



Templars Altar Serving Plan

Directions: Use the left column to capture how the Mass is currently celebrated at your parish and the right to indicate the items you would like to implement. Add any additional information to more accurately reflect the norms for your parish. When the Altar Serving Plan is complete, present it to your pastor for his approval. Then, train all of the chapter brothers and commit the plan to memory. If you think of any items that are not included, email us at john@templarsorder.org.

Before Mass

	Current	Proposed
Prepare the Thurible and Check Incense	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Check the Missal - Ribbons in place for: Collect & Preface (Solemn Blessing if desired)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Light the Candles & Check processional candles / torches	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Check the Chalice and Credence Table	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bring Gifts to the back of the Church	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Procession

Thurifer and boat bearer approach priest who fills the censor (GIRM 120). [If no incense is ever used, leave this blank].	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Book bearer hands the priest a hymnal, open to correct page	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thurifer + Boat (2 servers who hold the incense) OR Thurifer + Boat (1 server who holds both incense and boat)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crucifer (GIRM 188)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Procession cont.

Current Proposed

Acolytes (two, with candles flanking or directly behind processional cross) (GIRM 188, 189)

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Book Bearer (who does not process with Roman Missal) (GIRM 189)

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Additional Servers (if any):

Bow to the altar (a symbol of Christ) before entering the sanctuary. Those who carry something in hand, plant their feet at the step, nod head only (GIRM 49, 122).

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- Alternative: If the Blessed Sacrament is present in or near the sanctuary, a genuflection is made before entering sanctuary (GIRM 274) and as the procession leaves at the end of Mass (but not during Mass).
- Incensing the Altar (priest takes incense from servers and incenses altar alone) OR
- Incensing the Altar (priest takes incense from servers and incenses the altar while assisted by the Thurifer who holds his sleeve to allow for more freedom in range of motion for incensing)

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Gloria

The servers bow their head during the Gloria for each mention of the name of “Jesus Christ.”

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A server rings the Sanctus bells during Christmas, Holy Thursday, and Easter Vigil.

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Collect / Opening Prayer

When the priest says, “Let us pray,” the book bearer promptly brings the Roman Missal and anticipates the priest (he may want to observe a moment of silent prayer). He bows (simple) before opening/closing the book (GIRM 127).

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Collect / Opening Prayer cont.

Current

Proposed

The book bearer arrives in front of the priest with the Missal open to the Collect for the Mass for the priest to begin the prayer.

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Liturgy of the Word

First Reading (GIRM 128): Ministers (servers) are to pay close attention to the readings during Mass.

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Gospel Acclamation

If incense is used, the thurifer and boat bearer approach the priest at the chair who fills the censor immediately after the second reading is concluded (GIRM 132). Do not hesitate!

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Ministers may form a procession (led by thurifer, boat bearer, then two acolytes with candles) to lead the priest with the Gospel Book in an orderly fashion to the ambo. The procession should be planned and practiced before Mass. Acolytes should face the ambo following the procession (GIRM 133). There is no procession with a lectionary, only with the Book of the Gospels.

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Gospel Acclamation

207. Brothers are to listen attentively to the words of the homily.

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Profession of Faith

All bow deeply at “by the power of the Holy Spirit he was born of the Virgin Mary and became man” (GIRM 137).

Current

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Proposed

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All genuflect at these words on the solemnities of Christmas and the Annunciation (GIRM 137).

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Liturgy of the Eucharist

Preparation of Gifts

Crucifer leaves sanctuary with a nod (if it is the custom of the parish) and proceeds to back of church to escort gift bearers.

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Book bearer places the Roman Missal on the altar (GIRM 190).

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Acolytes (servers) place the chalice on the altar and remove the chalice veil, unfold the corporal properly and center it in the middle of the altar, place paten on corporal and chalice with purificator to the right of the corporal, set the pall to the right side of the corporal, bring to the altar extra chalices and any bread not brought forth in procession, and follow the priest to accept the gifts of bread and wine (GIRM 73, 139, 190).

