

Junior Altar Ministers

Centre for Liturgy Archdiocese of Perth



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Coordinators Manual for the training of Junior Altar Ministers
Archdiocese of Perth Liturgical Guidelines
2023 Edition

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NOTES FOR COORDINATORS

- The coordinator for the Senior and Junior Altar Ministers is to be approved by the parish priest.
- Coordinators must hold a valid Working With Children check Card.
- The coordinator works alongside the safeguarding officers of the parish.
- It is desirable the coordinator is a member of the parish liturgy team.
- When training new ministers, either junior or senior, it is a valuable time to evaluate the liturgical practices in your parish and align them with the requirements of The General Instruction of the Roman Missal.

Supplemental Material is available from the Centre for Liturgy Website www.liturgy.perthcatholic.org.au

- When a Bishop Celebrates Eucharist: handling the mitre and crosier
- 2. Incense: using incense in the Mass
- 3. Assisting with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

This training manual is to be used alongside the handbook for the children.

Training children in the role needs to be engaging and practical. Encourage the minister to write in and refer to their handbook.

The text in this manual and the junior minister's handbook aligns, though the text is simplified for the child.

There is a wealth of information in this handbook, you may need to break up the training sessions and present the material in a format appropriate to the age of the child.

Companion Text

References from **The General Instruction of the Roman Missal** are for the Coordinator's information. They are not in the Junior Handbook.

The General Instruction of the Roman Missal Final Text with Application for Australia 2012

- •Can be found inside the Roman Missal
- As a separate book published by St Pauls Publishing
- Electronically from

https://www.liturgybrisbane.net.au/media/1454/girm-2012-for-australia.pdf

It is necessary for the coordinator to be familiar with the references from this document.

WHO CAN BE A JUNIOR ALTAR MINISTER?

In the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth those can be Junior Altar Ministers are baptised Catholic girls or boys, seven years or older. It is usual for the child to have received their first Holy Communion.

THE ROLE OF A JUNIOR ALTAR MINISTER

Altar Ministers, both Senior and Junior, assist with the smooth flow and dignity of the liturgical rite, enhancing the spirit of worship and prayer. Ministers enable the Priest and the congregation to celebrate the Eucharist in a worthy manner.

Coordinator's Notes

The church documents tell us what to do, when to do it and how to do it. They are our guide in all that we do. Explain to the child that we are guided by the church documents in all that we do in liturgy.

Suggestion: Talk about this document; if suitable, show this document (it is the front of The Roman Missal) so the Ministers are familiar with it, know it exists and know where to go for information on the Mass in the future.

References made to **The General Instruction of the Roman Missal** (GIRM) are taken from the Final Text with Application for Australia, 2012.

WHAT A JUNIOR ALTAR MINISTER NEEDS TO KNOW

Coordinator's Notes

Go through each point and demonstrate if necessary. Encourage questions.

+ How to make the sign of the cross.

Practice this movement.

+ How to genuflect.

Practice this movement. GIRM # 274

+ The Order of the Mass.

Initially look at The Roman Missal and find all the parts of the Mass. <u>Togetheratonealtar</u> (see page 14) is a good resource to refer to for this segment.

+ The liturgical language used.

Refer to the language used in The Roman Missal. There is a Glossary in the handbook. Discuss and ask if any clarification is required. See page 31

+ When to kneel, stand and sit.

Discuss any relevant points. GIRM #43

+ The liturgical books used.

Show the new ministers the liturgical books used in the Mass and where they are kept. See page 28

+ Liturgical items for Mass.

Go through the Glossary of Items used in the Mass and show the new ministers each item and where they are kept. See page 31

+ The names of the parts and layout of the church.

Walk through the church naming the parts as in handbook. Encourage more to be added to the list. See page 29

HOW TO BE A REVERENT AND RESPONSIBLE ALTAR MINISTER

Coordinator's Notes

Go through each point and demonstrate if necessary. You may need to explain what some words mean. Invite questions.

When in procession, walk in time with other Altar Ministers.

Use both hands when carrying things.

When on the sanctuary sit up straight with your hands on your knees.

