

Serving as an Acolyte at Christ Church Cathedral

Being an acolyte at the Cathedral is a real honor and your decision to serve is greatly appreciated by the clergy, the other service volunteers and everyone throughout the church.

The role of Acolyte is a very important part of the Holy Eucharist at the Cathedral. It is very visible, and it is important that you take this role seriously and perform it with dignity and respect.

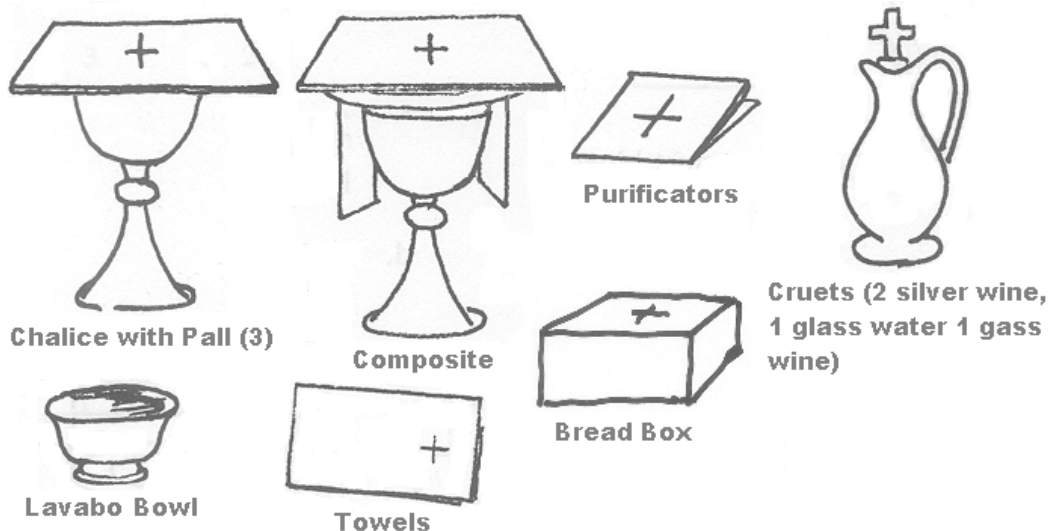
This document is presented in two sections. First, we will discuss the general procedures, posture, vestments, and the way to light and extinguish candles. Secondly, we will go through a typical Holy Eucharist Service and discuss your roles and responsibilities.

General Procedures when Serving as Acolyte

Terms and Definitions

Alms Basins	The silver plates that we use to collect the offering.
Altar Book	The red book and stand that the Priest reads from during the celebration of the Eucharist.
Credence Table	The small wooden table in the back of the Chancel Area where all of the materials used during the Holy Eucharist are placed.
Crucifer	The person who carries a cross.
First Server	The Lead Acolyte who does most of the work. The First Server normally carries the first cross in the processions.
Gospel Book	The gold book that is used by the Priest to perform the Gospel reading.
Liturgy	What is said during the service.
Sacristan	The director of the service. The Sacristan coordinates all Acolyte activity and will help you learn and perform correctly.
Sacristy	The room where we meet before the service.
Second Server	The Assisting Lead Acolyte. The Second Server carries the second cross.
Vestments	The robes that we wear during the service. "To vest" means to put your robes on. The vestments consist of two parts: the purple cassock and a white surplice to go over it.

Items used in the Holy Eucharist



Vestments

We wear burgundy cassocks and white surplices. These are kept in the restrooms in front of the reception desk. It is important that you pick a cassock that covers as much of your legs without the danger of tripping and the white surplice should be about one foot shorter than the cassock. Get someone else to look at the way your surplice lines up with your shoulders. Make sure to wear appropriate footwear: no high heels, no sandals, no flip-flops, and no athletic shoes.







Posture, Motion, and Form

Remember that when you serve as Acolyte, the attention of the congregation is not to be on those ministering but on the Liturgy. Therefore remember to always move:

Discretely	Slowly	Quietly	With Dignity
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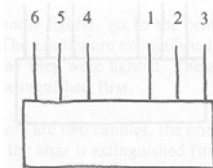
When standing, stand up straight and if carrying a candle or cross, carry it straight. Hands should always be folded and held above the waist. When sitting, sit up straight in the chair, knees together, feet together. When kneeling, put all of your weight on your knees and kneel upright. When bowing at the Altar, use the solemn, otherwise use the simple bow.

Your eyes should always be focused on the action at the altar, on the reader, or the preacher.

Standing	Hands	Sitting	Kneeling	Simple Bow	Solemn Bow
					

The Lighting and Extinguishing of Candles

Use this pattern for lighting the service candles on the reredos



Note: Easter through Pentecost, the Paschal candle should be lit. The Paschal candle is always lighted first and extinguished last.

Use this pattern for extinguishing the candles:



When extinguishing, the goal is to cut off the supply of oxygen, so you just have to hold the extinguisher in place for a sufficient period of time for the flame to go out.

Arrive at the Cathedral

You should plan to arrive at the Cathedral 20 minutes before the start of the service. Vest immediately upon arrival and check in with the Sacristan in the Sacristy. If you are not in the Sacristy 15 minutes before the service your role may be given to an alternate volunteer.

If you Cannot Serve

If for some reason you cannot serve for a service for which you have been scheduled, please find an alternate volunteer and notify the receptionist at the church 255-7729.

Scheduling

John Teasley (john.teasley@suntrust.com and 748-5994) is Acolyte Master at the Cathedral and schedules acolytes for all services. We schedule one quarter at a time, December through February, March through May, June through August, and September through November. John will contact all acolytes to check availability and then will post the schedule. It is easiest if John can have an e-mail for all Acolytes.

