



St. Patrick of Heatherdowns

*Funeral Mass
Server Handbook
2006*

A Server's Prayer

*O Lord,
You give joy to those who serve
you.
Bless my every action at your
altar,
that I may forget my fears
and serve you well.
Give me a generous heart,
that I may not lose the time
that I spend with you,
but spend it freely in your
presence.
Help me to give you my hands,
my prayers, my life, my all.*

Amen

INTRODUCTION:

Congratulations, you have been chosen to be an altar server at a Funeral Mass. At the Funeral Mass you will assist the family and friends of the deceased to give thanks and praise to God for the life of their loved one.

The role of the altar server is an important one. Therefore it is important to learn all matters concerning your responsibilities during the Funeral Mass. As you perform your role during the Mass, you can help the family in their prayer for their loved one.

THE FUNERAL MASS:

The Mass is many things. It is our main worship where God tells us of his love, reveals the life to which he is inviting us, teaches us how to live as his people in this world, helps us so that we might live as his people and renews and calls us to tell others of his love.

The Funeral Mass especially expresses our faith in Jesus' victory over death and our personal share in that resurrection. It does so through prayers and blessings, through songs and readings, through ceremonies and symbols.

At the Funeral Mass the community gathers with the family to give praise and thanks to God for

Christ's victory over sin and death, to commend the deceased to God's tender mercy and compassion, and to seek strength in a time of grief.

The main parts of the Funeral Mass consist of the following:

1. Reception of the body
2. Liturgy of the Word
3. Liturgy of the Eucharist
4. Final Commendation and Farewell

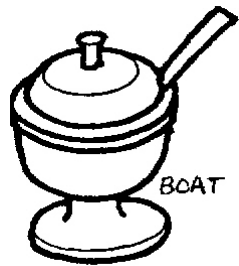
*Through
Death
to Life*



LITURGICAL OBJECTS and VESSELS USED AT THE FUNERAL MASS



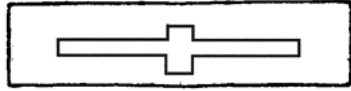
Aspergillum (sprinkler) : An instrument for sprinkling holy water; Used with the pail for holy water.



Boat: A supply container for the incense used in the censer (thurible).



Censer: A vessel for burning incense at ceremonies whose rising smoke symbolizes our prayers for the deceased. Also called a "thurible."



Pall: A sacred white cloth covering placed over the casket that recalls the white garment of the deceased's baptism.



Processional Cross: A mobile cross used to lead processions and recessions of liturgical ministers. It is placed in the sanctuary to signal the presence of the assembled praying community.



Easter Candle: (Paschal Candle) Large candle blessed at the Easter Vigil. Will be placed before the casket during the Funeral service as a reminder that the deceased through their death shares in the victory of Jesus over the powers of darkness.

BASIC INSTRUCTIONS FOR SERVING THE FUNERAL MASS

Normally there are three altar servers assigned for the Funeral Mass. The role of each server will be discussed in each part of the Funeral Mass.

Before Mass:

Servers need to:

1. Arrive 15 minutes before Mass and sign-in on board.
2. Put on an alb that comes to the top of the hard sole /athletic shoe. (No sandals please)
3. Put the bread paten and cruets of water and wine on the gift table.
4. Light the sanctuary candles and the Easter candle.
5. Put the Mass vessels on the credence table:
 The finger bowl and towel.
 The chalice with Purificator and Pall.

The following items might have already been taken care of but check to make sure they have been done:

1. Place the censer stand in the church near the servers seats.
2. The Easter candle should be placed in the center isle of the church at the foot of the sanctuary.
3. Retrieve the censer and the boat from the cupboard in the working sacristy and place them on the counter. Place two coals in the censer but do not ignite them yet.
4. Retrieve the holy water bucket and Aspergillum (sprinkler) from the cupboard in the working sacristy and place them on the counter. Make sure there is holy water in the bucket.
5. Retrieve the Funeral Pall from the drawer in the working sacristy and lay it out on the counter.
6. Place The "Book of Life" and a pen on a stand and set it up in the church.

