

Introduction to the Apostolate of Altar serving

Dear children (& parents)

*So I gaze on you in the sanctuary to see your strength and your glory.
For your love is better than life, my lips will speak your praise. (Psalm 63)*

I want to tell you that it is a great joy and honour to be an Altar Server because you will have the responsibility of assisting the priest in very special way, undertaking tasks quite different from anything else you do in your life. The **Catechism of the Catholic Church** states: The Eucharist is 'the Source and summit of the Christian life.' (CC1324)

Therefore, it is important for a young person to be involved more directly in the life of the Church (e.g. as Altar Servers) because it is **a means of drawing closer to God.**

Servers assist the priest and the congregation at Mass by:

- Lighting candles & preparing sacred vessels etc. before Mass. (in conjunction with Sacristan)
- Placing the chalice & other sacred vessels on the altar. (in conjunction with Sacristan)
- Presenting the gifts of water & wine to the priest.
- Ringing the bell during the consecration & at Holy Communion.
- Processing to/from the altar with lighted candles & at the Gospel. **(11am Sung Mass only).**
- Acting as Thurifer carrying lighted charcoal in a thurible, used for incensing the altar, congregation, etc. **(11am Sung Mass only)**
- Acting as Boat-Bearer to present incense to the priest to put in the thurible. **(11am Sung Mass only).**
- Acting as Cross-bearer, at the head of the procession to/from the altar. **(11am Sung Mass only).**
- After Mass, clearing the altar/extinguishing candles & putting away neatly our cassocks and cottas.
- Any other duties as required by the priest.

This training period (the **Novitiate**) is a time during which you will be able to decide if altar serving is right for you. It is very important to read the **Guild Promise** below, to understand the commitment required to be an altar Server. This includes serving at special ceremonies such as Confirmation, First Holy Communion, Holy Week/Easter, in addition to a 2-weekly Mass rota over the Sat./Sunday period.

After approx 2 years serving, servers may be eligible to receive the **Guild medal**, at which ceremony servers recite the **Guild Promise**:

I offer myself to God Almighty, to Blessed Mary our Mother, and to our Holy Patron, St. Stephen, and I promise to do my best, to serve regularly, with ¹reverence and ²understanding, for the glory of God, the service of his Church, and my own eternal salvation.

¹Reverence: being devout & prayerful and respectful of everything in Church

²Understanding: knowing what we do and why we do it

Cut here.....

Parents please enter details & return this section to Peter	
Full name of server	
Date of birth	
School attended	
Parent name	
Parent tel. no.	
Parent address	
Email address	

Servers responsible for training: Peter Keane 262935 (pk71dg@yahoo.co.uk) Steve Pameley