A Typical Holy Eucharist Service at the Cathedral

All services can be somewhat different in minor ways, but this is a general script for services at the Cathedral.

Before the Service

Check in with the Sacristan, who will give you direction and will train you if needed. *Do not be hesitant to ask any questions of the Sacristan.*

Line up for the Processional

The First Server retrieves the first cross, the Second Server does likewise with the second cross, and the Torchbearers retrieve the torches.

We line up in the hallway next to the chapel. The First Server stands in the doorway and is flanked by the two torchbearers. The torches will be lighted by the Sacristan. The First Server should stand up straight with the cross held high, straight, and level with the floor.

The Second Server stands at the chapel door and will follow the choir, leaving some five or six rows between the last choir pair and the Second Cross.. The Sacristan will indicate when it is time for the first Server to place the cross in position for the Processional.

The Processional

The Sacristan will give the First Server a signal that it is time to start. The First Server begins to walk slowly and the Torchbearers follow close behind.

Note: We need to take some good photos for this section.

Next comes the Choir and then the Second Server carries the second cross to the door, and waits. Keep the cross high and straight. When the last choir member is at the first pew, the Second Server enters the Nave. Remember to keep the cross high, straight, and to walk slowly and with dignity.

The First Server and Torchbearers pause in front of the Altar and wait for the choir to process on both sides. When the First Server sees that the last choir members have walked to the side, the First Server walks up the steps to the left of the Altar and puts the cross in the stand. The Torchbearers put the torches in their appropriate stands and everyone stands in their place and sings the hymn. The second server should walk slowly down the center aisle in order to let the Cross and torches get to their places before mounting the steps.

Gospel Procession

For the 11:00AM Sunday services, we generally have a Gospel Procession. The Sacristan will select a stanza of the hymn at which time the First Server will move into position in front and facing the Altar. The Torchbearers flank the sides of the First Server.

The Priest will come to the Altar and retrieve the gold Gospel Book. When the Priest turns, the First Server and Torchbearers turn around and process to the middle of the Nave. The First Server determines where to stop, usually about two-thirds of the way down the center aisle. The First Server turns around and the two Torch Bearers turn on either side to face one another. The First Server holds the Gospel Book for the Priest:



After the reading, the Priest will take the book and everyone recesses back to the chancel area. The order should be: first server (or first server and Cross), torches, then Deacon with Gospel Book; first server and torches go directly up the stairs and to their places. Occasionally we have the addition of the Cross to the procession. The cross leads the procession, stands behind the First Server with the Cross held high, straight, and upright. The cross also leads the recession back to the chancel area.

The Offering

When the Priest says, "Bring offerings, come into his court with praise" (or any similar offertory sentence), several things happen.

The Second Server retrieves the Alms Basins and walks down to the chancel rail to pass out the plates to the ushers. You should time it so that you are just in position when the ushers arrive. Stop for each usher to take a plate and return the large plate to the table and sit down.

The duties of the First Server are:

- The First Server walks to the Altar and the Priest will hand you the Gospel book. Take that back to the Sacristan at the Credence table.
- The Sacristan will give you the Composite and you will take that to the Priest. Remain standing there and they will give you the burse and pall to return to the Sacristan.
- The Sacristan will give you the Bread Box and may tell you something to say to the Priest. Stand there, and the Priest will give you the Bread Box to take back to the Sacristan.
- Next, the Sacristan will give you two glass cruets. Be sure that the stoppers are removed. You will have wine in your right hand and water in the left with handles facing out so the Priest can use them by the handles. You first give the wine to the Priest and then you shift the water to your right hand. They will hand you the empty glass cruet in your left hand and you will hand them the water with the right hand. Shift the empty wine cruet to the right hand and receive the water cruet in the left hand. Remember: pass with the right hand, accept with the left. Nod to the priest after every exchange. Return those items to the Sacristan.

- Finally, you will come back and retrieve the Lavabo bowl in your left hand, drape a towel on your left hand, and hold the water glass cruet in your right hand.
- Go stand at attention facing the Altar and the Congregation. The two Priests who will be serving the bread will come back and have their fingers cleansed. This happens just as the offertory hymn is finishing, before the Oblation Bearers and Ushers come from the back of the Nave. Return the bowl, water and towel back to the Sacristan.

The second server retrieves the plate and meets the ushers at the chancel rail and collects the plates. Then facing the Altar, the Second Server raises the plates up high to the Priest who will respond and then the plates are taken back to the table where two ushers will meet you to take the money safely to the Sacristy.

The Eucharist

When the Priest says, "... in your hearts by faith and with thanksgiving," all Acolytes line up to be served. Line up as far to the left as possible. The Sacristan will bring the remaining 3 Chalices and will give them to each acolyte. Hold them until the Priest retrieves them.

Now you will receive communion. The Torchbearers and Second Server return to their seats. When the Priests have started passing out the elements to the congregation, the First Server will retrieve the big silver pitcher and a purificator and stands in front of the Altar facing the congregation. If Chalice Bearers need more wine, they will come to you.

When completed the First Server takes that back to the Sacristan. The Second Server goes to the Credence Table and performs the same task that the First Server did with the water and Lavabo Bowl.

The Recessional

When the recessional hymn begins, the First Server retrieves the first cross and the Torchbearers retrieve their torches. The First Server and Torchbearers go to the front of the Altar and face the Altar. The cross should be held high. The Sacristan will have told the First Server on what verse to begin recessing.

The First Server turns at the appointed verse and recesses slowly back to the back of the Nave.

After the Service

When the service is over, the torches should be extinguished and returned to the chancel area with the crosses. An acolyte extinguishes the candles, and all Acolytes help return all of the pieces used in the Eucharist to the Sacristy.