Once Mass has commenced, bow to the Altar (bending from the waist) slowly and carefully when walking onto the sanctuary or when passing the altar. Bowing the head is sufficient if you are holding something.

Pay attention to the Order of Mass, join in singing the songs and saying the prayers and responses.

Treat all people and all things with respect.

Altar Ministers are Reverent!

Come early; at least 15 minutes before Mass begins.

Be willing to listen, to serve and to take on responsibilities.

Contact another Minister if you are not able to be present for your roster.

Vesting – how you present yourself is important:

Hair groomed

Alb neat and tidy and of a suitable length.

Clothes and shoes appropriate (what is worn under the alb can be seen).

Be confident in what to do and when to do it.

When you are unsure about something during Mass ask someone in a quiet voice.

Help others when needed.

Hang up the Alb neatly when Mass is finished.

Alert the coordinator if the Alb requires cleaning or needs repair.

<u>Safety First</u>: Tie back your hair; you may be a candle bearer.

Coordinator's Notes

Go through each point and speak to it.

Altar Ministers are Responsible!

PREPARATION BEFORE MASS

The Cross Bearer

Coordinator's Notes

Go through each point and demonstrate if necessary. You may need to explain what some words mean. Invite questions.

Take up your position with the cross at the front of the procession where it commences and wait patiently for the other ministers to join you.

The minister carrying the cross sets the pace for the Entrance Procession, so be aware of who is in the procession and set the pace accordingly. (there maybe someone in procession who has difficulty with walking)

Ensure you understand **when** to start the procession and **where** to place the cross when you arrive on the sanctuary.

When the procession arrives at the sanctuary, as you are carrying something, you do not need to bow. You nod your head in reverence.

Coordinator's Notes

Practice with the new ministers holding and walking with the cross as it can be heavy to carry for a period of time.

Go through each point and demonstrate if necessary. You may need to explain what some words mean. Invite questions.

The Candle Bearers

Know where to place the candles on the sanctuary.

Hold the candles upright. Be aware of melted wax dripping down.

If the candles blow out whilst in procession just calmly light them again when they are in place on the sanctuary.

As you are carrying something you do not need to bow or genuflect, you nod your head in reverence.

Coordinator's Notes

Protect the candle flame!

SAFETY FIRST

Tie back long hair

Do not hold the candle too close to your body.

Do not play with the candle flame.

Practise holding the lit candle and walking with it.

Go through each point and demonstrate if necessary. You may need to explain what some words mean. Invite questions.

Practice holding the Book.

The Book Bearer

The minister holds the book, (The Book of the Chair/Roman Missal), for the Priest when the Priest is not at the Altar

Sometimes you will have to hold a folder instead of the Roman Missal

The Book should be held steadily with both hands and held at chest height.

It should be raised to suit the Priest's height and sight range. The Priest will guide you.

If you feel unsure as to when to take the book to the Priest, look for guidance.

| Notes: | | |
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THE ORDER OF THE MASS

Mass is a single act of worship that has four parts.

An electronic resource to explore more about the Mass and the Church is: www.togetheratonealtar.catholic.edu.au

Coordinator's Notes

Encourage the child to explore the Mass on this website or you could have it accessible on the training day.

Currently displaying Years 7 - 10

This tab can be changed for material suitable to age.





Press the tab 'Receive' to explore the parts of the Mass.

www.togetheratonealtar.catholic.edu.au

THE ORDER OF THE MASS AND THE ROLE OF AN ALTAR MINISTER

Coordinator's Notes

Go through each point and demonstrate if necessary. You may need to explain what some words mean. Invite questions. Order of procession see GIRM below

Introductory Rite

see GIRM # 46 - 54

Entrance Procession

Order of Procession

- 1. Cross bearer
- Lead the procession
- Slow and deliberate pace
- Hold the cross high

2. Candle Bearers

- Candles lit
- Hold candle upright
- Walk together
- 3. Other Altar Ministers
- 4. Deacon/Proclaimer of the Word
- Carries the Book of the Gospels
- 5. Priest/s

When the people are gathered, the Priest and ministers, wearing the sacred vestments, go in procession to the altar in this order: a) the thurifer carrying a smoking thurible, if incense is being used; b) ministers who carry lighted candles, and between them an acolyte or other minister with the cross; c) the acolytes and the other ministers; d) a reader, who may carry a Book of the Gospels (though not a Lectionary), slightly elevated; e) the Priest who is to celebrate the Mass. *GIRM #120*

Go through each point and demonstrate if necessary. You may need to explain what some words mean. Invite questions.

