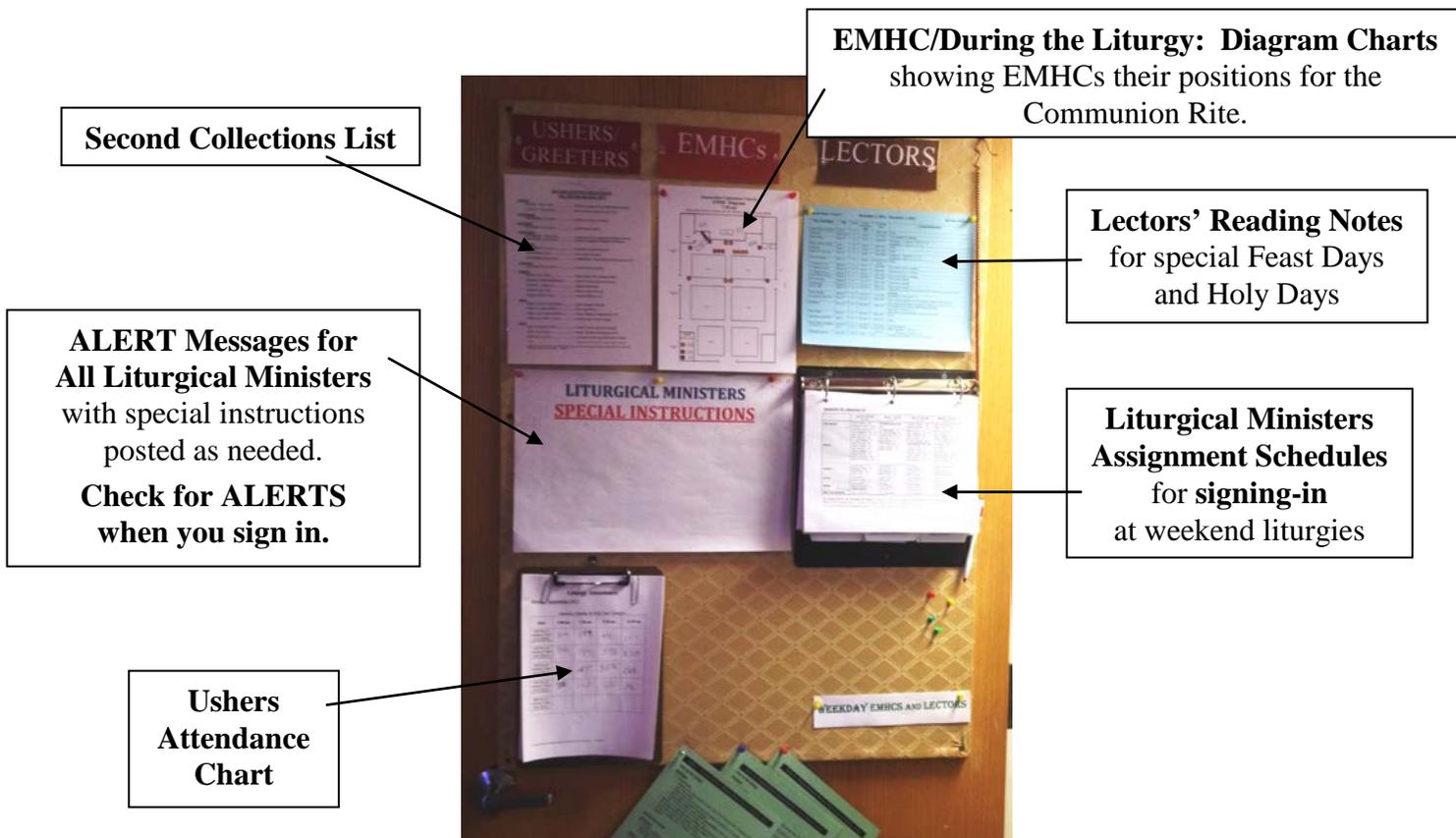
Training and Formation

Technical and practical orientation and training, as well as liturgical and spiritual formation, are a necessary part of every ministry. Initial orientation and training are required before the new liturgical minister enters service. Each liturgical minister is also expected to grow in faith and action through attending ongoing formation for established liturgical ministers, normally offered annually, and periodic formation events held to benefit *all* parish liturgical ministers.

