

# **HOW TO SERVE**

**IN SIMPLE, SOLEMN, AND  
PONTIFICAL FUNCTIONS**



**St. John Berchmans**  
**Patron of Altar Boys**  
**1599-1621**

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Dom Matthew Britt, O.S.B.

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*Introibo ad altare Dei.*

*Ad Deum qui laetificat juventutem meam.*

I will go unto the altar of God.

To God, who giveth joy to my youth.



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## Preface

AMONG THE FEW THINGS accomplished by the writer during the course of a somewhat busy but ill-spent life has been the preparation of three manuals or guides for servers, each of which has been independent of its predecessor. The first, a *Vade Mecum for Servers*, was published in 1895; the second, a *Ceremonial for Altar Boys*, appeared in 1898. Both of these were written several years before the author's ordination. The third booklet is now making its bow, and it is dedicated to the young men in our preparatory seminaries, with the hope that some day one of them may write a better book.

Since the earlier handbooks were published, and they were pioneers in the field, many changes have taken place that affect a work of this kind. Furthermore, many new and exhaustive ceremonials, written in a systematic and scientific manner, have appeared in Latin, English, French, and German. In the preparation of the present work extensive use has been made of such recent literature. Regarding Pontifical ceremonies, and Mass in particular, a special word must be said. The scholarly works of Stehle and Schober have been followed throughout. Each of these authors explains separately and concisely, but with sufficient detail, the duties of each minister in the sanctuary, both sacred and inferior.

It is not claimed that the method of serving as set forth in this manual is, in every case, the only correct one. Any-

one who is familiar with more than one book on the subject need not be told this. The rubrics provide a fair outline of the servers' duties; liturgical writers supply the details. The rubrics are often quite general, and at times none too clear. As a result they are not always interpreted in the same way. Custom, too, plays its part, even where there is no ambiguity in the law. From these and from similar sources arise the differences that are found in approved authors. Any approved author may be safely followed.

It need scarcely be said, and the fact is here stressed, that the present work contains considerable matter and many references that are not intended for the servers but for those who instruct them or provide for their needs in the sanctuary. This is especially true of some of the sections included under "Common Ceremonial Actions." Thus, to mention only two, the section on Vesture will be of interest to the members of the altar society, if it be their duty to provide appropriate garments for the servers. Nor is any apology required for the much-needed section on the little silvery-toned Altar Bell which is being so generally replaced by a variety of unrubrical, clangorous instruments that distract the recollected and make the angels weep.

The author expresses his grateful appreciation to his confrere, Dom Raphael Heider, O.S.B., for the cover design and for the twenty-eight drawings and other illustrations that were made by him especially for this book. Acknowledgment must also be made to the Rev. Vincent A. McCormick, S.J., of Woodstock College, for the frontispiece, an unusual picture of St. John Berchmans, the patron saint of altar boys.

For information concerning the St. John Berchmans' Sanctuary Society, its origin, rules, indulgences, etc., see the *Manual of the St. John Berchmans' Sanctuary Society* published by the Apostleship of Prayer (1927).

The author will be deeply grateful to anyone who will point out anything in the present work that is contrary to either the letter or the spirit of the rubrics. However,

this implies no request for the reader's preference in matters that are variously interpreted by approved authors.

### **PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION**

The present edition contains only minor changes, which were made for the sake of clearness. Section 34, on page 35, is new; the one on Mass pictures has been deleted since the pictures, published abroad, are no longer obtainable. A work of great value on the rubrics has just been published. Its author, the Rev. J. B. O'Connell, is the editor and reviser of Fortescue's *The Roman Rite*. The work is an exhaustive one in three volumes on *The Celebration of Mass* (Bruce, Milwaukee, 1941). It compares favorably with such standard works as Bishop Van der Stappen's *Sacra Liturgia*. It is a storehouse of rubrical knowledge for priests, seminarians, masters of ceremonies, and others.

## Key to Symbols

	Bishop.		Torch-bearer.
	Celebrant wearing a chasuble.		Assistant in cope.
	Celebrant wearing a cope.		Assistant priest.
	Deacon.		Assistant deacon.
	Subdeacon.		Crozier-bearer.
	Master of ceremonies.		Miter-bearer.
	Thurifer with censer		Book-bearer.
	Thurifer without censer.		Candle-bearer.
	Cross-bearer whether subdeacon or server.		Server with holy water vessel.
	First acolyte.		Candlestick.
	Second acolyte.		

## Acknowledgments

We wish to thank Fr. Scott Haynes, S.J.C. of the Canons Regular of St. John Cantius, St. John Cantius parish, Chicago, for facilitating the taking of the photographs which appear in this book (Figures 3, 4, 5, 6 and 10). For more information on the Canons Regular of St. John Cantius, please visit [www.canons-regular.org](http://www.canons-regular.org). Thanks go also to Milo Persic, the photographer, as well as to the servers who participated.

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# **HOW TO SERVE**

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## *Chapter 1*

# **Common Ceremonial Actions**

**T**HE MATTERS TREATED under Common Ceremonial Actions are of very great importance. They are the fundamentals of all good serving. Collectively they comprise the chief rules of conduct which Holy Church prescribes for those who minister before the Eucharistic King. Without a knowledge of them no altar boy can edify others by his presence in the sanctuary. What he is here taught will be helpful to him whether he remains a layman or becomes a priest. In the latter event he will have nothing to unlearn in the days of his priestly ministry.

### **1. Conduct**

An altar boy enjoys a distinct privilege in being allowed to serve at the altar. Every server is a page in God's house. This being the case, his conduct must be above reproach. In the sanctuary he must be reverent, thoughtful, and attentive. Nor will he ever be an occasion of distraction, much less of scandal, to others. A lack of reverence for sacred things is one of the great sins of the age. Unfortunately, at times it finds its way into the sanctuary, where by contrast it becomes extremely conspicuous.

### **2. Cleanliness**

No altar boy with a sense of self-respect would enter the home of a friend knowing that his face and hands are

dirty, his hair uncombed, and his shoes unpolished. Nor will the same boy neglect these proprieties when he enters the house of his dearest Friend, the sanctuary of the Living God.

An altar boy should be scrupulously neat and clean. And this cleanliness should extend not only to his own person but to everything in the sacristy and in the sanctuary. Special attention should be paid to cassock and surplice, the censer, charcoal, match stubs, candlesticks, and to the lighting of candles on the altar.

### 3. Attention

The server should pay strict attention to the Mass he is serving, and no attention whatever to anything else that is going on in the church, not even to a Solemn High Mass that is being celebrated at another altar. This applies even to such parts of another Mass as the Elevation or the Communion of the faithful.

Attention also implies that the server unite himself in thought and action as closely as possible to the priest whose Mass he is serving. When the priest makes the sign of the cross on himself during the prayers at the foot of the altar, at the Introit, at the end of the *Gloria* and *Credo*, at the beginning of each Gospel, and after the *Sanctus*, the server also signs himself. Nor should he neglect to bow his head when he hears the Holy Name of Jesus read or sung. The degree to which this union with the priest can be carried depends upon the age of the server and the amount of instruction he receives. With young servers these matters should not be too greatly stressed.

### 4. Vesture

The proper dress for any server is a black cassock and a plain linen surplice.

**a) The Cassock.** While there is no rubric forbidding the use of red cassocks, their use violates the spirit of the

liturgy as does the use of cinctures, birettas, and the vesting of altar boys as miniature prelates. The sanctuary is not a stage.<sup>1</sup>

**b) Putting on the Cassock.** In putting on the cassock the server first puts his right arm into the right sleeve, then his left arm into the other sleeve. Then, and this is most important, he buttons all the buttons, not merely a part of them. It need hardly be said that the cassock should fit the server, that it should be neither too long nor too short. Nor should it be torn, wrinkled, wanting in buttons, or spattered with wax.