Introductory Rite

On reaching the Sanctuary

1. Cross bearer

- Bow head.
- Place cross in delegated position.
- Proceed to their place.

2. Candle Bearers

- Bow heads.
- Place candle in delegated position.
- Proceed to their places.

3. Others

- Genuflect
- Proceed to their places.

Go through each point and demonstrate if necessary. You may need to explain what some words mean. Invite questions.

Ministers join in the responses when appropriate.

Introductory Rite

Greeting

Penitential Rite

Gloria

Not sung/said in the seasons of Advent or Lent.

After the Gloria

The Minister offers the Roman Missal, opened at the correct page, to the Priest when he says; "Let us pray".

Opening Prayer

Return to your delegated position with the Book at the end of the prayer.

Coordinator's Notes

Be familiar with the GIRM sections
Go through each point and demonstrate if necessary.
You may need to explain what some words mean.
Invite questions. Ministers join in responses.

Liturgy of the Word

see GIRM # 55-71

First Reading

Responsorial Psalm

Second Reading

Active listening. This is a time to listen to the message of the scriptures which is a lesson on how to follow Jesus.

Just before the Gospel Acclamation

The two candle bearers take the candles and all process to the ambo and stand either side of the Priest or deacon whilst he proclaims the gospel.

Gospel Acclamation

Join in the prayer.

Gospel

When the Gospel is finished being proclaimed the candle bearers process in the reverse manner and return to their seats.

Homily

The priest speaks to us, breaking open the scriptures and the message Jesus has for our lives.

Profession of Faith

This prayer reminds us of the promises we made when we were baptised or that were made for us if we were babies.

Prayers of Intercession

We pray for others

Be familiar with the GIRM sections
Go through each point and demonstrate if necessary.
You may need to explain what some words mean.
Invite questions.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

see GIRM #72 - # 89

Presentation of the Gifts

Two Altar Ministers process to the place where the gifts of bread and wine have been placed before Mass and lead the people who are presenting the gifts to the Priest.

Altar Ministers may also be required to assist the Priest with the reception of the bread and wine.

Preparation of the Gifts

After the Priest recites the prayers over the bread and the wine an Altar Minister with the towel over their forearm, holds the bowl, whilst another Altar Minister pours the water over the Priest's hands. The Priest wipes his hands with the towel.

Once the ritual action of the washing of the hands has taken place, the bowl and towel are returned to the credence table.

Go through each point and demonstrate if necessary. You may need to explain what some words mean. Invite questions. Ministers join in the prayers and responses.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Prayer over the Offerings

The Eucharistic Prayer

This is a very important prayer where we give thanks to God for giving us the person of Jesus to lead us to God's love and forgiveness. For the use of the bells see GIRM #150

The Lord's Prayer

This prayer is Jesus' prayer to the Father.

The Rite of Peace

We are called to be people of peace.

Offer peace to those people immediately around you as the custom in your parish. See GIRM #82

Lamb of God

Join in the prayer.

Communion

Ministers join the procession to receive Holy Communion. After receiving Communion Ministers take time to quietly pray in thanksgiving.

<u>After the congregation has received Communion</u> and a time of silence has been observed, the book bearer presents the Roman Missal/ Book of the Chair to the Priest for the Prayer after Communion.

Prayer after Communion

The book bearer returns to their seat when prayer is finished.

Go through each point and demonstrate if necessary. You may need to explain what some words mean. Invite questions.

The Concluding Rite

see GIRM #90

Announcements

Final Blessing

An Altar Minister may need to hold the Roman Missal/Book of the Chair for the Priest if there is a special blessing to be read.

The Dismissal

The Recessional Procession

The Cross Bearer leads the procession out of the Church.

When the procession has formed the priest will turn to leave. All ministers follow on and process to the sacristy.