Scheduling/Substitution Procedure

All liturgical ministers are absolutely crucial and essential for the celebration of the liturgy. An untrained individual cannot properly fill this essential role in the liturgy; therefore, only trained liturgical ministers serve during a liturgy. Schedules are prepared for three-month periods by the parish secretary and sent to each trained liturgical minister along with information to access the schedule on the parish website, www.iccwilm.org Please be present when scheduled or arrange for a substitute as early as possible. All liturgical ministers are asked to be flexible and willing to fill in for one another whenever possible, even if it means filling in at a different liturgy. Use the current roster list and "unavailable dates" provided with each ministry schedule (also posted on the parish website) to contact potential substitutes. Do not call the Coordinator except as a last resort. When communicating by e-mail, be sure to use an address that is checked frequently. Communication by e-mail should be supported by a phone call if you do not receive a response

to your e-mail. Be sure to inform the parish secretary and your coordinator of any changes to your e-mail address or phone number. If you are filling in for someone, note the change on the Liturgical Ministers (LM) closet door schedule by crossing out the scheduled person's name and writing your initials next to it.



1. Bulletin Board on the inside of the Liturgical Ministers' closet door.



2. Presentation Table at the rear of the center aisle.

In place before each weekend liturgy:

- Presider's large ciborium (with unconsecrated hosts)
- Presider's large chalice (with wine)
- Book of the Gospels

Day of the Liturgy

Preparation Prior to the Liturgy

NOTE: All Altar Servers are expected to learn ALL of the responsibilities of an altar server.

Currently trained servers can mentor the newer servers, who will gradually be able to exercise all the responsibilities of this ministry.

1. The Point Person (an appointed Altar Server who comes early to observe which Altar Servers are present in general, and specifically those who are scheduled, in order to be prepared to ask an appropriately dressed Altar Server to fill in for a “no show” Altar Server) should arrive **no later than 20 minutes** before the liturgy. All Altar Servers should arrive **no later than 20 minutes** before the liturgy. Arriving in a timely manner puts other liturgical ministers at ease by knowing that you are present. It allows you to be calm and relaxed as you exercise ministry. It also models good preparation to all who attend the liturgy.
2. Know when you are scheduled to serve. Never assume you can miss your assignment. Always make sure there is a replacement if you are unable to fulfill your commitment. Youth: You are responsible for your assignment, not your parents. Remind them ahead of time when you are scheduled to serve.
3. Place a checkmark next to your name on the schedule posted on the inside of the door to the Liturgical Ministers (LM) closet, located in the rear corner of the church nearest to the Gathering Area (**picture 1, p.2**). If you are substituting for another person, cross out his/her name and write your initials next to the name on the schedule.
4. Go to the sacristy and find a server's robe in the wall closet to the left of the sink area. Your robe should not be too short or too long (dragging on the floor), which would be about ankle length.
5. After (or while) putting on your robe, take time to ask God’s blessing upon your ministry. Offer your ministry to the Lord before, during, and after the liturgy. The following is a suggested adaptation of the direction of intention by St. Francis de Sales (or use your own words):

“Lord, I give you my actions and ministry.

*Help me to conduct myself in a manner that will give praise to you
And will assist my brothers and sisters in their worship of your holy name.”*

6. Check that all is in place for the liturgy.

Server 1 (S1)

- Will normally be the Cross Bearer, except when that server is not capable of handling the weight of the processional cross. In that case, **Server 2 (S2)** may be the Cross Bearer.
- Check the presider's binder, which is found on the credenza or small stand in the hallway near the sacristy, to see if there are any Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EMHC) to the Sick and Homebound for that liturgy. *If there are, count how many and inform the presider before the liturgy.*
- 10 minutes before the beginning of the liturgy (or as directed by the presider) take the presider’s binder into the sanctuary and place it on the steps near your chair (chair nearest the altar steps).
- The Roman Missal (big, red book – **picture on page 7**) should also be in place on the steps near your chair.
- Check that the correct number of ciboriums, chalices, and purificators have been set out on the preparation table behind the altar (**Picture 3 & 4 on pages 4 & 5**).
- If there are any questions about how the Preparation Table has been set up (for example: something missing, anything different) *check with the presider first before making any changes to the Preparation Table.*

- Retrieve the processional cross from its stand in the corner of the wall near the Blessed Sacrament Chapel and go to the rear of the center aisle to wait for the liturgy to begin.