**c) The Surplice.** There are certain kinds of surplices that are not in keeping with the spirit of the liturgy. Among these are the lace surplice, the pleated surplice, and the short surplice of whatever material it may be made. No altar boy is more becomingly vested than one who has on a simple, long, linen surplice, immaculately clean. Moreover, it is preferable that it should have a wide opening at the neck where the fabric is neatly gathered. It is immaterial whether the opening be square or circular in shape. The surplice should have no slit down the front, no ribbons, strings, hooks, or buttons.<sup>2</sup>

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1. "Cassocks of altar boys should be black. It is fitting that a boy serving Mass should wear the clerical garb, which consists, for all clerics who are not prelates, of a black cassock and a white surplice." *Amer. Eccl. Review*, Dec., 1932, p. 644.

"The common dress for all servers," says Fortescue, "and for all who assist at any function in choir is a black cassock and a white linen surplice." *The Roman Rite*, p. 11.

"The use of red for such cassocks and accessories," says Dom Roulin, "dates from the nineteenth century and no earlier, and however attractive red cassocks may be to some, and distracting to others, they do not really harmonize well with the dignity of Christian worship. As ministers of the altar the servers have dignity enough from their office without these red vestments; and I believe that both for them and for choir-boys the true and proper vestments are the black cassock and the full surplice." *Vestments and Vesture*, p. vi.

2. "It is astonishing," says Fortescue, "how modern the little cotta (surplice) to the waist is. Illustrations of . . . the eighteenth century still show long full surplices without lace; and France and Germany have never brought the surplice above the knee. I need hardly point out that artistically the beauty and dignity of this garment are entirely a matter of long full folds. A long surplice falling in folds, with wide sleeves — one, in short, made according to St. Charles's rules — is an exceedingly handsome garment." *Vestments of the Roman Rite*, p. 110. See especially Dom Roulin's *Vestments and Vesture* (Herder), pp. 29–35. In it will be found a good account of the surplice and several illustrations of both correct and incorrect models. Every ladies' altar society should have a copy of this book.

**d) Putting on the Surplice.** To put on the surplice properly, the server holds it with one hand at the top, and with the other he opens it from below. Then placing both hands in the opening he passes it over his head and onto his shoulders. He then puts his right arm into the right sleeve, and his left arm into the other. He carefully adjusts the garment so that it will hang properly about his person.

In taking off the surplice, the server withdraws his left arm from its sleeve; then, lifting the left side of the surplice over his head, he withdraws his right arm. In putting on or removing the surplice haste should be avoided.

## 5. The Sign of the Cross

To make the sign of the cross properly, the server holds his left hand open and extended against his breast. It is held a little below the breast, but not too low. Then with the right hand also extended, with the fingers joined and the palm facing the server, he touches with the tips of the fingers his forehead, breast, left shoulder, and lastly his right shoulder. The lines of the cross should be traced fully and deliberately, not hurriedly and thoughtlessly. The rubrics prescribe a generous-sized cross, not a niggardly one.

If the words accompany the sign, they are distributed thus: At the words *In nomine Patris* he touches his forehead; at *Filii* his breast just above his left hand; and while passing the hand from the left to the right shoulder he says *et Spiritus Sancti*. Joining his hands, he says *Amen*.

At the beginning of each Gospel the server makes three small signs of the cross on his forehead, lips, and breast. The left hand is held as above. The right is extended with the palm facing the server. Then with the soft part of the thumb, not with the nail, he makes the triple sign on his forehead, lips, and breast. The third is made above, not below, the left hand.

## 6. Genuflections

There are two kinds of genuflections, simple and double. A simple genuflection is made by touching the floor with the right knee near the left heel. The hands are kept joined before the breast. They must never rest upon the knee nor upon any other object. No bow of any kind is made. This genuflection must not be prolonged; the knee must not remain resting on the floor. In making this genuflection, either too great haste or too great slowness is equally improper.

A double genuflection is made by kneeling on both knees and making a moderate bow. This bow is explained in the following Section.

There is an important decree<sup>3</sup> concerning genuflections that are to be made before an altar on which the Blessed Sacrament is not reserved. It applies to servers in all Masses whether they be read or sung.

The following quotation contains a translation of the decree and an opinion regarding its application to us. "The decree of Nov. 23, 1906, is the only rule to be observed now, even in this country. Therefore 'the minister serving Mass at the altar on which the Blessed Sacrament is not reserved, should genuflect on one knee on arriving at the altar, as often as he passes before the middle of the altar, and on retiring from the altar.'"<sup>4</sup>

## 7. Bows or Inclinations

There are three kinds of bows, which may be conveniently designated by their abbreviations. Thus bow P stands for profound bow; bow M for moderate bow; and bow H for simple bow, which is a bow of the head only.

**a) The Profound Bow, Bow P.** This bow is made by bending the head and body so low that if the hands were extended it would be possible to touch the knees with the

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3. S.R.C. 4193, 1, Nov. 23, 1906.

4. *Amer. Eccl. Review*, Dec., 1932, p. 643.

tips of the fingers. As this bow is made only while standing, there is no instance, not even during the *Confiteor*, when an altar boy makes it.<sup>5</sup>

**b) The Moderate Bow, Bow M.** This is marked inclination of the head and shoulders, but as the name implies, it is less low than the preceding bow. This is the bow that a kneeling person makes while reciting the *Confiteor*. One who is standing makes a profound bow.

**c) The Simple Bow, Bow H.** This is made by bending the head only. By some this bow is subdivided into profound, medium, and slight. Unless otherwise specified, the term *bow H*, throughout this book, signifies a profound bow of the head. It is very common. It is the proper salutation to make to the cross in the sacristy, to the choir or clergy, to the celebrant, and before and after incensing anyone.

## 8. Bows to the Choir or Clergy

Since most altar boys have no idea of what is meant by the term *choir* as used in the rules given below, a brief explanation of it will not be out of place. In some churches, where there are a number of clergy, as in religious communities, the members occupy seats or stalls either in the sanctuary or near the sanctuary. These stalls are arranged so that the occupants face one another, one half being at the Gospel side, the other half at the Epistle side. Theoretically these should do all the singing that is to be done; practically, however, they may do only some of it, or none at all. For ceremonial purposes the terms *choir* and *clergy* may be regarded as synonymous. The term *choir* in no sense refers to the body of singers that occupies the gallery above the front entrance to the church. No attention is to be paid to them.

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5. S.R.C. 4179, 1. See Callewaert, p. 30; Wapelhorst, 97, 5; 131, 4; Fortescue, p. 24.

If there is a liturgical choir present, the servers bow to it as indicated in the rules given below. The purpose of rules *a* and *b* is to make clear which should come first, the bows to the choir or the genuflection to the altar. Rules *c* and *d* state which side of the choir one should bow to first, the Gospel side or the Epistle side. By *function* is meant Mass, Vespers, etc.

a) On entering the sanctuary at the beginning of any function, if the celebrant and servers have to pass through the choir before reaching the altar, they bow to the clergy at the entrance of the stalls and genuflect before the altar when they reach it.<sup>6</sup>

b) But if they do not have to pass through the choir in order to reach the altar, as is the case in most of our American churches, they first genuflect before the altar and then bow to the choir or clergy.<sup>7</sup>

c) At the beginning, and at the end, of any function a bow is made first to those at the Gospel side, and then to those at the Epistle side. But if, by any chance, the greater dignitary should be at the Epistle side, a bow is made first to that side.

d) During any function, as before the singing of the Epistle and Gospel in Solemn High Mass, and after the *Aperi Domine* in Vespers, a bow is made first to the side of the choir from which one turns or departs, and secondly to the side toward which one is to go. No regard is paid to "the side of greater dignity."<sup>8</sup> The rule has many applications.

e) Whenever the thurifer, either alone or with the torch-bearers, enters or leaves the sanctuary during any function, he first genuflects before the altar, and then bows to the choir or clergy.

