

CHRIST THE KING CHURCH,

KNOCKNAGREE,

ALTAR SERVERS

HANDBOOK



WELCOME,

You have been invited to be part of a very special group in our Knocknagree church as Altar servers.

Being an altar server is an important part of serving God and his people at mass. We, at Knocknagree Church, are delighted you are part of our team and are very thankful to you for giving your time. Your main job will be helping the priest at Mass.

This role is open to the boys and girls from 4th Class to 6th class that have received the sacrament of Communion. It takes time and patience to be an Altar server, but do not give up.

Each time you altar serve at mass, we will be there to guide you, and you will become a brilliant role model for your younger peers as your confidence grows.

Some of the responsibilities may include,

- Carrying of the cross and processional candles
- Assisting the Holy water, during a blessing,
- Bringing the sacred vessels to and from the altar.
- Ringing the bell during Mass.
- Carry the incense and censer.
- Assisting the priest as necessary throughout the mass.
- Responding to prayers and responses of the priest along with the congregation.

What training is given to the Alter servers?

- Getting dressed in Alb, cincture and cross.
- Getting to know the Mass parts and meanings.
- Understanding various objects used in Mass, their names and use.
- Understanding the different aspects of celebrations.
- Learning the proper decorum and attire when serving Mass, and their functions.
- Following instructions given by a member of the sacristy.
- At all times, whether you are going on or coming off the Altar, Please ensure that you genuflect or bow as a mark of respect.

Commitment of the Altar servers.

- You commit yourself to be at all training sessions.
- You commit yourself to be a team player.
- You commit yourself to swapping with another altar server if you are not able to attend on your rota day. This can be communicated on our WhatsApp's group
- (Contact Denise Fitzpatrick to be added to this group)
- You commit to show respect for yourself, others, and the church at all times.

Minister at Mass

To minister means to serve. We are privileged to have the following people serve the community in helping Fr Pat and other Celebrants to make our Mass so enjoyable.

1. Priest (Celebrant) – this is person that presides over the celebrations of Mass.
2. Altar servers – young members of our community who help the priest by taking things from the credence table to the altar and also by leading the community in prayer.
3. Readers - the person who reading the first two readings, responsorial psalm, and gospel acclamation,
4. Sacristan – the person that usually makes sures that everything is in place around the altar.
5. Eucharist ministers – person who assists in distributing communion host.
6. Offertory Collection – the person(s) responsible for collecting the offertory donations i.e. Money throughout the Mass,

Alter servers Vocabulary Words

1. **Altar servers** – Young members of our parish who have duties such as lighting candles, carrying a cross and candle, ringing the bells, taking, and bringing things from the credence table.

2. **Altar** – Special table used for Mass, This can also be called the Tabernacle, Every time we pass this or are in front of the Altar, we bow or genuflect, as this is a sign of respect.



3. **AMBO** - The stand where readings and homily take place.



4. **ASPERGILLUM** - The holy water sprinkler.

5. **BELLS** – Usually rung at consecration.

6. **CHALICE** – The cup that holds the wine which is consecrated at Mass.



7. **Ciborium** – A large cup-like container with a cover. It holds the hosts.

8. **Corporal** – The linen cloth spread on the altar. The Chalice and ciborium are placed on it.

9. **Credence table** - The table near the altar, where wine, water, chalice and ciborium are kept until needed.

10. **Crucifix** – A Cross with the figure of Christ on it. This holds a place of honour at the back wall of the altar, in Knocknagree.



11. **Cruets** – Small pitchers that hold the water and wine used at mass. These may also be known as the gift of bread and wine, and may on occasion be brought up the altar, by members of the community.

12. **Finger towel** - Cloth that is used to dry the priest's hands during mass.

13. **Host** – This is the bread used for Eucharist. It is usually in the form of a wafer given at communion time.

14. **Incense boat** – A metal container that holds incense which is used during mass at special times of the year.

15. **Lectionary** – A book from which scriptures are read at mass.

16. **Liturgy of the Eucharist** – one of the two main parts of the mass, It is at this time that bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus.

17. **Liturgy of the word** – One of the two main parts of Mass, God speaks through the prophets, the Apostles, the life and teachings of Jesus and the priests.

