Acolyte and Head Server Training Manual

Prayer: Almighty God, empower us, we pray, to serve in Your holy sanctuary with grace and power. Enable and strengthen us to do Your will, and in all things to remember that one day in Your presence is worth a thousand anywhere else. This we pray through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Acolyte: One Who Serves

An Acolyte, ("one who helps") in Christian churches, is a layperson who assists the clergy during religious services by performing minor duties. In the Roman Catholic Church, the term also applies to an official church ministry in which a man is officially installed to assist the deacon and priest.

Acolytes were considered to be part of a Minor Order in the early Latin Church specially delegated to the service of the altar, assisting the priests and deacons in the administration of Holy Communion both inside the church and outside. Acolytes are first mentioned in Rome in 251 A.D. and were under the supervision of regional deacons who oversaw their work. Gradually their function changed and some acolytes became officers and secretaries to the Pope in Rome. It is considered to be an order of ministry for laypersons, not requiring admission to ordination, but as a privileged opportunity to

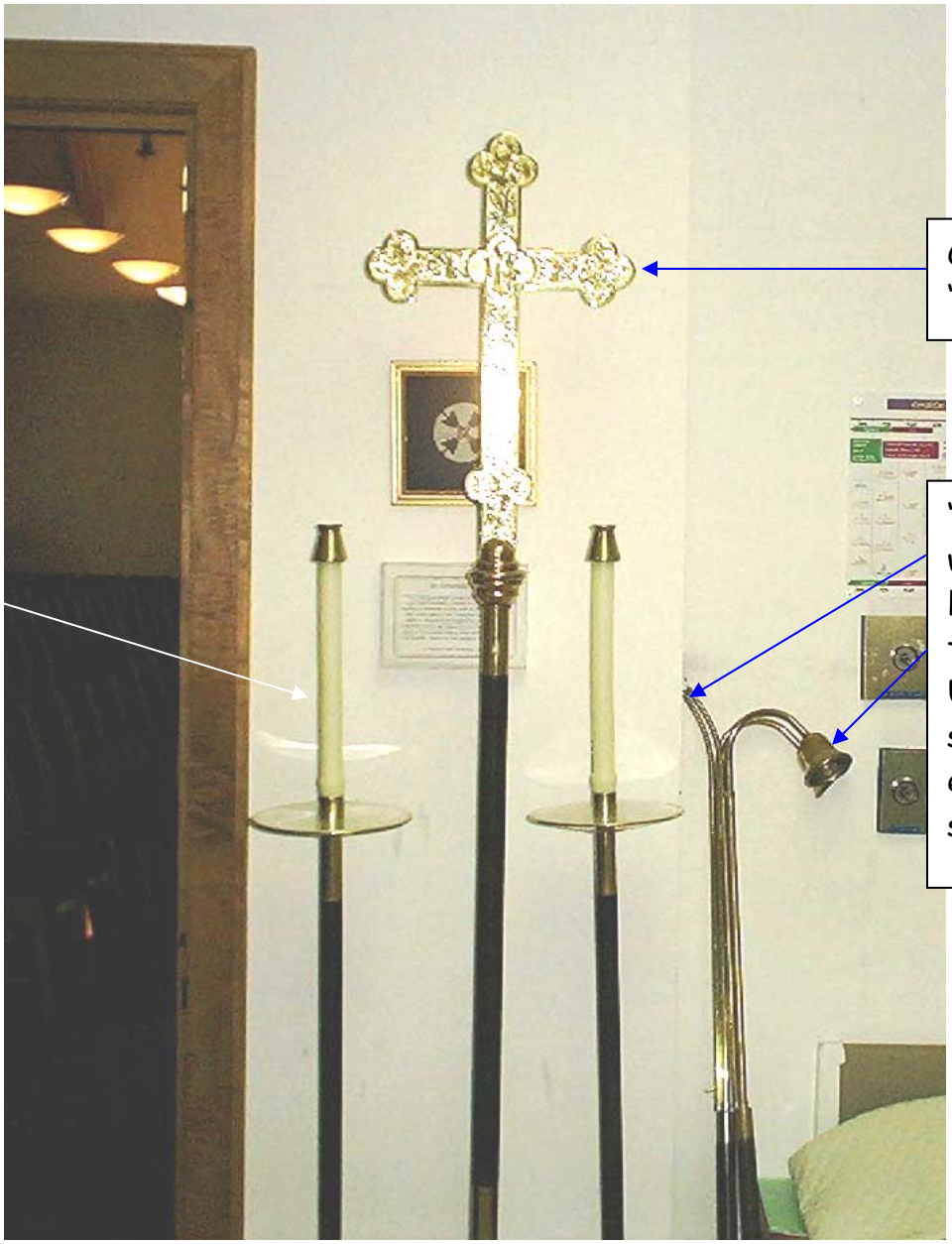
assist the Celebrant in the worship of God, always with the emphasis on humble service.

Before the Service….