6. *Caer. Ep.* XVII, 1.

7. *Caer. Ep.* XXX, 1. The directions given in most of our ceremonials regarding rules *a* and *b* above are, to say the least, misleading. The misunderstanding arises from the two contradictory directions given in Chapters XVII and XXX of the *Caeremoniale Episcoporum*. The solution given above is taken from the *Ephemerides Liturgicae*, XIV, 1900, p. 369, which solution is repeatedly referred to by Van der Stappen. The term rendered "pass through" above, may also be rendered simply "pass" or "pass by," owing to the different places a choir may occupy. See the article on "Choir" in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*.

8. *Caer. Ep.* Lib. I, XVIII, 13; Fortescue, p. 216; Callewaert, p. 23.

f) While the Blessed Sacrament is exposed, no bows are made to the choir or to anyone else, regardless of his rank or dignity.<sup>9</sup>

g) No bows are made to anyone from the Consecration till Communion in any Mass.

h) When the bishop of the diocese is present in the sanctuary, a bow is made to him, but no bows are made to the choir.<sup>10</sup>

## 9. Postures of the Body

Under this heading are treated such things as enter into a server's general deportment in the sanctuary. When a server does not observe them it is probably an indication that in his training the following rules have not been sufficiently stressed. In such matters, however, extremes must be avoided. It is equally improper for a server to be careless and slovenly in what he does, or for him to be ridiculously stilted and artificial in his actions.<sup>11</sup>

**a) Standing.** When standing the server always faces the altar when he can do so without violating any other rule. He stands naturally and with his hands folded, with his head erect, and with his eyes directed toward the altar or modestly cast down. He genuflects whenever the priest does. Any exception to this rule will be found in the proper place.

**b) Kneeling.** The server kneels facing the altar. His hands are joined unless he is holding a book. He should kneel as quietly and as motionless as possible and pay close attention to what is going on at the altar. He should especially avoid looking about him or behind him. The latter is sometimes done by servers who make a great fuss

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9. S.R.C. 2544; 2928, 6.

10. Callewaert, p. 23.

11. See Martinucci-Menghini, II, pp. 550-551; and Fortescue, p. 35.

about covering their feet with their cassock. It is much more unbecoming for a server to look behind him than it is to kneel with uncovered feet.

**c) Sitting.** While seated he sits erect with his hands resting palms downward on his knees. The knees should be kept close together. The feet must never be crossed. In changing from a sitting to a kneeling position, or from a kneeling to a sitting position, he first stands erect momentarily, and then kneels or sits as the case may be. This rule is frequently violated, and something akin to slouchiness results.

**d) Walking.** There is nothing in a server's general conduct more noticeable than his manner of walking. Here again extremes must be avoided. Hasty walking, and unduly slow walking are alike objectionable. Long strides and short mincing steps are equally out of place in the sanctuary. It is important that a server should hold his head and body erect, and that they should not sway from side to side with his steps. Nor should a server ever attempt to genuflect while walking. Before genuflecting he should first come to a full stop, and stand directly facing the altar. He should never walk backwards or sideways either on the floor or on the steps of the altar, but should first turn fully in the direction in which he is to go.

When two servers are walking together they walk side by side, unless the way is narrow. If the way is narrow, the second, the one at the left, precedes the first. It is never permissible for one server to walk only partly in front of another.

**e) The Eyes.** The eyes are troublesome members. A good server will guard them with care. They should be either modestly cast down or directed toward the altar. They should never be permitted to wander about the sanctuary nor even beyond the communion rail into the body of the church. Such behavior shows both a want of attention and a very great lack of self-control.

**f) The Hands.** When a server is standing or kneeling, his hands, if not otherwise occupied, are joined palm to palm with the right thumb over the left in the form of a cross. The elbows rest naturally against the sides. The hands, when joined, point upward at an angle of about forty-five degrees.<sup>12</sup> It is equally incorrect to hold the hands upward against the breast, or to hold them so low that they are parallel with the floor. The hands, whether one or both, must never be permitted to hang down at the server's sides.

**g) The Feet.** A server whether kneeling or sitting should never cross his feet. While kneeling, if it be difficult to hold the feet erect and parallel, the heels at least should be kept together.

**h) Striking the Breast.** The breast is struck with the right hand, which is held half open and not clenched in the form of a fist. The server does not strike his breast during the priest's *Confiteor*, nor at the *Nobis quoque peccatoribus*, nor at the *Domine non sum dignus*.<sup>13</sup> The only time that he strikes his breast at the *Domine non sum dignus* is when it is said just before he himself receives Holy Communion.<sup>14</sup> The words, which mean "Lord I am not worthy," apply then to himself. When the priest says them in the Mass, or before giving Communion to the faithful, they apply to the priest or to the faithful, as the case may be.

Servers must not fall into the habit of striking their breasts whenever any word or phrase is repeated three times. Some even carry this so far that they strike their breasts at the words: "O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary!"

**i) Uniformity of Action.** Too great stress cannot be laid on this rule. When two or more servers are to perform any action in common, such as to genuflect, bow, kneel,

12. Van der Stappen, V, p. 3; Wapelhorst, 100.

13. S.R.C. 3535, 3.

14. Van der Stappen, Vol. V, p. 47; Menghini, p. 44.

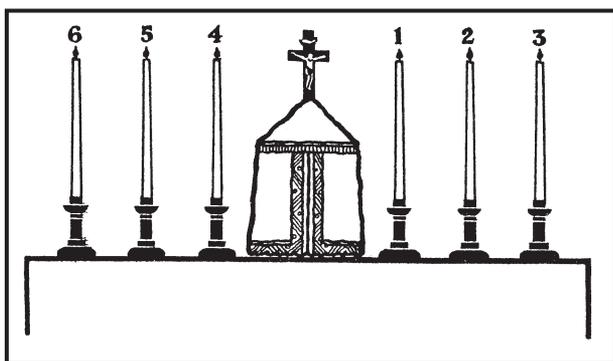
sit, or rise, it must be done at one and the same moment, and in exactly the same manner. This uniformity is obtained only by drilling or rehearsal. In the making of a well-trained group of servers, books have their place, and oral instruction has its place, but without frequent and careful drilling both of them combined will not produce the desired results.

In the timing of an action the second server, the one at the left, should be guided by the first. When several servers are to perform an action in common, one of them should give a signal loud enough to be heard by all.

## 10. Lighting and Extinguishing Candles

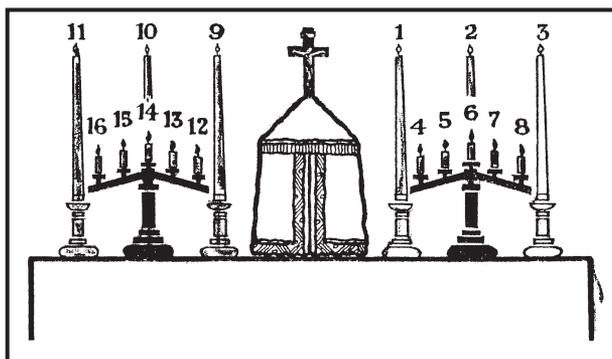
**a) One Row of Candles.** The candles at the Epistle side are lit first,<sup>15</sup> beginning with the one nearest the cross. Then those at the Gospel side are lit in the same manner. They are extinguished in the reverse order. See Figure 1. Rule: In lighting, count forward; in extinguishing, count backward.

