

Altar Servers Guide to Preparing to Serve Mass

At home:

1. Know when you are scheduled to serve. Mark it on a calendar. Hang the servers' schedule on your closet door, on the refrigerator, or in some other convenient spot that will help you to remember your responsibilities as a server. Tell your mom and/or dad. If you cannot serve when you are assigned, contact Mrs. Holly Downey at hkdowney@umich.edu as soon as you can and ask her to arrange for a substitute.
2. Before leaving home wash your hands and face, comb your hair, and brush your teeth. Wear good clothes. (Remember that you will put on a vestment over your clothes, so don't choose heavy clothes!) Wear dress pants and dress shoes.
3. Say a prayer before leaving your house (You may choose one from this packet or say one from your heart).

Preparing:

4. Come to church early, at least 15 minutes before Mass begins.
5. Check your name off on the schedule in the Brides' Room.
6. Put on your alb. Make sure that it is not too long or too short. Look in the mirror to make sure that it is on right.
7. Participate in the prayer before Mass with Father and the other ministers.
8. Bow when you pass the altar.
9. Use the bathroom, if you need to, before the Mass begins. Never leave during the liturgy unless it is an emergency.
10. When all of the servers have arrived, decide which serving position each server will take (Cross Bearer, Candle Bearer I, or Candle Bearer II).
11. Relax and be calm. Say a few prayers by yourself asking Jesus to help you.

Celebration of Mass:

12. Do not bow when you pass the altar if you are carrying something, such as the cross or the candles.
13. When you are not carrying something, fold your hands.
14. Walk and move slowly, but not too slowly. Don't be too stiff, but also don't be too loose in the way that you walk, stand, sit or kneel.
15. Don't whisper to other servers unless something very, very, important about the Mass needs attention and you have to discuss it very discreetly with another server (This should happen very rarely, if ever).
16. Don't fiddle with things when you are in your seat – especially during the readings and the homily.
17. Sing when the assembly sings, listen when the assembly listens, and speak when the assembly speaks.
18. If you make a mistake or forget something, stay calm and relaxed (Everyone in the world makes mistakes now and again no matter how well trained they may be at what they are doing, but only the most mature people learn to react well to their mistakes).

After Mass:

19. Put the cross and the candles back in their places in the Ushers Room (Blow out the candles **before** you put them back in their slots).
20. Hang up your alb and make sure it is right side out.
21. Say a little prayer thanking God that he let you serve at his altar.