Altar Ministers may be asked to assist in tiding areas of the Church.

THE LITURGICAL YEAR

The liturgical cycle of the seasons of the Church.

The Church's Liturgical Year begins with the First Sunday of Advent, four Sundays before Christmas. That means the beginning of the year will be the end of November or beginning of December.

Coordinator's Notes

That seems strange as a year commences in January!

A liturgical year is different;

it starts with the 1st Sunday of Advent.



An annual liturgical calendar is available to download

www.liturgy.perthcatholic.org.au

THE SEASONS OF LITURGICAL YEAR

<u>Advent</u> is a time of joyful waiting; we look back to the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem and we look forward to his coming again at the end of time.

<u>Christmas</u> celebrates the coming of Christ into the world – the Son of God, Jesus, became man and lived among us.

Ordinary Time – the first period of Ordinary Time fits between the Christmas Season and Lent. We explore more deeply the life of Jesus and reflect on his message of life, justice, love and peace.

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday and lasts for 40 days, from Ash Wednesday to the beginning of Mass on Holy Thursday.

The Easter Triduum (one feast, three days) begins with the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday and concludes with Evening Prayer on Sunday of the Resurrection.

<u>The Easter Season</u> lasts for 50 days after the Mass of the Resurrection (Easter Sunday) and culminates on the feast of Pentecost Sunday.

The second period of <u>Ordinary Time</u> stretches from Pentecost to the feast of Christ the King and a new liturgical cycle begins again with <u>Advent</u>.

When we are in Year A, B or C that means we are hearing scripture from different Gospels - Year A Matthew/ Year B Mark / Year C Luke. The evangelist John's book being heard on feast days throughout all the years and especially on Good Friday.

COLOURS USED IN A LITURGICAL YEAR

Coordinator's Notes

The colour of the priest's liturgical vestments change from time to time. This is because the Church uses different colours to indicate the season or feast that is being celebrated.

The liturgical colours used are:

WHITE OR GOLD

White or gold, since they are festive, joyful colours, are used during the Christmas and Easter seasons, and on major feast days.

PURPLE

Purple (or violet) symbolises repentance and penance. Vestments of purple or violet are used during the seasons of Advent and Lent. Lent is the season of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. It is a quiet season of reflection. The colour of Advent is more of a rosepurple, like the sky just before sunrise.

GREEN

Green is a sign of life in nature and as such it represents growth, life and hope. Green is the colour worn most often during liturgies in Ordinary Time. It symbolises the graces that draw people into the life of God. Most of the Church's year is Ordinary Time.

RED

Red symbolises both blood and fire. It is the colour that is used on Passion (Palm) Sunday, Good Friday, Pentecost Sunday, and for celebrations of the Sacrament of Confirmation. It is also the colour that has traditionally been associated with martyrs — those who have shed their blood for their faith — and so it is worn on the feast days of martyrs.

ROSE PINK

Rose pink is an optional colour that may be used on the Third Sunday of Advent and the Fourth Sunday of Lent. On both days, the Entrance Antiphon calls us to rejoice, so the pink vestments mark a softening of the penitential tone of the season.

For further information about
Liturgical Seasons and Colours see:
https://www.togetheratonealtar.catholic.edu.au/craft/liturgical-colours-and-seasons/

Coordinator's Notes What are Holy Days of Obligation?

Along with Sundays, December 25th, Christmas Day and August 15th Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary are days when we MUST attend Mass. These are called Holy Days of Obligation.

SYMBOLS USED IN LITURGY

The symbols we use in liturgy are also found in our homes and we are familiar with them. These familiar things communicate with us in a different way; in a symbolic way, a way without words. Because the symbols are used in our daily lives, they draw out how we feel about them.

For example, water is not just water that we drink or wash ourselves in, it has potential to make us clean and refreshed; it can change the way we feel. It can be cool and inviting or warm and comforting.

These everyday experiences of water evoke feelings and memories in our lives of the times we have used water.

A symbol can give us a glimpse of something far beyond what the symbol is: it can tell us something beyond



Coordinator's Notes

All our senses; hearing, seeing, feeling, tasting, smelling are engaged in liturgy. Engage the child in recognising how or when they use their senses in liturgy.