**b) Two or More Rows of Candles.** When two or more rows of candles are to be lit, the server first lights



**Fig. 1.** How to light one row of candles.

15. S.R.C. 4198, 9.



**Fig. 2.** How to light more than one row of candles.

all the candles at the Epistle side, then those at the Gospel side. He first lights the top row at the Epistle side, beginning with the candle that is nearest the cross. He lights the second row in the same order, and the third, if there be one. He then lights the candles on the Gospel side in the same manner. The candles are extinguished in the reverse order. See Figure 2.

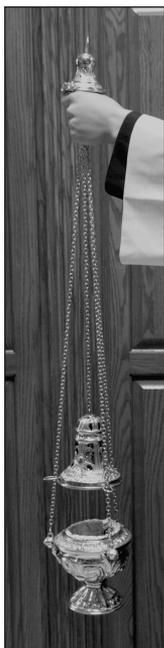
The decree referred to above seems to imply that one server is to light all the candles. But if two servers light them, each lights the candles on one side,<sup>16</sup> beginning with the one nearest the cross in the top row. They extinguish them in the reverse order.

### **c) How to Use Candle Lighter and Extinguisher.**

In lighting candles the taper should be held upward so that it will give forth only a small flame. A small flame will light a candle as quickly as a large one. If the taper is held downward, it will give forth a large flame which may not only cause drops of wax to fall on the altar, but by heating the end of the lighter it may clog it up with molten wax.

In extinguishing candles it is neither necessary nor advisable that the extinguisher be pressed down on the candle, or that it even touch it. If it does, it is apt to

<sup>16</sup> Fortescue, pp. 100 and 103.



**Fig. 3.** How the censer is carried when it does not contain incense.

become partly filled with wax which the candle flames will cause to drip on the altar.

In either lighting or extinguishing candles let the server, above all things, be neat, and let him go about his task with a quiet dignity. It is a pleasure to watch a well-trained server light or extinguish candles. It is an art, and in many places a lost art, owing to the hurry, want of method, and carelessness of the one who lights them.

### 11. The Censer, How Carried

**General Rule.** When the censer does not contain incense it is carried with the left hand; but after incense has been put in, it is carried with the right. The incense boat is held against the breast in the unoccupied hand.

**a) Without Incense.** When the censer does not contain incense it is carried by gripping the chains with the left hand just below the cap or disk at the top. The cover of the censer is raised slightly to permit better ventilation to the charcoal, but the censer is not swung to and fro. See Figure 3.

**b) With Incense.** After incense has been put in, the censer may be carried as described in the preceding paragraph, but with the right hand. On more formal occasions, however, as when the thurifer walks at the head of a procession, or when he goes to the place where the Gospel is to be sung, he employs the following method: He passes his thumb through the ring at the top of the disk, and thus supports the weight of the censer. He puts his middle finger through the other ring which enables him to

raise or lower the cover of the censer. Or, if he prefers, he may reverse the position of his thumb and finger in the two rings. See Figure 4. While the censer contains incense, the thurifer gently swings it to and fro, but this should not cause any swaying motion of his body.<sup>17</sup>

While kneeling or genuflecting, the thurifer holds the censer with one hand at the top; with the other he grasps the chains near the middle.

## 12. Putting Incense into the Censer

When the thurifer brings the censer to the celebrant he hands the boat to the person who is standing at the celebrant's right, whether it be the deacon, the master of ceremonies, or an acolyte. He then takes hold of the chains with his left hand just below the disk, and with his right he draws up the cover about four inches. He brings his left hand to his breast, and with his right he holds the censer at a convenient height for the priest to put incense into it. See Figure 5. After the incense has been blessed, and not before, he closes and lowers the censer. It is important that the thurifer should remember that incense is always blessed except during Benediction and at other times when the Blessed Sacrament alone is to be incensed.

## 13. Presenting the Censer

Two cases are possible: (a) When the censer is given to someone who is not to use it himself. In this case the thurifer holds the chains at the top with his right hand,



**Fig. 4.** How the censer is carried when it contains incense.

17. The rule for carrying the censer is given in the *Caer. Ep.* I, XI, 7, but authorities differ in its interpretation. See Callewaert, pp. 53–54.



**Fig. 5.** How the censer is held while incense is being put into it. Illustration shows positions of priest and thurifer only: see Fig. 16, p. 76.

and thus presents it to the deacon or to the master of ceremonies, who in turn hands it to the celebrant or to the person who is to use it. (b) But when the thurifer gives the censer directly to the celebrant or to the minister who is to use it, he holds the chains with both hands. The right hand grips the top of the chains just under the disk, and the left, the lower part. The upper part is then placed in the celebrant's left hand, and the lower in his right. In both cases haste should be avoided, and the thurifer's actions should be slow, graceful, and

dignified. To handle the censer gracefully requires careful drilling and no little practice.

## 14. How to Incense

The easiest way to learn how to incense a person or an object is by watching someone do it who does it accurately and gracefully. The act of incensing is in no way complicated, but it is one which requires many words to explain.

To handle the censer properly the thurifer takes the top of the chains in his left hand and holds it against his breast. With his right hand he takes hold of the chains a short distance above the cover, passing them between the first and second fingers. The three remaining fingers are held together under the chains to aid in swinging the censer toward the person to be incensed. A profound bow of the head is made both before and after incensing anyone. This bow is made also by the one who is being incensed. While a server is being incensed he should face the person who is incensing him, bowing before and after.

There are two kinds of incensing, one of which consists of a single swing of the censer toward the person incensed, the other of a double swing.

**a) Single Swing.** To incense with a single swing the thurifer raises the censer to the level of his breast, and at the same time he swings the censer out toward the person he is incensing. He then lets it fall to about the level of his knees. This act is repeated according to the number of swings that are to be given.

**b) Double Swing.** To incense with a double swing the thurifer raises the censer to the level of his face, then swings it outward toward the person he is incensing; repeating this outward swing he then lowers the censer. This raising and twice-repeated swinging of the censer constitutes one double swing.

c) The celebrant in Mass and Vespers is incensed with three double swings; the deacon with two; the master of ceremonies with one; each acolyte with one. The people are incensed with three single swings,<sup>18</sup> one down the middle, the next toward the Epistle side, and the last toward the Gospel side. Additional information will be found in the proper place.

## 15. The Boat-Bearer

The duty of the boat-bearer, if there be one, is to carry the incense boat. The rubrics make no provision for such a server, but many of the best authorities mention him.<sup>19</sup> If there is a boat-bearer, there is no reason why he, and not the thurifer, should not present the boat to the deacon and receive it from him. Callewaert everywhere presumes that there is a boat-bearer and that he hands the boat to the deacon and not to the master of ceremonies. Where there is no boat-bearer, authorities are divided. Probably the better method is for the thurifer to hand the boat to the master of ceremonies, who in turn gives it to the deacon. Against this practice, however, one could quote Martinucci and Van der Stappen.

## 16. Presenting Objects

Whenever possible, objects are presented with the right hand and received with the same. When one hand is occupied the other is held open and extended against the breast.

## 17. Kissing Objects Presented to the Celebrant

Three different practices obtain, only one of which should be adopted and followed by all the servers in the same church.

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18. Fortescue, p. 98; Callewaert, p. 202.