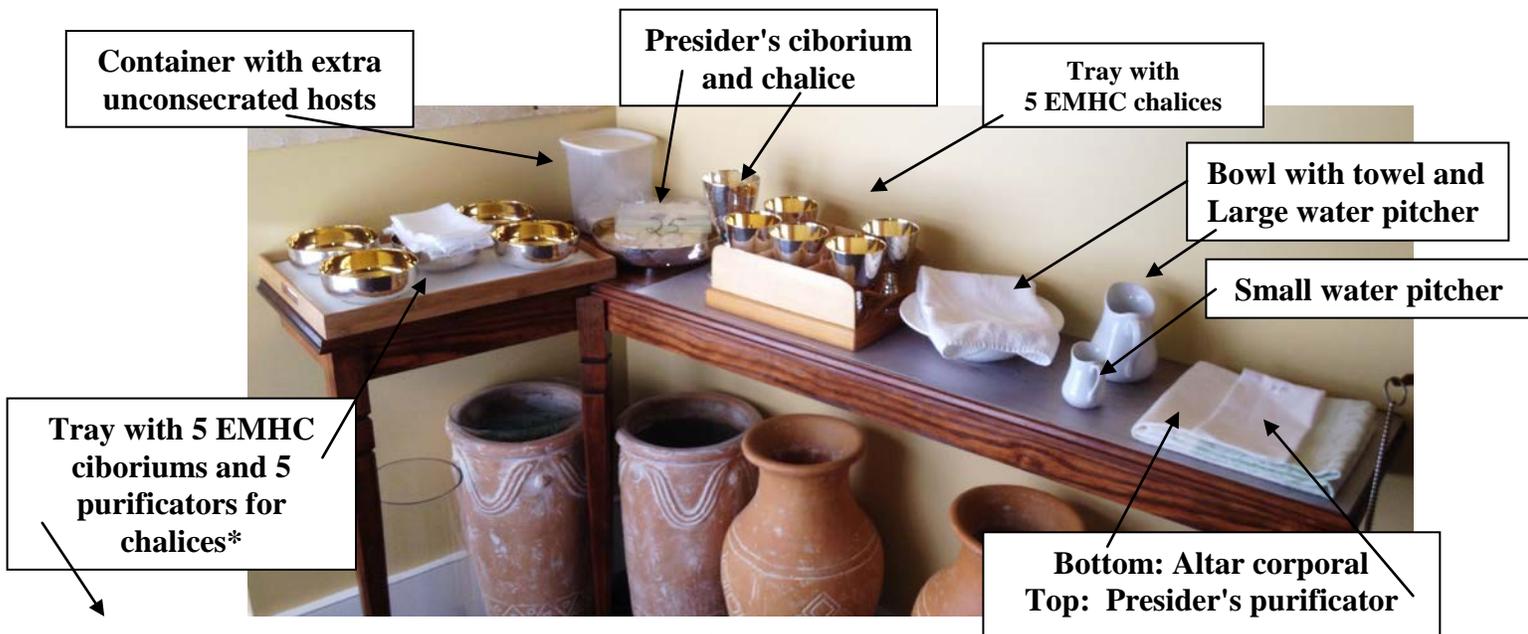
Server 2 (S2)

- Place a Breaking Bread Book marked "Altar Server's Copy" on each server's chair.
 - Go to the rear of the center aisle and check that the presider's large ciborium, chalice and the Book of the Gospels are on the presentation table there. (**picture 2, page 2**).
 - The Breaking Bread book marked "Presider's Copy" should be on the shelf under the presentation table.
 - Check with the presider for any special instructions.
 - Wait at the rear, center aisle for the liturgy to begin.
7. When the chimes are sounded (about 5 minutes before the liturgy starts) all servers go to the rear of the church to prepare for the entrance procession.
8. Normal Order of Procession: Cross Bearer
 Other Altar Server(s)
 Lector with the Book of the Gospels
 (If a Baptism) Parents and Godparents
 Presider

