

# *Acolyte Training Manual*



Congratulations! You have joined a very important group in the service of our Lord. You will learn many new things and lots of funny words. The only requirements to be an Acolyte are that you are at least 11 years old, baptized in a Christian church, and willing to serve. As a leader in the service you must remember that you are a role model to all, including the younger children in the church. For this reason it is vital that you follow the service and not appear bored or tired. Thank you for your willingness to serve the Lord. The following are step-by-step instructions for each role you will be asked to perform. However, there are always exceptions. Be prepared to be flexible!

**Remember: Blessed are the flexible for they will not be bent out of shape.**

## **Dress**

**Crucifer** – alb (white robe) and cincture (rope)

**Plates and Torches** – red cassock and white cotta

**Lighting the Altar Candles** (Usually lit by the Crucifer and Plates, but anyone can do this.)

Two person:

1. Using candle-lighters process together to the front of the altar and (deep) bow.
2. Light the Gospel (on the left as you face the altar) and Epistle (on the right) candles in unison.
3. Return to the middle of the altar and bow.
4. Walk around the altar and light the candles behind the altar starting with the candles closest to the cross and work your way out.
5. Light the torches and return to the center of the altar. (Deep) bow.
6. Return to the vesting room.

(Note: When the Pascal candle [tall candle in the aisle] is out, light it first and extinguish it last.)

One person:

1. Approach the altar and (deep) bow.
2. Light the Epistle (on the right) first, the Gospel (on the left).
3. Return to the center of the altar and bow.
4. Walk around the altar and light the candles behind the altar starting with the candles closest to the cross and work your way out. The right side first and then the left.
5. Light the torches and return to the center of the altar. (Deep) bow.
6. Return to the vesting room.

### **Extinguishing the candles:**

1. Using candle-lighters process together to the front of the altar and (deep) bow.
2. Extinguish the Gospel (Note: Always do this first, if doing this alone, the Gospel candle should never burn alone) and Epistle candle in unison.
3. Return to the middle of the altar and bow.
4. Walk around the altar and extinguish the candles behind the altar starting with the outside and work your way towards the cross in unison.
5. Extinguish the torches and return to the center of the altar and (deep) bow.
6. Return to the vesting room.

### **Crucifer**

1. Make sure that all the acolytes are in place and ready to begin. If not inform the Acolyte Master or designee.
2. Ensure that the cross (procession cross) is at the back of the church.
3. Begin procession at the direction of the Priest. (Note: If we are using a Supply Priest ask them in advance when they would like to begin the procession, and if they would like to read the Gospel from the aisle.)
4. Process slowly to the first step up to the altar pause, and then put the cross in its stand to the right (as you are facing the altar) of the altar. Join the hymn being sung.
5. During the second hymn, at the direction of the Priest, get the Cross and process down the aisle to the fifth pew. Ensure that the Torches are waiting for you at the break in the altar rail. Turn and face the Priest, and rest the Cross on the ground.
6. Following the reading of the Gospel the Priest will stand aside and you will pass between the Torches returning to the altar {pause} and placing the Cross in its stand to the right of the altar.
7. Communion
  - a. After the Peace, and after the Plates person gets the plates, walk to the alter rail to meet the Ushers who will present the water, wine and Host Box (container with the wafers for the communion). Take the Host box first, remove the lid, and hand it to the Priest. The Priest will hand the Host Box back to you. Replace the lid and return it to the Credence table.
  - b. Return to the alter rail and take the wine and water from the family and take them to the Credence table. Remove the stoppers from the water and wine cruets. Pick them up and hold them for the Priest (handles facing the Priest). The Priest will take the wine first and then the water.
  - c. At this time the Plates person will hand you the service count. Place this on the corner of the altar for the Priest to see. (Note: The Priest may ask for more wafers, they are wrapped in foil and kept behind the Host Box.)
  - d. Pick up the towel in the Lavabo and place it over your left arm (like a waiter), hold the Lavabo in your left hand and face the Priest. The Priest will hand you the water cruet, and place their hands over the bowl. Pour the water over their hands until the Priest begins to rub their hands. The Priest will then take the towel from your arm and dry their hands. They will then place the towel on your arm, or in the bowl. Return the bowl, towel and water cruet to the Credence table.
  - e. Sit down.
  - f. At the fraction anthem (the music that follows the breaking of the bread) pick up the second chalice from the Credence table and place it on the altar. Join the priest behind the altar. The Priest will pour wine into the second chalice and place a chalice in front of you. When the Priest touches the paten that will be your signal to be ready to lift the chalice. Lift the chalice in unison when the Priest says, "The gifts of God for the people of God."
  - g. You will receive communion at the altar.
  - h. Sit down.
  - i. After the Ushers receive communion (the last ones), pick up the water cruet and hold it