RECEPTION OF THE BODY

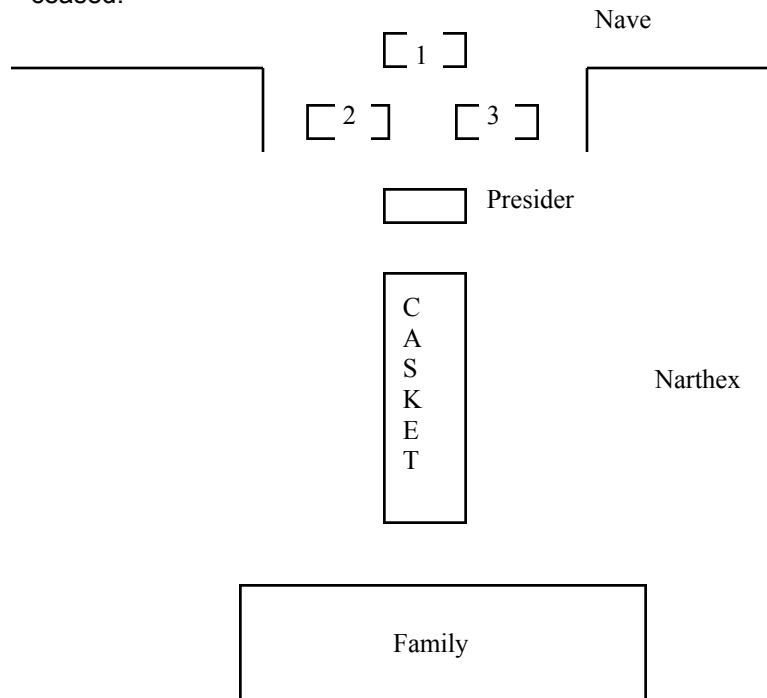
The presider with the altar servers waits in the narthex for the casket and deceased's family to enter the church.

Server 1-Cross Bearer

Server 2-Carries the Funeral Pall

Server 3-Carries the holy water bucket and sprinkler

- The presider and the altar servers for the funeral liturgy greet the family in the narthex as the casket is brought from the hearse.
- The "Sprinkling with Holy Water" and the "Placing of the Pall" are performed in the narthex prior to the entrance procession.
- The family members are invited to place the pall on the casket.
- After the introductory rites in the narthex, the processional cross leads the procession into church followed by the other two servers, the presider, the casket, and the family and friends of the deceased.



INTRODUCTORY RITE

Opening Prayer:

Once the presider has reached the presider's chair he will pray the Opening Prayer. Normally the presider will have the Funeral rite book on the table next to the presider's chair and will read the opening prayer without the services of the server.

However the server should be prepared to hold the book for the opening prayer if needed. If the presider has asked the server to hold the book for the opening prayer, the following procedure is used:

- The presider will wait for the server to bring the Sacramentary to him when he reaches the presider's chair before he says "Let us pray".
- Bring the Sacramentary to the presider closed.
- If the presider should adjust the position of the Sacramentary, the server should hold it in its new position.
- Try to avoid moving the book while the priest is proclaiming the prayer.

NOTE: The server should wait until the prayer is finished and the assembly has responded, "Amen," before returning to his/her seat.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading:

Psalm:

Second Reading:

Alleluia: The server should stand when the presider stands, look to the ambo and listen attentively to the Gospel.

Gospel:

Homily: The server should sit when the presider says, "The Gospel of the Lord." Again, the server is to help model for the assembly. Therefore, they should be listening to the homily and not talking or looking around.

Prayers of the Faithful: **Let us pray....**

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Preparation of the Gifts:

At the end of the prayers of the faithful, the presider says, "grant these our prayers through Christ our Lord, Amen." The congregation is seated.

Server #1 brings the Sacramentary to the altar and server #2 brings the chalice **with Purificator** to the altar.