Preparation Table

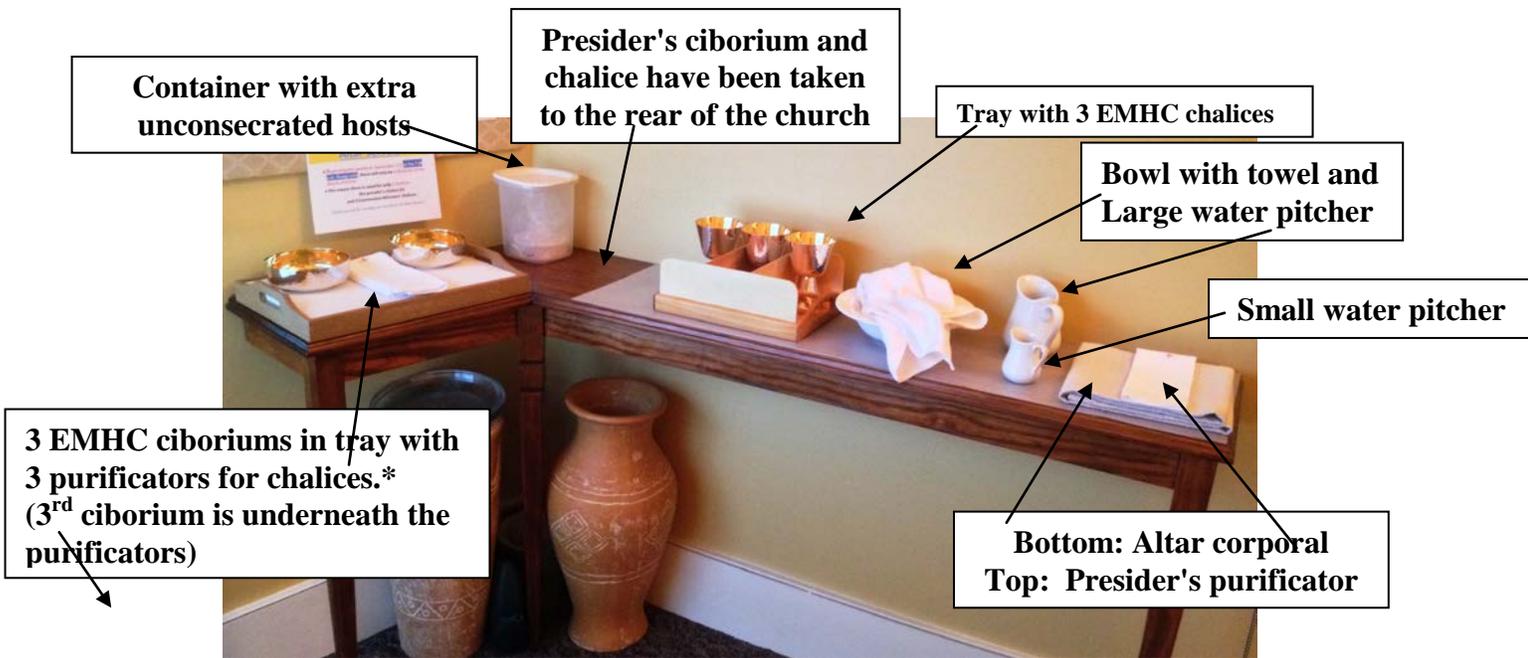
(behind the altar wall nearest to the presider's chair)

3. Set-up for 5:00 p.m., 9:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. Weekend Liturgies



***The tabernacle ciborium may become the 5th ciborium if it is overflowing with more Eucharistic hosts than are needed to be kept there.**

4. Set-up for 7:30 a.m. Weekend Liturgies



***The tabernacle ciborium may become the 3rd ciborium if it is overflowing with more Eucharistic hosts than are needed to be kept there.**

During the Liturgy

General Attitude and Posture

Your first ministry is to be part of the praying assembly. Altar servers pray with the rest of the assembly, standing when the assembly stands and saying or singing the responses along with them. **It is important that you participate and do not talk or display any distracting behavior.** (Please read in *Guide for Servers* from The Liturgical Ministry Series, pages 78-80, or [Youth] *The Ministry of the Altar Server* by Caroline M. Thomas, pages 5-8)