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Once the gifts have been received, return to the altar, and wait for priest and hand gifts to the priest (do not place the gifts on the altar) (GIRM 75).

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Acolytes bring cruets of water and wine to the priest (GIRM 142). Do not hesitate!

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If incense is used, it is brought to the priest after the bread and the chalice of wine are offered and the priest has finished his silent prayers. The book bearer should remove the Roman Missal from altar before the incensing (GIRM 75, 144).

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Liturgy of the Eucharist cont.

Current

Proposed

All bow deeply at “by the power of the Holy Spirit he was born of the Virgin Mary and became man” (GIRM 137).

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When the priest is finished incensing the altar, he returns the censor to the thurifer who, in turn, incenses the priest (three sets of two swings), bows, incenses concelebrants (three sets of two swings) and then moves to the front of the sanctuary and incenses the people (three simple swings). The thurifer may have to signal the congregation to stand before the incensing (GIRM 75, 144).

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For ablutions—the washing of the priest’s hands—one acolyte brings the cruet of water and lavabo bowl (standing on the right), the second acolyte brings the finger towel (standing on the left) (GIRM 76, 145).

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Everyone stands and prays with “Pray, brethren, that my sacrifice and yours...” (GIRM 146).

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Eucharistic Prayer

Servers kneel attentively (with or without kneelers) with hands folded.

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At the “Holy, Holy, Holy...” the thurifer and boat bearer (and candle bearers, if applicable, from wherever they may be waiting) uniformly move to before the altar and kneel upon the sanctuary steps (from left to right at the altar steps facing the altar: acolyte with candle, thurifer, boat, and acolyte with candle).

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At the epiclesis, directly before the prayer of consecration, the thurifer opens the censor and the boat bearer fills the thurible with incense. During the consecration, the thurifer incenses the host and chalice as the priest elevates them (three sets of three) (GIRM 150).

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Liturgy of the Eucharist cont.

Current

Proposed

Following the Great Amen, the acolytes, thurifer, and boat bearer withdraw back to sacristy or credence area.

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Sanctus bells may be rung at the epiclesis, the elevation of the host, and the elevation of the chalice (GIRM 150). If it is the local custom, the bells may be rung when the priest consumes the Precious Blood.

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Our Father

Servers remain in their position with hands folded (GIRM 152-153).

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Communion Rite

Sign of Peace should be offered to the priest first, then to your fellow ministers (GIRM 154).

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Book bearer removes the Roman Missal from the altar.

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Once the priest has received the Sacred Host in Holy Communion, ministers “fall in line” behind the altar or another appropriate place to receive Holy Communion. All servers must bow before receiving Holy Communion (GIRM 160)

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If communion plates are being used, there ought to be enough for each server to assist every Eucharistic Minister of Holy Communion. The servers handling the communion plate should receive Holy Communion first (on the tongue) holding the plate for himself, and then remaining by the priest to assist with the plate for each other server.

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Liturgy of the Eucharist cont.

Current

Proposed

Each server with a communion plate should accompany a Eucharistic Minister of Holy Communion to the appropriate place and position himself unobtrusively near the EMHC holding the plate under the chin or hands of each of the faithful receiving Holy Communion.

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Following Communion, an acolyte (server) brings the cruet of water to the priest if the chalice is to be purified at the altar (GIRM 163).

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The acolyte returns with the chalice veil (if one is used) and waits to return with chalice.

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Prayer After Communion

A period of silent prayer may be observed (GIRM 164).

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When the priest says “Let us pray,” the server brings the Roman Missal to the priest and bows before presenting the book as well as before leaving (GIRM 165).

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Concluding Rite

All form recessional line in main aisle (and turn back toward the altar) to await solemn bow or genuflection. Turning toward his partner, the ministers recess with dignity and decent pace.

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Server's Blessing

It is a custom in many parishes for the ministers who have just served at the altar to promptly kneel in front of the doors before exiting the church to receive the priest's blessing.

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The crucifer may say, “Father, may we have your blessing?”

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