

INTRODUCTION TO SERVING

CLOTHING: Altarservers usually vest in a cassock and surplice.

You should be careful of these vestments: button or zipper the cassock carefully, handle the surplice or alb so as not to tear it when putting in on or taking it off; try not to spill wax on either one when you are carrying a candle.

An altar server's shoes should be clean and quiet: squeaky shoes or hard heels can be a distraction to everyone at Mass. Dirty shoes show that the server does not respect the important role servers have at the altar.

→ Shoes and socks should be black or brown. No flip-flops or sandals.
→ Hair ribbons, etc should be dark colored and not distracting.

→ Hands, including fingernails, and face should also be clean. Most churches have a sink with soap and water where a last-minute clean-up can be done, if it is necessary.

POSTURES AT MASS:



→ **HANDS:** unless you are carrying something, your hands should be kept in front of your chest, palm to **palm**, fingers pointing upward. If you are carrying something in your **right** hand, your left hand should be held flat on your chest.

→ **EYES:** always look where the action is: at the altar, the **pulpit**, chair, as the **Mass** moves along.

→ **STANDING:** always stand up straight with both **feet** firmly on the floor—not leaning on one **leg**, not leaning on anything **else**.



→ **BOWING:** when you bow to somebody or something, it should be a smooth, not a jerky, forward inclination of your head and shoulders.

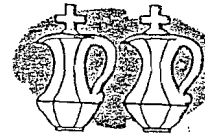


KNEELING: when kneeling, your body should be upright and your hands in front of your chest as mentioned above.

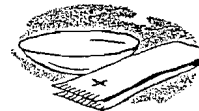


GENUFLECTING: keep your hands in front of your chest while you go down on your right knee; do not lean forward any more than you must, but keep your body upright.

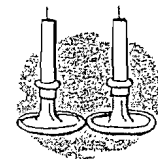
THINGS USED AT MASS:



CRUETS: One cruet holds wine, the other water. Always be sure that you do not pour wine into a cruet that already has some water in it: if you are not sure whether the liquid in the cruet is wine or water, pour it into the sink. Before Mass, the cruets should be put in their place, either on the credence table in the sanctuary, or on the table with the ciborium for the offertory procession.



BASIN AND TOWEL: These should be on the credence table before Mass begins. You should know where the towels are kept, so that you can get a fresh one when needed.



CANDLES: Two, four or six candles are lighted for Mass according to local custom. When lighting the candles, be careful not to drop wax from the taper on the altar cloth. This will not happen if you keep the burning wick fairly short.