Server #3 quietly slips out of church via the side isle and goes to the sacristy to prepare the censer. Ignite the two coals in the censer. Once you are sure they are ignited return quietly to the church with the censer and boat. Place the censer on the censer stand near the server seats and return to your seat.

After bringing the Sacramentary and chalice to the altar, servers #1 and #2 go down the main aisle and lead the gift bearers to the front of the altar.

Server #1 stands with the presider to receive the gifts while server #2 proceeds to the credence table to get the finger bowl

and towel. Server #2 stands on the altar side of the baptismal font with the bowl and towel and waits.

The presider receives the gifts from the gift bearers. Server #1 helps the presider receive the gifts, follows the presider to the back of the altar and presents the wine and water cruet to the presider as he prepares the chalice.

After the presider is finished preparing the chalice with the wine and water, server #1 joins server #2 by the baptismal font.

The presider will come to the servers by the baptismal font to wash his fingers. After this, return to your seats.

Eucharistic Prayer:

After the “Holy, Holy, Holy...” kneel on the sanctuary steps near your seats until the “Our Father”.

Lamb of God:

All three servers move to a position on the altar side of the baptismal font and wait to receive Communion.

Once the various communion stations are in place and the distribution of Communion has begun, the servers clear the altar of everything. Remember, you are touching holy vessels and should treat them with respect. Therefore, do not stack or try to carry everything at once. Make several trips if necessary. More than one object in each hand means you need to make another trip.

Family Memorial:

After communion, one of the family members may say a few words about the deceased.

Book of Life:

The presider will explain the “Book of Life” and then invite the family to inscribe their loved one’s name in the “Book of Life”.

Final Prayer:

After a period of silence the presider will stand. Bring the Sacramentary to the presider. See the "Opening Prayer" in the Introductory rite.

Final Commendation and Farewell

The Final Commendation is a final farewell by the members of the deceased family and the gathered community prior to leaving for the cemetery. **The Final Commendation starts immediately after the Final Prayer.**

As soon as the presider completes the Final Prayer and the congregation responds with "Amen", the presider will come to the front of the sanctuary in front of the casket.

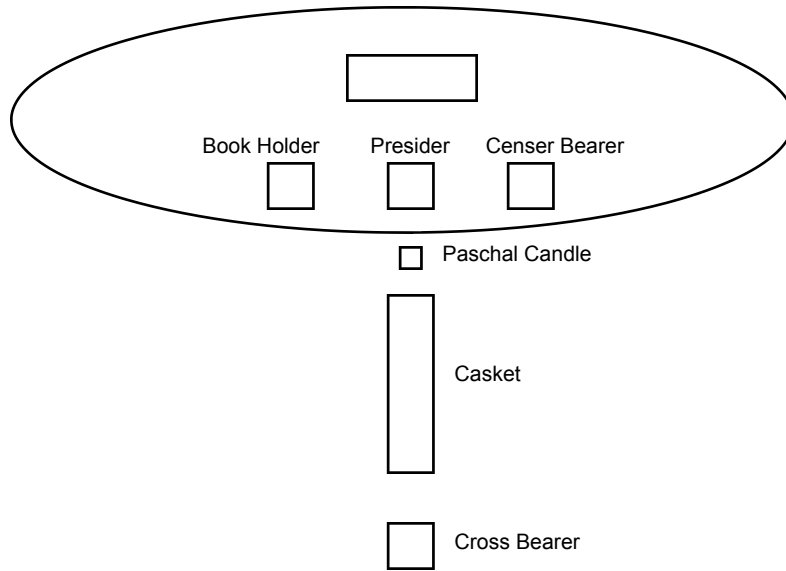
The Cross bearer will retrieve the processional cross from its stand (just like the Sunday and Weekday liturgies) and stand with the cross in the church isle **behind the casket facing the altar**. Stand away from the casket so the presider will have enough room to incense the casket. See diagram on next page.

The other two servers will come into the sanctuary and stand on each side of the presider in the sanctuary. One server will bring the censer and boat. The presider will say some prayers from the Funeral rite book and will then incense the casket.