19. De Herdt, II, 15; *Baltimore Ceremonial*, p. 143; Geryanti-Merati, I, p. 107; Fortescue, pp. 95-96; Callewaert, 53.

a) A rubric and a decree of the Congregation of Rites direct the server to kiss both cruets at the Offertory.<sup>20</sup> Some authorities omit all reference to the kissing of any other objects by altar boys. Among these are our own *Baltimore Ceremonial* and Wapelhorst. "By custom these oscula (kisses) are frequently omitted altogether by laymen."<sup>21</sup> Outside of seminaries, preparatory and major, this custom has much to commend it.

b) Others direct the server, when presenting an object, to kiss first the object, and then the hand of the celebrant. But when receiving it, he is to kiss first the hand and then the object.<sup>22</sup> The reason for both rules is solely one of convenience.

c) Others again direct the server to kiss whatever object he gives to the celebrant or receives from him, but he is never to kiss the celebrant's hand.<sup>23</sup>

d) In Requiem Masses and in Masses said in presence of the Blessed Sacrament exposed, no objects, not even the cruets, are kissed. On the Feast of the Purification and on Palm Sunday, when receiving a candle or palm, the server first kisses the newly blessed candle or palm and then the hand of the celebrant.<sup>24</sup>

## 18. Presenting the Cruets

The cruets are held at the base, and the handles are turned toward the left, parallel with the end of the altar or the top step. Each cruet is presented with the right hand. This is true whether there is one server or two, as will be explained in the proper place. The server kisses each cruet, both before giving it to the priest, and on receiving it back.<sup>25</sup> This kiss is imparted by merely

20. *Ritus cel.* VII, 4; S.R.C. 4193, 2.

21. Fortescue, p. 82, and especially p. XXIII.

22. This is the rule given in the *Caer. Ep.* I, XVIII, 16. All authorities apply it to the deacon and subdeacon, and some extend it to the inferior ministers or servers. Fortescue, Martinucci, Menghini, Stehle, Schober, and others.

23. De Herdt, I, 299; Callewaert, pp. 44 and 158.

24. S.R.C. 2148, 5.

25. *Ritus celebrandi*, VII, 4; S.R.C. 4193, 2.

touching the handle or the middle of the cruet with the closed lips. They are not kissed in Requiem Masses nor in Masses said in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament exposed. Nor are they kissed in Solemn High Mass, because they are not presented directly to the celebrant but to the subdeacon. Nor are they kissed at the ablutions in any Mass.<sup>26</sup>

## 19. Care of the Cruets

Before filling a cruet it should be drained. If there is the slightest indication that it is not clean it should be thoroughly rinsed out and then drained. The cruets should not be filled to the top. The necks at least should be left empty. After filling a cruet, its foot or base should be wiped dry. A drop of wine or water falling on a starched altar cloth leaves an unsightly stain. After the *Lavabo* the cruets should not be placed on the wet dish but upon the credence table. If it is the server's duty to take care of the cruets after Mass, he should rinse out the wine cruet twice. Both should be drained and the stoppers put in them.

## 20. The Processional Cross

The processional cross, which is really a crucifix with a long staff, is carried at the head of the procession. The figure of our Lord on the cross faces in the direction in which the procession is moving. The cross-bearer is accompanied by two acolytes with lighted candles. These three never genuflect but merely bow their heads when others genuflect. In those processions in which the Blessed Sacrament is not carried the thurifer precedes the cross-bearer.<sup>27</sup>

An archbishop's cross is not carried at the head of the procession but immediately before the archbishop and

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26. Fortescue, p. 87; Van der Stappen, V, p. 47; *Ephem. Lit.*, XI, 1897, p. 609.

27. Van der Stappen, V, pp. 32-35.

his assistants robed in their vestments. The figure on the archbishop's cross always faces the archbishop. In a procession of this kind if it be of some length, there may be two cross-bearers and two sets of acolytes. One cross would then head the procession, and the other would precede the archbishop.

## 21. Acolytes' Candlesticks

**a) How Carried.** When the two acolytes are standing or walking together, or when the subdeacon or cross-bearer is between them, it is prescribed that they hold their candlesticks in the following manner: The first acolyte, the one on the right, holds his candlestick just under the knob with his right hand, and he puts his left under its foot. The second holds his left hand under the knob, and places his right under the foot.<sup>28</sup> Care should be taken that they be held equally high and as nearly straight as possible. See Figure 6. It cannot be stated too strongly that at no time do the acolytes carry candlesticks with unlighted candles in them. There is no exception to this rule. During the singing of the Gospel in Solemn Requiem Masses, and on Holy Saturday and the Eve of Pentecost, the acolytes stand beside the subdeacon with their hands joined before their breast. Their lighted candles remain on the credence table. They stand thus also during the Gospel at the end of the Passion as often as it is sung.

**b) Material and Structure.** According to Bishop Van der Stappen, acolytes' candlesticks should be made of brass or silver and they should have a broad round base. They must have a knob midway between the top and the bottom. Regarding their height, he suggests that they be not less than sixteen inches for ordinary use, and thirty-two for greater feasts and for use in processions.<sup>29</sup>

28. *Caer. Ep.* Lib. I, XI, 8.

29. Vol. III, p. 117. Care should be taken to purchase only such acolytes' candlesticks as are both artistically beautiful and liturgically correct.

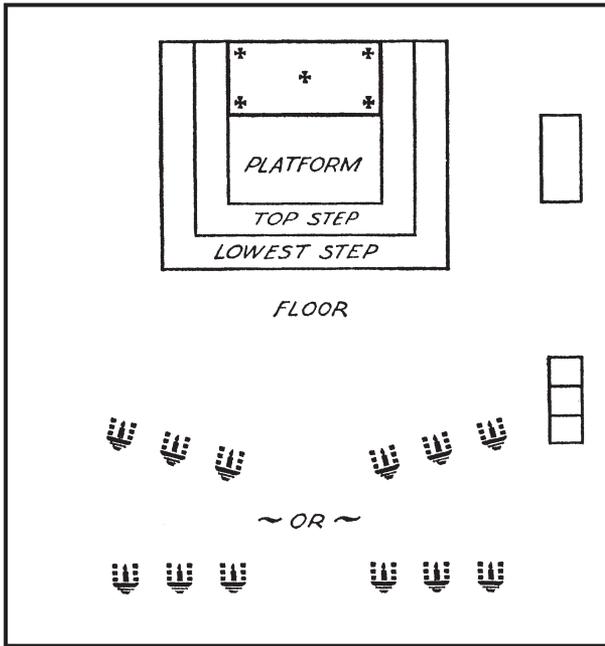


**Fig. 6.** How the acolytes should hold their candlesticks.

## 22. Torch-Bearers: General Remarks

In any sung Mass and in Benediction there may be from two to eight torch-bearers. The number should be even. As eight is the greatest number allowed in a Pontifical High Mass,<sup>30</sup> it may be inferred that a greater number must never be employed in any function. At the beginning of any service they enter the sanctuary together walking two by two behind the acolytes. If they differ in height, the shorter should precede. If they carry torches, they hold them at the middle, and hold them

<sup>30</sup>. *Caer. Ep.* Lib. II, VIII, 68.



**Fig. 7.** The torch-bearers' place in the sanctuary:  
how the altar steps are named in this book.

equally high. Those at the right carry their torches in their right hand, those at the left in their left. The unoccupied hand is held open against the breast. After the genuflection made in common they go to their places. The places they occupy will depend on the shape and size of the sanctuary. They usually form either a single row directly in front of the altar, or two rows, one at each side of the altar.