18. **Roman Missal** – A large book that contains all the prayers the priest uses during Mass.

19. **Purificator** – A linen cloth used for wiping the chalice.

20. **Pyx** – This is a small container used to carry the Sacred gluten free Host.

21. **Thurible** – Also called a censer, is a metal container extended from a chain in which charcoal and incense are burned for liturgical ceremonies.

Serving at mass

Before Mass.

- Arrive at least 15 minutes before mass, into the Sacristy.
- Sign into the safeguarding logbook.
- Put on your Alb (and cincture) checking what colour, with a member of the sacristy.
- Decide with your team, who is going to be leader, and what jobs everyone has.
- Check is there any gifts or changes to the mass.
- Say the before prayer with Fr Pat (or the attending priest).
- The leader to get the Processional cross, who will become the cross bearer.
The other team members to get the candles (Candle bearer), line up and be ready to enter the church.

Introductory Rite,

- As you walk from the porch to the altar, do with slowly and with confidence, having the leader in front with about 2 steps behind the lit candles held by the other members.
- The cross bearer (in the middle) and the candle bearers (stand either side of the cross bearer) meet in front of the altar.
- When Fr Pat (or the attending priest) has arrived behind, The Leader is to whisper "1, 2,3, bow" and then all will genuflect in front of the altar.
- Proceed up on the altar, placing the candles and cross into the stands. Do not extinguish the candles.
- If there are fewer than 3 altar servers, please note the crucifix will not be used.
- Go in front of your seats but remain standing as mass begins.

Liturgy of the word;

- Pay attention to the readings, followed by the Gospel acclamations. At the end of the Gospel acclamation (Alleluia), The Candle bearers are to get the candles ready.
- When Fr Pat (or the attending priest) proceeds to the Ambo, follow and stand at either side of the Ambo, facing each other, holding the Candles with two hands at chest level. Once the Gospel
- has been said and Fr Pat (or the attending priest) begins the Homily, you may place the candles back into the stand and take your seat.

Liturgy of the Eucharist.

- Once Fr Pat (or the attending priest) has finished the prayers of the faithful, it is time for the 2 Altar servers to bring items from the credence table. This includes bringing the ciborium, the Chalice, cruets, finger bowl and finger towel for the preparation of the Altar.
- Once Fr Pat (or the attending Priest) has prepared the Eucharist for blessing, you may bring back the pitcher, bowl, finger towel, water and wine to the credence table, and take your seat.
- As you hear the prayer “ Oh Holy, Holy Lord, God of host.....” Being said or sung, The Leader must take his / her place kneeling in front of the bell.
- Please pay attention to Fr Pat (or the attending priest), as he places his hands over the bread, you ring the bell once,
- When Fr Pat (or attending priest) raises the Chalice, (Body of Christ), Ring the bell 3 times, and finally the Ciborium, (Blood of Christ) Ring the bell 3 times, genuflect and you may return to your seat as the Eucharistic minister come to the altar in preparation for the giving of communion.
- Once the Eucharistic ministers have received communion, Please stand in front of your seats, if you wish to receive Holy communion. Fr Pat or a Eucharistic minister will give you this and then you may take your seat.

Concluding Rite

- When the Eucharistic ministers have completed giving out communion, then 2 Altar servers need to go to the Credence table for the tidy up. This includes bringing the cruet of water, hand towel and water bowl to the altar. When Fr Pat (or attending priest) had cleaned out the Chalice and emptied the ciborium, you may bring everything back to the credence table and take your seat.
- After the final prayer, The leader needs to get the cross and the other 2 Altar servers need to get the candle. Once mass is over, you may go to the front of the Altar, again Cross bearer in the middle, the Candle bears in either side, and Fr Pat (or attending priest) will be behind. The Cross bearer needs to whisper “ 1, 2,3 bow” for the final genuflection. The Cross bearer will lead out of the church, followed by the candle bearers and Fr Pat (or attending priest).

Please remember.

- Altar servers should fold their fingers with fingers pointed upward. This is a sign of greater respect.
- At all times, altar servers should not rush. Your movements should be slow and graceful.
- Betty, Nuala, or Denise will be sitting up near the front, and will be there to guide you. If you make a mistake, don't worry about it.

Well done all and again, thank you for your time.