- up for the Priest.
  - j. The Priest will then begin taking items from the altar and handing them to you. Place them on the Credence table.
  - k. Once the altar is cleared, sit down.
8. During the closing hymn, at the Priest's direction, get the cross from its stand and walk to the front of the altar. Wait for the torches to join you. Process down the aisle.
  9. Following the closing hymn, extinguish the candles per instructions.

### Plates

1. You follow both the Crucifer and the Torches in the Procession. Be sure to get the altar Bible before the service begins and carry it above your head during the procession. When you are in front of the altar pause, place the Bible on the altar, **bow**, and take your seat on the left side (as you are facing the altar) of the altar.
2. During the second hymn, when the Crucifer retrieves the cross, take the altar Bible from the altar (hold the Bible reverently). Follow behind the Crucifer and the Torches, and process down the aisle to the fifth pew. **Turn and face the Priest and present the Bible. The priest will take the Bible, open it to the passage to be read, and place it back in your hands while she reads. Upon conclusion of the reading of the Gospel the Priest will take the Bible, close it, and return it to you.** Stand to the side to allow the Crucifer and the Torches to pass by and then follow them to the altar with the Bible. Place the Bible on the altar, **bow**, and return to your seat.
3. After the Peace, and when the Priest takes her seat, walk to the Credence table. **Remember to bow when you cross in front of the altar.** Take the plates from under the Credence table, and take them to the altar rail.
4. As the Ushers approach, step to the break in the altar rail and hold the plates in front of you. The Ushers will take the top two. **Bow.** The Ushers should hand you the service count at this time. Turn and hand it to the Crucifer.
5. Take one step to the left and hold the large plate in front of you throughout the Offertory.
6. As the Ushers approach step to the break in the altar rail and hold the large plate out to collect the Ushers' plates. **Bow.**
7. Take the plates to the Priest (on the Crucifer side of the altar) and hand them to her. **Bow.**
8. Return to your seat remembering to **bow** when you cross in front of the altar.
9. At the fraction anthem (the music that follows the breaking of the bread) join the priest behind the altar. The Priest will pour wine into the second chalice and place a chalice in front of you. When the Priest touches the paten that will be your signal to be ready to lift the chalice. Lift the chalice in unison when the Priest says, "The gifts of God for the people of God."
10. You will receive communion at the altar, then **sit down.**
11. During the Closing Hymn watch for the Crucifer to retrieve the Cross. Take the Altar Bible from the altar, hold the Bible above your head, and follow behind the Crucifer and the Torches down the aisle.
12. Following the Closing Hymn, extinguish the candles per instructions, and return the Altar Bible to the altar.

### Torches

1. Follow the Crucifer in the procession. Process just behind and to either side of the Crucifer.
2. As the Crucifer takes the first step up to the altar they will pause, that is your cue to pause then turn toward your side of the church and place the Torch in its stand.
3. Sit down.
4. During the second hymn, at the cue of the Crucifer, get your torch and meet the other Torch person in front of the break in the altar rail. Follow the Crucifer to the fifth pew. Stop and face the other Torch person.
5. After the reading of the Gospel, allow the Crucifer to pass between each of you and then follow him/her to the altar rail, they will pause, which is your cue to pause then turn toward your side of

- the church and place the Torch in its stand.
6. Sit down.
  7. During the closing hymn, watch for the Crucifer to retrieve the Cross, get your torch and meet the other Torch person in front of the break in the altar rail. At the break in the altar rail, allow the Crucifer to pass between you and follow behind them in the procession.
  8. After the closing hymn return the torch to its stand.