### 23. Unnecessary Servers

As to the number of servers that should take part in any function, the rubrics are sufficiently explicit, and where they are not, approved authors should be consulted. There is a tendency in many churches to employ a greater number of servers than are required. This is a

mistake. There is no beauty in mere numbers. "It does not add to the dignity of a rite that a crowd of useless boys stands about the sanctuary doing nothing."<sup>31</sup> "Too many servers may easily become a nuisance, nay, even a scandal to the people."<sup>32</sup>

Additional servers, raw recruits, are often placed in the sanctuary to be instructed in the ceremonies by older servers. This practice has nothing to commend it. Aside from the fact that very few altar boys are qualified to instruct others, there remains the additional impropriety of imparting such instruction during Mass or Benediction. Furthermore, this traditional or "handed-down" method of teaching the ceremonies is one of the chief causes of the slipshod serving which so often distracts or scandalizes devout souls and disgraces our sanctuaries.

## 24. The Altar Bell

**a) When Rung.** The rubrics prescribe that a small bell be rung at the *Sanctus* and at the Elevation. It is also permissible to ring the bell at the *Hanc igitur*, when the priest spreads his hands over the chalice.<sup>33</sup> It is likewise an approved custom to ring the bell at the *Domine non sum dignus* in Mass, but it should not be rung when the priest says these words before the distribution of Communion either during Mass or outside of Mass. When rung during Mass it calls attention to one of the principal parts of the Mass. But when it is rung before the distribution of Communion it is not only unnecessary but also meaningless.<sup>34</sup>

**b) When not Rung.** The bell must not be rung during a Low Mass while a High Mass is being sung in the same church. Nor may it be rung even on Sundays either at the altar of exposition or at any other altar in the church during the time the Blessed Sacrament is

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31. Fortescue, p. 34.

32. Augustine, *Liturgical Law*, p. 265.

33. S.R.C. 4377.

34. See *Amer. Eccl. Review*, February, 1905, p. 184.

exposed, as during the Forty Hours' Adoration.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, it should not be rung at a side altar while a wedding or a funeral is taking place. Nor is it rung while the Office is being recited in choir, nor while the celebrant and sacred ministers are on the way to the altar for a Solemn High Mass, or are returning to the sacristy after it, nor, finally, while a procession is in progress in the church.<sup>36</sup>

**c) How Rung.** The bell should be rung softly and gently but sufficiently loud that it can be heard by those in the rear pews. In ringing the bell abruptness and violence should be avoided. A single stroke of the bell is preferable to a prolonged ringing. Thus, at the *Sanctus* three distinct strokes, not too close together, are given; and at the *Hanc igitur* one stroke. At the Consecration the server rings the bell six times in all, once at each of the four genuflections, and once when the priest elevates the Host, and again when he elevates the Chalice. The rubric here permits that the bell be rung but twice, and that continuously from the time the priest begins to elevate the Host or Chalice till he again replaces it on the altar. The former is the better method and the one in general use.

**d) What It Is.** According to the rubrics of the Missal the altar bell is a small hand bell.<sup>37</sup> Nothing can equal in appropriateness a simple, single, sweet-toned bell. Bishop Van der Stappen would tolerate a correctly tuned chime of three or four small bells, but he hastens to add that the single bell prescribed by the rubrics is preferable.<sup>38</sup>

**e) What It Is Not.** Gongs are forbidden.<sup>39</sup> But no less objectionable are chimes of plates or tubes mounted on a board, and so-called electric altar chimes which consist of

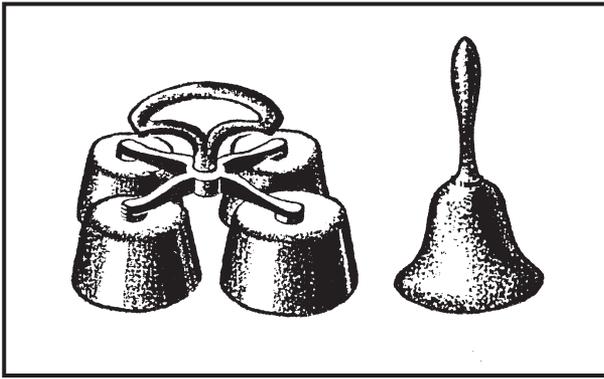
35. S.R.C. 3151, 10 and 3448, 2.

36. De Carpo-Moretti, 449; *Matters Liturgical*, 126.

37. *Ritus cel.*, VII, 8.

38. Vol. III, p. 116. See also *Emmanuel*, June, 1926.

39. S.R.C. 4000, 3. The instrument referred to in the decree resembles our gong.



**Fig. 8.** A permissible bell.

**Fig. 9.** The altar bell prescribed by the rubrics.

tubes operated from a keyboard sunk in the altar step. Such devices savor of the theater, not of the sanctuary.

## 25. The Communion Plate or Paten

Owing to the two different practices that obtain, it is best to treat of the communion plate or paten from the point of view of the one who holds it.

**a) When It Is Held by the Communicants.** According to an Instruction issued by the Congregation of the Sacraments (Mar. 26, 1929), the faithful are to use a metal plate which they hold under their chin while receiving Holy Communion. They pass the plate from hand to hand themselves. The server is not directed to have anything to do with it.<sup>40</sup>

**b) When It Is Held by the Server.** It has long been a custom in this country and apparently in others, for the server to hold an unconsecrated paten under the chin of

40. This Instruction is given in full in *Matters Liturgical*, 3rd ed. Appendix, pp. 9-12; and there also will be found valuable comment on it taken from the *Ephemerides Liturgicae*, 1930, pp. 72-74.

the person receiving Holy Communion. He walks at the right of the priest and holds the paten, not in front of, but about two inches below, the chin of each communicant. It must at all times be kept level so that if minute particles fall on it they will not slide off. The paten must never touch the person of a communicant. On returning to the altar the server goes up to the platform with the priest and places the paten on the altar to be purified.

In answer to a question, the Congregation of the Sacraments (Oct., 1930) declared that the use of the paten as described above is in no way prohibited by the decree regarding the use of the communion plate. "Therefore our altar boys, when serving Mass, may continue to hold the paten while Holy Communion is distributed, provided they are careful to keep it horizontal, lest fragments of sacred particles fall off."<sup>41</sup>

The use of either the plate or paten does not do away with the communion cloth which must still be spread at the altar rail. Such things are merely additional precautions to safeguard the fragments of the sacred particles.

## **26. The Server's Communion: Precedence**

As a general rule the server receives Holy Communion before all others. But this statement requires some qualification to bring it into conformity with two important decrees on the subject.<sup>42</sup> These may be briefly summarized as follows:

a) If the server is the usual altar boy, hence a layman, he receives Communion before other laymen, including Sisters; but he does not receive Communion before a cleric in major orders, minor orders, or before one who has received only the tonsure. Nor does he receive Communion before certain privileged persons who are specifically recognized in the liturgy, such as the bridal couple in a nuptial Mass.

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41. *Amer. Eccl. Review*, Oct., 1931, p. 413.

42. S.R.C. 1074, July 13, 1658; and 4328, June 30, 1915.

b) A server in minor orders receives Communion before other persons in minor orders, but not before those in major orders. The privileged persons referred to above must be given precedence over clerics in minor orders, but not over those in major orders.

c) A layman serving Mass, though not vested in cassock and surplice, receives Holy Communion in the sanctuary, kneeling on the platform of the altar.<sup>43</sup>

When receiving Communion the server holds a cloth, a card, or the communion plate or paten under his chin. He must not use the lower part of the priest's chasuble or stole for a communion cloth.<sup>44</sup>

## 27. Offering Holy Water

If there is a holy water font or stoup at the sacristy door, it is customary on entering the sanctuary for the server to dip his fingers into it and offer his outstretched fingers to the priest. He makes the sign of the cross and proceeds. If there are several servers, as in High Mass, those who are next to the font take holy water, and each one presents it to his companion. If there is no deacon, the last server presents it to the priest.