Oil

We cook with oil; it makes a car or machinery run smoothly. In liturgy we are anointed with holy oil at baptism or when we are sick; we are strengthened.





Bread

Bread is a staple food in many countries. Bread was broken at the last supper.

Wine

Wine is made from grapes.
We celebrate our birthdays and the milestones of our lives eating and drinking together.



In the celebration of Eucharist, the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ. Those who share the Body and Blood of Christ at the Lord's table become the Body of Christ in the world called to bring the love of Christ to others.

Light

We light a fire to get warm or to cook something and candles light up the darkness. We feel different when we experience the light. At Easter we proclaim the light of Christ!





Incense

Incense is used to create fragrant smoke. The smoke symbolises our prayers rising up to God.

Coordinator's Notes

For further information about Symbols used in Liturgy: https://www.togetheratonealtar.catholic.edu.au/craft/ signs-and-symbols/

IMPORTANT CHURCH BOOKS

Coordinator's Notes

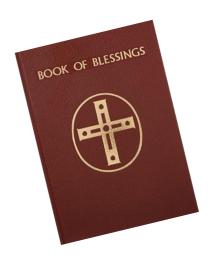
If possible, have a copy of the books available for the new ministers to look at and handle.

The Roman Missal

This book has the text and rubrics for most liturgies. The red text, or the rubrics is the special rules on how and when to do things.



Book of the Chair {excerpts from the Roman Missal} As The Roman Missal is heavy, this lighter book is sometimes used.

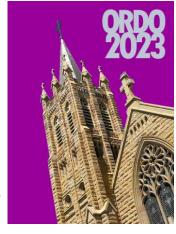


The Book of Blessings

Father will refer to this book to find the suitable prayers for a blessing. It is usually kept in the sacristy.

The Ordo

This book is found in the sacristy. It tells the priest what readings to use, what the liturgical colour is for each day of the liturgical year.



THE PARTS OF THE CHURCH

Coordinator's Notes

Move around the church pointing out these areas. In the handbook the child has a check box next to each item. More could be added to the list when the Church is explored.

Churches vary in their features and design.
All churches are planned with these basic parts in accordance with Church Documents.

Narthex- people enter the church through the narthex. There are notices and sometimes a piety stall (a place that has rosary beads, holy cards, books etc for sale) is situated there. The narthex's purpose is to provide a transitioning space to move from the outside busy world into a quiet, peaceful sacred space.

The Nave is the main body of the church where the seats or pews for the people are. It usually has very high ceilings.

The Sanctuary - this is an elevated place where the Altar, Ambo and Priest's chair is.

The Baptismal Fount is where adults and babies are baptised. Near the fount there will be a display cupboard that hold the holy oils. This is called the Aumbry. A key to the Aumbry is kept in the sacristy.

The Tabernacle this is where the Body of Christ is kept so it is available for those who are sick.

Move around the church pointing out these areas.

The ministers may like to suggest more to

add to the list

Processional Cross this may be a crucifix or a plain cross. It is carried in the Entrance Procession.

Crucifix - a cross with an image of Jesus on it.

Shrines are small niches that hold images or statues of saints. They are different in each church.

Sacristy there are usually several sacristies. One is where the priest robes and where the vestments are kept. Another is where the robes of Altar Ministers are kept, and another is where the flowers are arranged. Sacred vessels are stored in one of these sacristies.

GLOSSARY

Coordinator's Notes

Show the new ministers as many of these items as possible.

ALB: Long white garment worn by Priests, Deacons, Acolytes and Altar Ministers.

CHASUBLE: The outer garment worn by the Priest.

CINCTURE: Cord worn around the waist.

CORPORAL: A cloth placed on the altar on which the chalice and paten are placed.

CROSIER: A staff carried by the Bishop. This looks like a shepherd's crook.

FUNERAL PALL: A large white cloth that covers a coffin.

HAND TOWEL: A towel used to dry the hands of the Priest.

MITRE: A pointed hat worn by the Bishop.

PURIFICATOR: A small cloth used to wipe the rim of the Chalice during Communion.