The Entrance and Opening Rites

1. The Cross Bearer (normally **S1**) leads the procession. Once reaching the front of the church, Cross Bearer carries the processional cross to its stand by walking between the font and the altar steps and then to the corner near the air conditioning vent on the Blessed Sacrament wall. Cross Bearer places the cross in the stand, then returns via the same path and stands at the immediate left side (font side) of the presider, facing the altar.
2. **S2** stands at the right end (choir side) in the ministers' line, leaving space for the presider (at center) and for the lector, who will stand between **S2** and the presider.
3. Lector goes immediately to the altar to place the Book of the Gospels there.
4. Once the lector returns to the line, all bow together, then go to their designated chairs.
5. **S1** sits near the steps and will hold the presider's binder (or sometimes the Roman Missal) for him. The second tab in the binder is marked *Penitential Act*, and is the first place the presider will read from (if there is a Baptism, the first tab for the presider is the *Collect*). Server holds the

bottom of the binder firmly in both hands with the pages facing the presider. When the presider gestures for the binder, move to stand in front of him and hold up the binder.

6. Watch for cues from the presider for when to walk to him with the binder and when to return to your chair.
7. Until you are familiar with the tabs, or if you are not sure, do not struggle with finding the correct tab. Instead, the presider will know the correct tab and will turn to it himself.
9. When the presider sits, all sit for the Liturgy of the Word. *Altar servers should sit, stand, listen and respond to the readings along with the rest of the assembly.*

Liturgy of the Word

1. Sometimes there may be a special event after the homily, for example, dismissal of the Candidates and/or Catechumens, Baptisms, etc. Follow the directions of the presider.
2. All stand for the Creed.
3. **S1** opens the presider's binder to the *Universal Prayer* (Prayer of the Faithful) tab, and waits for the presider to gesture for him/her to hold the binder for those prayers.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Preparation of the Altar

- Servers should always use the steps near the handrail so that you are not crossing in front of the presider.
- Once the Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful) has finished, the preparation of the altar begins.

Server 1 (Refer to Picture 5 on next page.)

1. Hands **S2** the Roman Missal, then goes to the altar, picks up the clear plastic book holder, and places it on the top shelf of the ambo. He/she continues around behind the altar to the preparation table.
2. At the preparation table, picks up the Roman Missal, presider's purificator and small pitcher and takes them to **S2** at the altar. Return to the preparation table to get the tray of chalices.
3. Brings the tray of chalices to the side of the altar and holds the tray so that **S2** can place the chalices on the altar.
4. Takes the empty chalices tray to the purification table in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, and then returns to his/her chair.

Server 2 (Refer to Picture 5 on next page.)

1. Before going behind the altar, receives the Roman Missal from **S1**, takes it to the preparation table and sets it there, then retrieves the corporal and takes it to the altar. Proceed to *unfold* the corporal. *Do not shake it out.* It is placed about 1 inch from the right side of the altar with the bottom side near the edge of the altar.
2. **S1** brings the Roman Missal to the altar and hands it to **S2**, who places it on the left side of the corporal. It is not necessary to open the Roman Missal.
3. Receives the presider's purificator and small pitcher from **S1** and sets them both at the left of where the chalices will be placed.

4. Lifts the chalices one by one from the tray, placing them two by two on the right side of the corporal, *with enough space between them that they do not touch or clang together* (**picture 5 below**). Returns to his/her chair.



5. The altar, as prepared during the Collection.
(7:30 am Liturgy will have only 3 EMHC chalices plus the Presider's chalice.)

Presentation of Gifts

Server 1

1. When the Offertory gifts are ready to be brought forward, follows the presider to the front of the center aisle and stands at his left (choir side).
2. Receives the presider's chalice from the presider.
3. Follows behind **S2**, and waits near the presider's platform while holding the presider's chalice for him.
4. After presider adds water to the chalice, hands the chalice to the presider.
5. Receives the small pitcher from the presider and returns it to the preparation table.
6. Returns to his/her seat.