If the *Asperges* takes place, holy water is not taken by anyone at the sacristy door. The *Asperges* takes place before the principal Mass on Sunday, and on no other day.

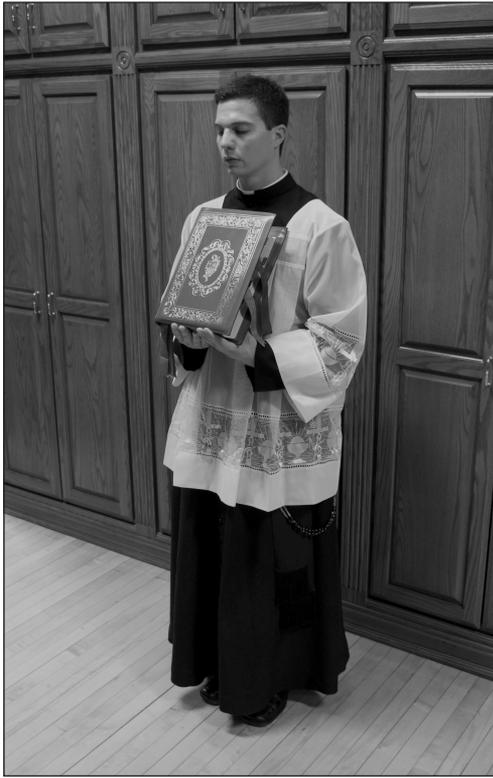
## 28. Carrying the Missal to the Altar

The rubrics suppose that the Missal to be used in Low Mass is left in the sacristy to be marked by the priest who is to celebrate. Where this is observed the server, walking before the priest, carries the Missal to the altar. He holds the book from below, with one hand at each corner. The opening is toward his left, and the top rests against his breast. At the altar he places it on the bookstand with the

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43. S.R.C. 4271, 1.

44. Van der Stappen, Vol. V, p. 47.



**Fig. 10.** Carrying the Missal to the altar: how it is held.

opening toward the crucifix. The back of a closed Missal is never turned toward the middle of the altar, whether it be at the Epistle side or at the Gospel side. The server must not open the Missal nor turn over its pages.<sup>45</sup> At the end of Mass he carries it back to the sacristy.

In many churches it is customary not to carry the Missal to and from the altar. Nor is this practice contrary to the rubrics. “In regard to the carrying of the Missal from the sacristy to the altar by the server, the rubric is not categorical (one admitting of no exception) and does not condemn a contrary practice. . . . The *Baltimore Ceremonial* is right

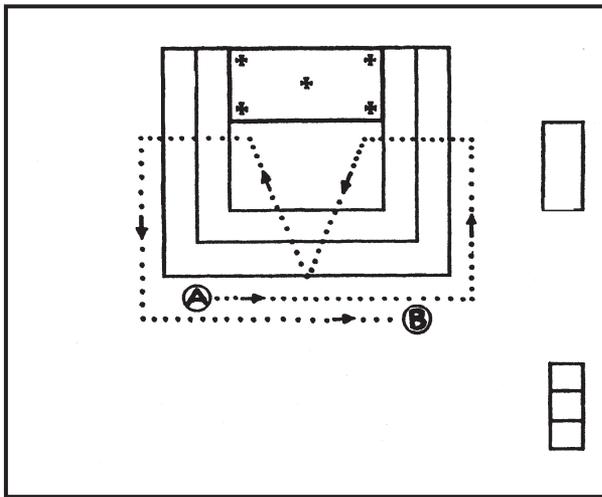
45. S.R.C. 2572 and 3448, 14.

in saying: 'After the priest is vested, the server takes the Missal, unless it is already on the altar.'<sup>46</sup>

## 29. Transferring the Missal during Mass

In going for the Missal, and when returning after placing it on the altar, the server walks on the floor. He goes up to the platform, and comes down from it, by the side steps. But while actually carrying the Missal he goes down to the middle by the front steps, and after genuflecting on the floor, he goes up by the front steps and places the book on the altar.<sup>47</sup> At the Epistle side the server stands on the top step till the priest goes to the middle of the altar. After transferring the Missal he likewise stands on the top step at the Gospel side and waits for the priest to begin the Gospel.

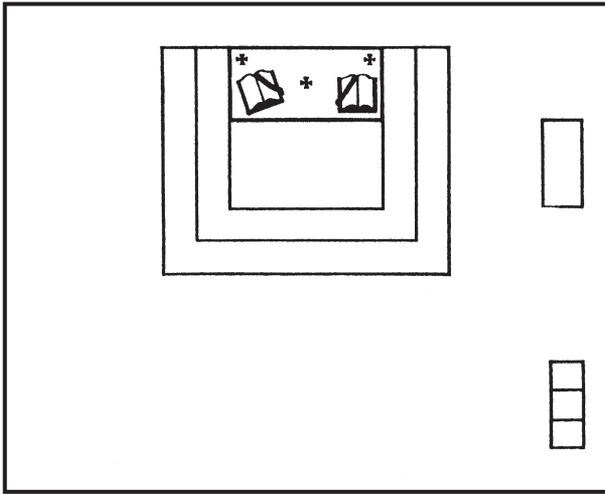
Figure 11 shows the path which a server follows in removing the Missal from the Epistle to the Gospel side.



**Fig. 11.** Transferring the Missal during Mass.

46. *Amer. Eccl. Review*, Nov., 1929, p. 513; *Baltimore Cer.*, 9th ed., p. 58.

47. Fortescue, p. 84; Callewaert, p. 158, note 6, and others. The rubrics do not specify how the Missal is carried.



**Fig. 12.** How the Missal is placed on the altar:  
at the Epistle side; at the Gospel side.

At the end of the Epistle he rises from his position at A, and follows the dotted line till he arrives at B, where he stands during the reading of the Gospel.

Figure 12 shows the positions which the Missal should occupy when it is placed at the Epistle and at the Gospel sides, respectively. At the Epistle side the front of the bookstand must be parallel with the front of the altar. At the Gospel side it is never so placed, but it must be turned halfway toward the middle of the altar. The priest is supposed to be partly facing the people while he is reading the Gospel.

### **30. Turning the Back toward the Altar**

A server should be careful not to turn his back directly toward the altar. This is true of every altar, whether the Blessed Sacrament be reserved on it or not. It must not be inferred from this that a server is here directed to walk sideways or backwards in the sanctuary. Far from it.

One of the things this rule implies may be illustrated by a single example, though many might be given. If, after presenting wine and water at the Offertory, the server turns to the right to go back to the credence table, he should there turn to the left when leaving the table to minister at the *Lavabo*. The observance of this rule calls for thoughtfulness on the part of the server, and for deep reverence and respect for God's holy altar.