STOLE: A thin strip of material coloured to match the liturgical season worn by the Priest over the Alb.



ACOLYTE: A lay person who assists the Priest in liturgies.

DEACON: An ordained Minister who assists the Priest at the Liturgy of the Word and at the Altar for the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

BOOK OF GOSPELS: A special book just of the Gospels usually processed in and held high by a Deacon or Proclaimer.

GENUFLECTION: Lowering on to one knee out of respect for the presence of Christ.

HOLY OILS: Oil of Chrism, Oil of the Sick, Oil of Catechumens.

HOMILY: The speech that the bishop, priest or deacon gives after the scripture readings are proclaimed.

These words help the people to understand and live the words of scripture.

LECTIONARY: a set of books containing readings of the Bible for every day of the liturgical year.

PROFOUND BOW:A bow made with the body from the waist.

ROMAN MISSAL: The book used during Mass from which the Priest takes the prayers.

ASPERGES: The Rite for the sprinkling of Holy Water.

ASPERGILLUM: The item used to sprinkle Holy Water.

BOAT: A small container that holds extra unburnt incense.

CHALICE: A cup used to hold the Precious Blood.

CIBORIUM: A covered container containing Consecrated bread (the Body of Christ).

CRUETS: Containers for the wine and water.

HOLY WATER BUCKET: Vessel holding the Holy Water.

MONSTRANCE: An ornate vessel that holds the Blessed Sacrament and is used as the focus for the devotion of Adoration.

PATEN: A small metal plate that is used by the Priest to hold the host.

PYX: A small container that holds the Blessed Sacrament which a minister takes to those who are ill and cannot come to Mass.

THURIBLE: A vessel in which incense is burned, usually made of metal with a long chain or chains.

THURIFER: The person who carries the thurible.





AMBO: The place where the scriptures are read from.

CREDENCE TABLE: A table in the sanctuary where the items required for Mass are placed.

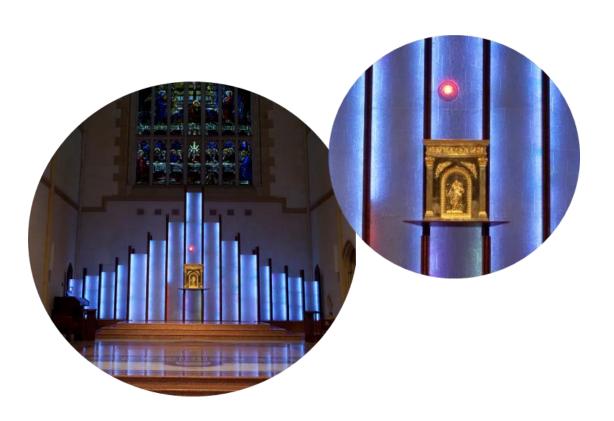
HOLY WATER FOUNT:A container that is placed at the entrance to the church. The people bless themselves from it. In some Churches this will be the Baptismal Fount.

OFFERTORY TABLE: A small table on which the gifts of bread and wine are placed before mass commences.

PROCESSIONAL CROSS: A crucifix or plain cross carried in Procession and stands near the altar during Mass.

SANCTUARY LAMP: A light that remains lit alerting all to the presence of Christ in the tabernacle.

TABERNACLE: The place where the Body of Christ is kept.



KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN OUR COMMUNITY

Safeguarding Office 29 Victoria Square, Perth WA 6000

Telephone: 9221 7762

Email: safeguarding@perthcatholic.org.au Website: safeguarding.perthcatholic.org.au

Protecting Children and Adults in the Catholic Church

Safeguarding Officers in your Parish

There is a poster in the Narthex of the Church with the photos, names and contact details of the Safeguarding officers in your Parish.

The Archdiocese of Perth is the first of Australia's Catholic dioceses to begin to establish Safeguarding Officers across its network of parishes.

The Safeguarding Office is responsible for ensuring the safety of children, young people and the vulnerable within the confines of the Catholic Church across the Archdiocese of Perth, educating the Catholic community on child protection and protective behaviours, and establishing Safeguarding Officers within Perth's metropolitan and rural parishes.



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