Server 2

1. When the Offertory gifts are ready to be brought forward, follows the presider and **S1** to the front of the center aisle and stands at his right (font side).
2. Receives the large ciborium from the presider.
3. Carries the presider's ciborium to the altar and places it near the center edge of the altar. He/she then goes to the preparation table, retrieves the bowl with hand towel and large pitcher, and waits near the cross until **S1** returns from the altar.
4. **S2** then takes the bowl, towel and pitcher to the presider for his washing of hands. Once presider finishes, **S2** returns the bowl, towel and large pitcher to the preparation table.
5. Returns to his/her seat.

Eucharistic Prayer

1. **Facing the presider at the altar, altar servers pray with the rest of the assembly, standing when the assembly stands and saying or singing the responses along with them.**
It is important that you participate and do not talk or display any distracting behavior.

2. At the Sign of Peace, both servers go to the side of the altar (NOT the altar platform) and share the Sign of Peace with the presider.
3. **S2** goes to the short side of the baptismal font and stands near W1 EMHC.
4. **S1** receives the Roman Missal from the presider and places it on the preparation table. He/she then carries the tray of EMHC ciboriums and purificators to the altar, placing them on the corporal as shown in **picture 6, below**.
5. **S1** then steps down to the baptismal font to stand next to **S2**.

Note: If there is a need to retrieve the ciborium of consecrated hosts from the tabernacle, the Presider will direct a server to do so.



6. The tray of EMHC ciboriums is placed on the altar during the Sign of Peace.

(7:30 a.m. Liturgy will have only 3 EMHC chalices and 3 EMHC ciboriums)

Reception of Communion

Servers and EMHCs line up as follows:

1. **S1, S2,** and W1 EMHC line up at the short side of the baptismal font.
2. All other EMHCs line up in front of the altar steps according to their assigned station.
3. **S1** receives the Body of Christ from the presider, then goes immediately to the altar, retrieves the presider's chalice and returns to his place in line.
4. **S2** and W1 receive the Body of Christ from the presider. Presider normally sets his ciborium on the font until he is ready for it. (Visiting priest may ask a server to hold it.)
5. Presider offers the Blood of Christ to the servers and W1, leaving his chalice with W1.
6. Presider then distributes the Body of Christ to the other EMHCs. W1 follows to distribute the Blood of Christ.
7. While the presider distributes the Body of Christ to all EMHCs, **S1** proceeds to the altar, picks up the first EMHC chalice and purificator, and waits to begin passing them down to **S2**.
8. **S2** goes to the top step (NOT the altar platform). **S2** then receives each EMHC chalice and purificator to pass to the presider for EMHCs/Wine.
9. When finished, **S2** returns to stand near the font.
10. **S1** carries the tray of EMHC ciboriums from the altar to the presider and holds it for him while he passes a ciborium to each EMHC/Bread; then, **S1** takes the empty tray to the purification table in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel (**pictures 7, page 9**) before returning to his/her chair.
11. Presider and EMHCs go to their stations.

12. **S2** proceeds to clear the altar, folding the corporal as it was, then returning it to the preparation table. He/she returns the Roman Missal to the step beside S1's chair, and goes to his/her own chair.

Sending Forth of EMHC/to the Sick and Homebound

1. IF there are any EMHC/Sick and Homebound listed in the presider's binder, **S1** will have the binder ready to hold for the presider when he finishes distributing Communion and comes to the foot of the altar. The binder is opened to the *EMHC/Homebound* tab.
2. Watch for the presider's cue to go and hold the binder for him.

After Communion

1. Altar servers remain standing until the presider returns from the Blessed Sacrament Chapel.
2. **S1** holds the binder for the presider to pray the *Prayer after Communion*, followed by the *Announcements*. If there is a Baptism or other special blessing, follow the presider's directions.
4. After the final blessing, the Cross Bearer retrieves the processional cross and proceeds to the center aisle at the first row of chairs. He/she faces the altar,
5. **S2** and presider go to the foot of the altar. All except the Cross Bearer bow. At the presider's cue or directives, all turn and process down the center aisle, with the presider exiting last.