Incensing the casket:

The server without the censer takes the Funeral rite book from the presider when he hands it to you. The server with the censer will assist the presider by holding the censer high enough so that he may place incense on the hot coals. After the presider has placed the incense on the coals, hand the censer to the presider and take the boat from him.

Remain standing in your places in the sanctuary as the presider incenses the casket. When complete, the presider will hand the censer back to the server. The other server will hand the rite book back to the presider. Remain in your places in the sanctuary as the presider continues with the Final Commendation prayers.



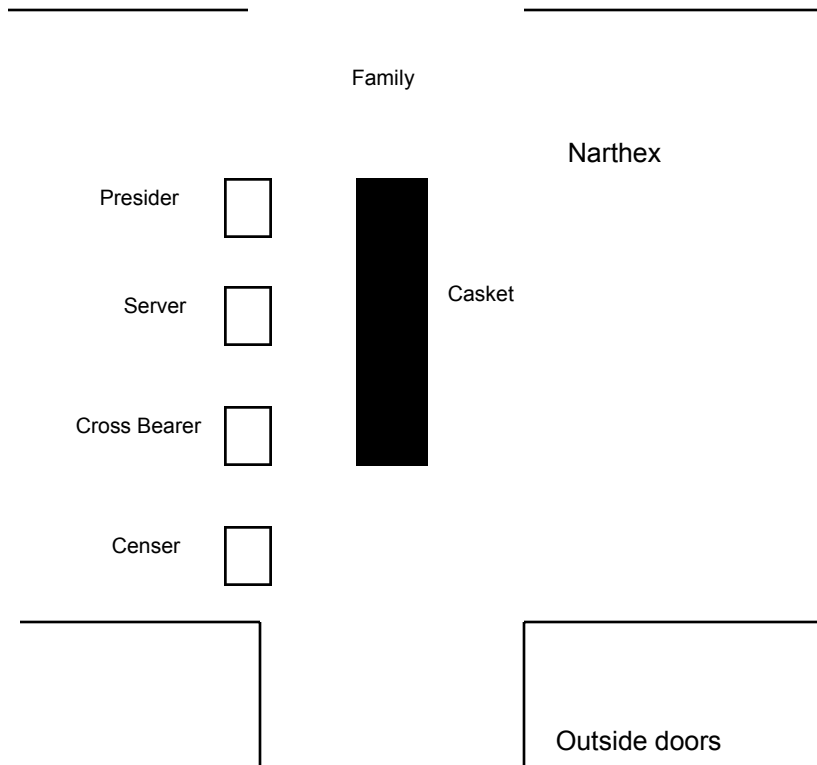
Recessional:

The Final Commendation concludes when the presider says the following words: "In peace let us take our (brother/sister) to (his/her) place of rest."

The Cross bearer, servers and presider will lead the casket and the family out of church into the narthex. Do not start the procession until the presider turns toward the back of the church. All turn at once.

Removal of the Pall:

Once the procession reaches the narthex, the Cross bearer, servers and presider stand to one side as the Pall is removed from the casket. The server who has a free hand should accept the Pall from the morticians after it has been removed. Remain in your positions in the narthex until the casket and the family have left the church. See diagram below.



AFTER MASS

1. Bring everything back to the working sacristy and put it on the counter so it can be washed and put away by the ministers.
2. The hot coals in the censor should be taken outside and placed on the top of the cigarette tray by the small door near the church office.
3. Extinguish the candles.
4. Hang up your alb.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

- After you light the candles, extinguish the taper by sliding it into the tube. Immediately push the taper back out of the tube or it will stick inside the tube.
- When using the taper, be careful. Keep it away from your alb and hair.
- Before Mass and before you leave the sacristy, check your appearance in the mirror.
- When you serve, be conscious of what you choose to wear. The light colored alb does not cover up bright colors and lettered shirts.
- Although tennis shoes are permitted, please try not to wear them if possible for a funeral. Show respect for the family by wearing your best shoes and clothes. Dress the way you would if it were one of your family members that had died.