Arrive 10 minutes before
Wear school clothes (shoes, not sneakers)
Find a robe that fits you.
Head Servers wear a silver cross (on hangers on the door) and do the following:

- ❑ Light the Taper
- ❑ Go to the Altar. Stand in the center, and bow your head (that's called "reverencing the Cross")
- ❑ Light the candles (including the large Paschal Candle if it is there)
- ❑ Remember, " *The Gospel Candle never burns alone*" (The Gospel Candle is the one on your left as you face the Altar)
- ❑ When you are through, stand in the center and bow your head before returning to the Sacristy.

Sacristy



Cross (carried by "Crucifer"

"Taper"- has thin wax-wick inside-light candles with this.
Use the bell to snuff candles at end of the service

"Torches" Carried in processions and at the Gospel Reading.

Altar Setup



- When the Paschal Candle is present, light it first.
- Then light the Epistle side, then the Gospel side.
- Remember, "*The Gospel Candle never….?*"

The Processional

- Crucifer is first
- Two Torch Bearers follow
- Head Server follows (fold your hands as you walk).
- Chalicers follow, the Bishop, if visiting next follows Clergy.
- When you get to the Altar, the Crucifer with two Torch Bearers stand in front of the Altar until the Clergy take their places.

- ❑ Crucifer then turns back down the center isle and leads the children out to Sunday School.

Gospel Procession

- ❑ Crucifer, Torch Bearers assemble facing the Altar
- ❑ When the Priest comes and picks up the Gospel Book, turn and slowly walk down center isle about half way down. Torches always turn "inward".
- ❑ Crucifer faces toward the Altar; Torches face each other on opposite sides.
- ❑ After the Gospel reading, proceed back up, wait facing the altar, then go back to your seat.

Offeratory: Acolyte's Duties

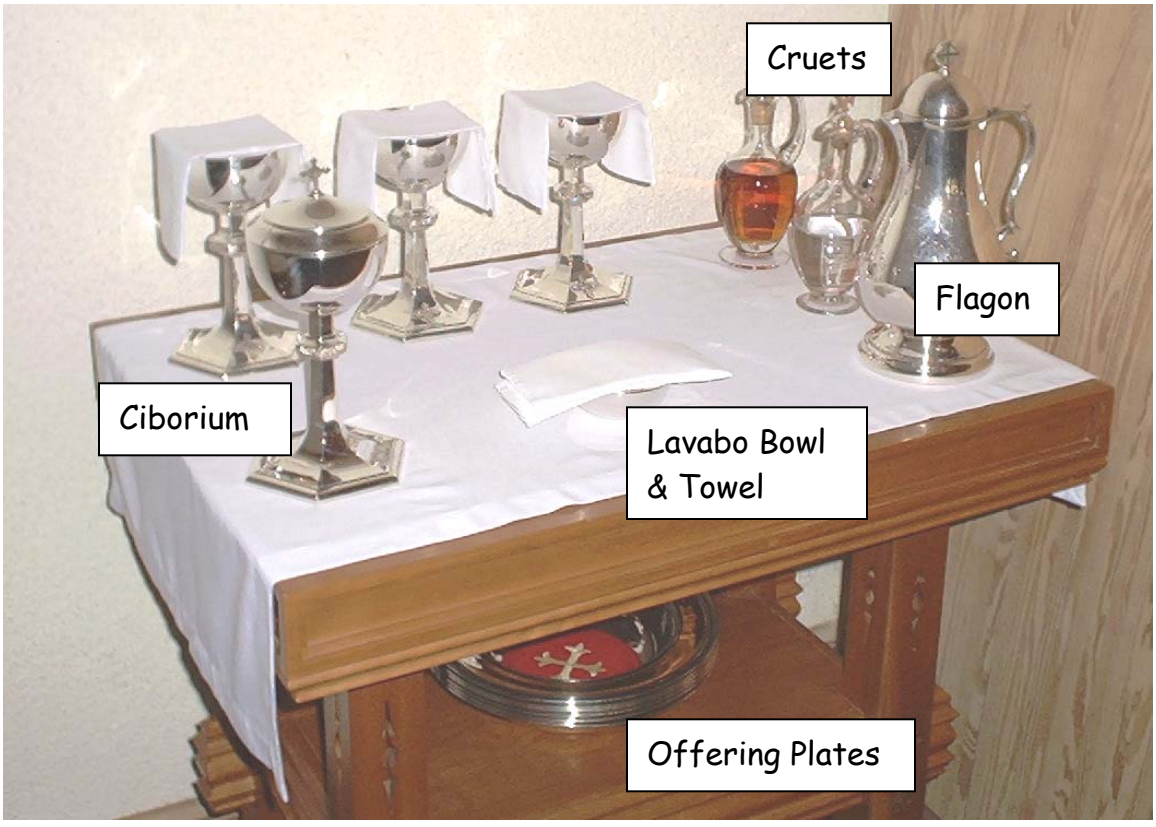
- ❑ After the Priest gives the offertory sentence, get the Offering Plates from underneath the Credence Table and give them to the Ushers when they come forward.
- ❑ When the Ushers return them, receive the stacked Offering Plates, wait for the Priest to bless them, then give them to then Tellers (don't worry, they be there!)