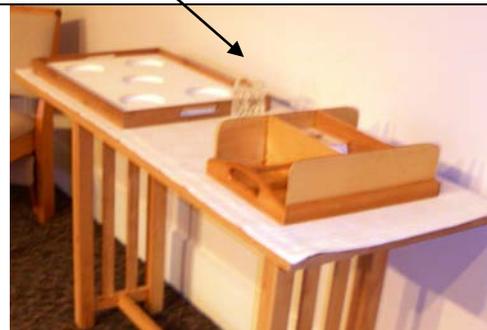
After the Liturgy

1. **All servers** go to the front near the processional cross stand. **Respectfully WAIT there until the final hymn is finished before doing any "after liturgy" activities.**
2. **S1** returns the clear book stand for the Book of the Gospels to the altar, placing it at the center of the altar on the presider's side. After the 11:30 a.m. liturgy, the book stand remains on the ambo shelf.
3. **S2** takes the presider's binder to the back hallway credenza.
4. Servers go to the sacristy, remove their robes, and **hang them neatly in the closet** reserved for altar servers' robes. **If a robe has been torn or received a stain from the wine or Blood of Christ, it should be hung near the sacristy door so the sacristan knows to have it cleaned or mended.**
5. Servers should advise the Altar Servers Coordinator (or presider, if necessary) of any problems during the liturgy.

EMHCs place the sacred vessels in the trays after distributing Communion. The clear glass pitcher contains is half-filled with water to help the presider purify the sacred vessels.



7:30 a.m. Liturgy



5:00 p.m., 9:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. Liturgies

7. Purification Table in Blessed Sacrament Chapel

Important TERMS to Know

Altar Cloth:	Large cloth covering the altar.
Ambo:	A dignified and stationary place from which the readings, Responsorial Psalm, and the Prayer of the Faithful (Intercessions) are proclaimed. It may also be used for the homily.
Boat:	A small metal container that holds the incense to be put into the thurible. It has a cover and comes with a small spoon.
Chalice:	A specially made cup used to hold the Blood of Christ during the Liturgy of the Eucharist. This term is used for the presider's cup, and is also the official term for the cup of any other Communion minister.
Ciborium/Paten:	A specially made vessel/bowl used to hold the Body of Christ.
Corporal:	The white cloth which is placed over the altar cloth, on which the chalice and ciborium are placed during the Preparation of the Altar.
Credence Table:	(Called the Preparation Table here at ICC) Table where the vessels and other necessary items are placed for the Liturgy of the Eucharist.
Cruet:	A small pitcher used to hold the water which the presider adds to the main chalice of wine during the Preparation of Gifts.
Extinguisher:	This tool is used to extinguish the flames of candles and/or light them. It has a tube on one side at the top with a retractable wick for lighting candles. The other side has a small cup for extinguishing the candles. It is very important to extend the wick after you have extinguished the flame.
Finger Towel:	Towel used to dry the presider's hands after the Offertory Procession.
Genuflect:	An act of reverence - the lowering of the right knee to the ground in front of the tabernacle.
Presider:	The priest who is officiating at the liturgy.
Purificator:	A small cloth, usually white, used to wipe the rim of the chalice during the Communion Rite at the liturgy.
Pyx:	A small container, usually metal, used for holding consecrated hosts when taken to the sick and homebound.
Roman Missal:	One of the most important liturgical books used during the liturgy, containing the official liturgical prayers for the Eucharistic Liturgy.
Sacrarium:	A special sink installed in a sacristy for the cleaning of the sacred Communion vessels. It drains directly into the earth, not into the sewer.
Sanctuary:	That area of the church building that contains the altar, ambo, and presidential chair (presider's chair).
Sanctuary Lamp:	A candle that both indicates and gives honor to the presence of the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle of a church building.
Tabernacle:	A large, prominent container for the consecrated hosts, reserved in a church building, often in a special room called the Blessed Sacrament Chapel.
Taper:	The long, wax-coated wick of a candle extinguisher, used to light candles. Sometimes a small, thin, hand-held candle is referred to as a taper candle.
Thurible:	A metal container extended from a chain in which charcoal and incense are burned for liturgical ceremonies. It has a lid that can be raised. It is sometimes called a censer.
Thurifer:	The Altar Server who carries the thurible or censer in procession.
Vestments:	The special garments worn by the ministers of the liturgy.
Alb:	A long white garment worn by priests, deacons, and lay ministers. It is a reminder of the white garment given in Baptism.
Humeral Veil:	A cloth placed around the shoulders of a priest or deacon when he carries the Blessed Sacrament, in a procession or for benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

Chasuble:	The priestly vestment worn only for the celebration of the Liturgy of the Eucharist.
Cincture:	A roped belt, usually white, which is sometimes worn with an alb.
Cope:	A cape-like vestment worn by a priest or deacon for liturgies outside of Mass, e.g. processions on Palm Sunday and the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ.
Stole:	A narrow strip of fabric worn by ordained ministers. Priests wear the stole around the neck, hanging down in front under the chasuble.