### 31. The Elevation Candle

A rubric in the Missal prescribes that in Low Mass a third candle be lit at the *Sanctus*, and that it remain lit till after Communion. It is variously styled the "Sanctus Candle," "Elevation Candle," or "Consecration Candle." Unfortunately this rubric is no longer extensively observed. But where it is observed it is preferable that the candle should not be placed on the altar, nor is it to be held by the server; but it should be placed in a bracket attached to the wall at the Epistle side. Or it may be placed in a candlestick on the credence table, or on the floor, or on the steps of the altar near the server.<sup>48</sup>

"The size of the candlestick and its material obviously depends on the locality. Hartmann mentions as a suitable size a candlestick of 1.50 meter (59 inches), so that it may be visible from the body of the church. Others give the size as that of the Easter candlestick, and suggest that two of the same size be placed respectively on the Epistle and the Gospel side, the latter to be used for the Easter candle."<sup>49</sup>

### 32. Holding the Chasuble at the Elevation

In any Mass in which there is no deacon the server kneels on the platform and raises slightly the lower

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48. Martinucci, Vol. I, p. 139; Fortescue, p. 85; De Herdt, Vol. I, p. 405; Callewaert, p. 162; Van der Stappen, Vol. III, p. 64; De Carpo-Moretti, p. 201. The nonuse of this beautiful symbolical candle is permitted where the custom obtains. S.R.C. 4029, 2.

49. *Amer. Eccl. Review*, Vol. 51, 1914, p. 488. For an illustration of two such candlesticks see the *Liturgical Arts Review*, Vol. I, No. 2, 1932, p. 60.

part of the chasuble during the actual elevation of the Host and Chalice, but not during the four genuflections. During the genuflections he does not touch the chasuble. At each elevation it is held but momentarily, its lower part being raised about four or five inches. The chasuble must not be drawn outward, away from the priest; nor should it be pulled or tugged even slightly. While kneeling on the platform, the server does not strike his breast, nor does he make the sign of the cross. If the platform is narrow, he may kneel on the top step.

a) If there is but one server, he kneels on the edge of the platform at the right of the priest. After the first genuflection at the consecration of the Host or Chalice, he takes hold of the chasuble at the middle of the lower rim with his left hand, and with his right he rings the bell. He releases the chasuble the moment the Host or Chalice is replaced on the altar.

b) If there are two servers, one kneels at each side of the priest, and they both hold the lower rim of the chasuble, one with his right hand, the other with his left. In holding the chasuble it is important that the hands be held equally high. To secure uniformity the server at the left should be guided by the one at the right. With practice even the smallest altar boy can be taught to perform this ceremony in a becoming manner.

c) At each of the four genuflections the servers bow (bow M). At each elevation they look upon the Sacred Species and say: "My Lord and my God"—a prayer richly indulged by Pope Pius X.

d) At the Elevation some authorities do not direct the server to genuflect either before he goes up to kneel on the platform or again on his return to the floor. Others prescribe both.<sup>50</sup> Others, again, direct that a genuflection be made only on the server's return to the floor.<sup>51</sup> This practice is more consistent with the general rule that

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50. Van der Stappen, Vol. V, p. 46.

51. Callewaert, p. 163.

while the Blessed Sacrament is on the corporal the server genuflects before going up to the platform for any purpose and again on returning to the floor.

### 33. Special Ceremonies for Special Seasons and Occasions

a) On certain days especially in Lent and on the Ember Days there may be several Epistles or Lessons. After each Lesson the server answers *Deo gratias*, except after the fifth Lesson on those Saturdays that are Ember Days. The server will know that these Lessons are to be read whenever the priest, after the *Kyrie eleison*, does not turn around and say *Dominus vobiscum* but goes directly to the Missal. The regular Epistle of the Mass comes as usual after the *Dominus vobiscum* which is always said at the middle of the altar. When, on these days, the priest says *Flectamus genua* while at the Epistle side, the server answers *Levate*.

b) Psalm 42, a part of the prayers said at the foot of the altar, is omitted in Masses said in black vestments, and in those said in violet vestments from Passion Sunday till Holy Thursday.

c) On certain penitential days in Advent, Lent, on the Ember Days, and on some other occasions, the deacon and subdeacon wear folded chasubles. With the assistance of the second acolyte the subdeacon takes off his chasuble during the last Collect, and he puts it on again when he has received the celebrant's blessing after the Epistle. It is taken off and put on at the bench.

The deacon, assisted by the first acolyte, goes to the credence table and takes off the folded chasuble as soon as the celebrant begins to read the Gospel. He puts on a broad stole over his real stole and remains so vested till after Communion. After he has carried the Missal to the Epistle side, he again goes to the credence table and takes off the broad stole and puts on the chasuble.<sup>52</sup>

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52. See *Rub. gen.*, XIX, 6, and Fortescue, p. 271.

d) The Passion is read or sung in four Masses during Holy Week; viz., on Palm Sunday, on the Tuesday and Wednesday following, and on Good Friday. *Dominus vobiscum*, etc., are omitted at the beginning, but *Laus tibi Christe* is said at the end. This is said when the priest has gone to the Gospel side a second time and has finished reading the narrative of the Passion. When finished, he kisses the book, except on Good Friday.

e) At the end of Mass during Easter week the priest says *Ite missa est, alleluia, alleluia*. The server answers *Deo gratias, alleluia, alleluia*.

f) On All Souls' Day and on Christmas Day a priest may say three Masses, and on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation two. On such occasions, when the Masses are said on the same altar, the priest does not purify the chalice till the last Mass. The server, therefore, should transfer the Missal as usual, but he should present wine and water for the ablutions only in the last Mass.

g) From Easter Sunday till Ascension Day the Paschal candle is lit at Solemn Mass and Vespers (at High Mass and sung Vespers) on all Sundays, and if customary, on other days and solemnities that are celebrated during the Easter season.<sup>53</sup> It may also be lit at a parochial or community Low Mass that takes the place of a High Mass. But it must never be lit at a Mass celebrated in violet or in black vestments.<sup>54</sup>

It is not lit during Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.<sup>55</sup> But if Vespers immediately precedes Benediction, and the candle was lit during Vespers, it remains lighted during Benediction.<sup>56</sup>

On Ascension Day it is extinguished after the first Gospel, and it is no longer used.

h) In Requiem Masses the clergy may, and generally do, hold lighted candles as indicated on pages 67 and 102

53. S.R.C. 235, 11.

54. Merati, 1, 4, 10.

55. S.R.C. 3479, 3.

56. S.R.C. 4383, 1.

of this book.<sup>57</sup> The rubric, however, does not absolutely prescribe the distribution of candles, but merely says “if candles are to be distributed.”<sup>58</sup>

### 34. Postures during the Credo

Should the servers kneel or stand while the celebrant is reciting the *Credo* in Low Mass and in High Mass (*Missa Cantata*)? This question has been asked repeatedly. Its answer is contained in a General Rubric in the Missal (*Rubr. gen. XVII, 2*). The best authorities<sup>59</sup> are practically unanimous in prescribing that the servers kneel during the *Credo*, as they are directed to do on pp. 44, 55, and 64 of this book.

As already stated, O’Connell prescribes a kneeling posture in both Low Mass and High Mass, but in the latter he adds the following footnote: “Some authors, by analogy with (Solemn) High Mass, direct them to stand when not engaged in any special duty. If they do, they must (a) genuflect when the priest recites *Et incarnatus* of the Creed, (b) kneel from after the Sanctus until after the Elevation, (c) kneel, for the Blessing” (Vol. III, p. 201).

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57. *Ritus Cel. Missam, XIII, 3*.

58. *Ritus ser., XIII, 3*; Augustine *Liturgical Law*, p. 287.

59. Among them Wapelhorst (10 ed.) sections 131, n. 6, and 155, n. 5; Fortescue (6th ed.), pp. 84 and 144; De Carpo-Moretti (1932), sections 445 and 868; O’Connell, *The Celebration of Mass* (1940), Vol. II, p. 194; and Vol. III, p. 202; Callewaert, *Caeremoniale* (1934), pp. 161 and 229. It would be easy to add to this list.