Holy Communion- Head Server's Duties:

- ❑ While the Priest is setting the Altar, bring up everything but the chalices- the large silver pitcher (call a "Flagon") the little glass vessel of water and

wine (called "Cruets") the chalice with the lid on it (called the "Ciborium") and the small, round silver bread box. If in doubt the priest will always help you.

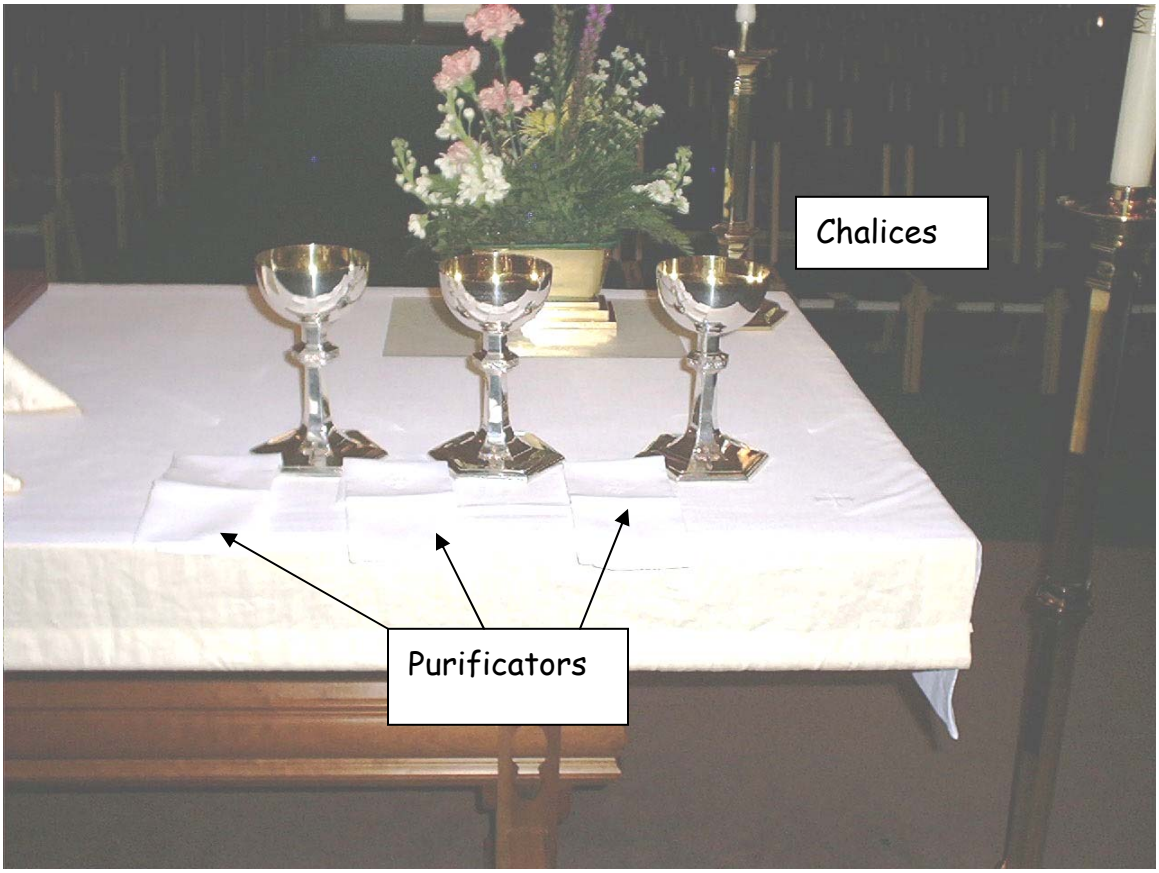
Credence Table Set up



- ❑ Next, take the Lavabo Bowl, towel and water and wash the priest's hands. When done, bow to each other.



- After the consecration, when the Chalicers start to line up behind the priest to receive communion, the Head Server sets out the Chalices on the side of the altar closest. Lay the purificators out in front of each Chalice.



- ❑ During Communion, stand by the Altar and be ready to refill any chalices when needed.
- ❑ After Communion, take away the Chalices and anything else the Priest might give you.

Recessional

- ❑ When the final Recessional hymn starts, Crucifer and Torches assemble facing the altar (floor level).
- ❑ When the Priest(s) and Chalicers reverence the cross and turn, turn around (torches turn inward) and slowly process down the isle to the back of the sanctuary.
- ❑ NOTE: The Head Server STAYS in place until after the Dismissal, then snuffs out the candles, First the

Gospel candle, because "*the Gospel Candle never…..what?*" then the Head Server walks back with the taper to the back of the church.

- ❑ Finally, take off your vestments in the Sacristy, being careful to put everything back neatly on the hangers, etc. If anything has wax on it, tell the Acolyte Coordinator.

Now You are Done! Thanks be to God!

We are grateful for your service to our Lord and His Church and thank you for your willingness to join with us in making the worship of God an inspiring experience for all His people. God bless you.

Fr. Robin and Fr. Luke