Immaculate Conception Church Campus

A. CHURCH BUILDING

- **Parking:** Upon entering the church property, in front of the church, at far side of the church building. Designated areas of parking and “no parking” are to be respected, as well as parking for the handicapped.
- **Blessed Sacrament Chapel:** Inside the worship space, front left. Doorway is beneath the red Sanctuary lamp which hangs from the ceiling and marks the near location of the tabernacle containing the Blessed Sacrament.
- **Conference Room:** Front hallway of the office wing, third door on the right.
- **Exits:**
 - a. Front Gathering area doors
 - b. Rear Gathering area doors
 - c. Door near the kitchen
 - d. Doors at rear of worship space
 - e. Rear door at end of back office hallway
- **Kitchen:** Entrance is inside the worship space, on the far wall across from the Gathering area, through the open, double doorway. Kitchen doorway is off of the hallway there.
- **Pastor’s Office:** Back hallway of the office wing; as you turn the corner, first office on the right.
- **Reconciliation Room:** Inside the worship space, on the far wall across from the Gathering area, to the right of the kitchen doorway.
- **Restrooms:** Front hallway of the office wing. *Ladies’ Room* is first door on the left. *Men’s Room* is immediately after the drinking fountains on the left.
- **Sacristy:** Back hallway of the office wing, first doorway to your left.
- **Volunteer Room:** Front hallway of the office wing, second door on the right.

B. DE SALES FAITH FORMATION CENTER

- Building across from the rear courtyard behind the church building.
- Become familiar with the location of the following:
 - Nursery**
 - Library**
 - Faith Formation classrooms**
 - 2 Kitchen Rooms**
 - Restrooms**
 - Annex Room** (lounge setting)
 - Brisson Hall** (for larger Faith Formation events, with the ability to be divided into smaller spaces with expandable divider walls)

Dealing With Emergencies

The motto of the Boy Scouts is “Be prepared”. It is a good one for liturgical ministers, also. True emergencies during the liturgy are rare, but it is important that we be prepared.

- **Emergency situation with a parishioner:** A greeter or usher should immediately let the presider know so that he can ask for any medical personnel who may be present. If there is any question of the health safety of the parishioner an ambulance should be called (911).
- **Emergency situation with the building or any safety circumstance that would affect those gathered for prayer:** 911 should be called immediately and the presider should be notified in order to make an appropriate announcement to the assembly.
- **Fire extinguisher Locations:**
 1. On the wall immediately to the left of the front Gathering area doors
 2. On the right wall before entering the rear Gathering area space.
 3. In the far staff hallway, on wall across from Pastor’s office
 4. Inside the worship space, on the far wall across from the Gathering area, to the left of the double archway
 5. Immediately upon entering the kitchen, on wall to the left
- **Telephone Locations:**

No need to push buttons for outside line - just pick up and dial. (For 911 and local calls only)

 1. On wall in office hallway, between Ladies’ and Men’s’ restrooms
 2. Immediately upon entering the kitchen, on wall to the left

Items Found Near or In the Kitchen

(Kitchen is located beyond the worship space, opposite the Gathering area side, through the double archway.)

- **First Aid Kit:** Located upon entering the kitchen, on the counter immediately to your left near the telephone. It is a blue plastic box marked "First Aid". This kit contains small items for basic first aid. More First Aid items can be found in the kitchen hallway, in the wall cabinet next to the door leading outside.
- **Defibrillator:** Located in the kitchen hallway, in the wall cabinet next to the door leading outside. The Defibrillator can be found inside the cabinet. There is a list of trained parishioners who know how to use the Defibrillator on the door of the cabinet. Trained parishioners should be the first to provide assistance with this machine when needed. In the event there is not a trained parishioner available, the Defibrillator has basic step-by-step directions that any adult can follow.
- **Wheelchairs:** Located in hallway outside of kitchen.