

## Preparing to Serve

In preparing to serve each week:

- Look at the readings and prayers of the Mass and use them for your prayer.
- Reflect on how they speak of the love of God for all, and the quality of life that they call us to make our own
- Spend time in prayer, praying for yourself, and the other parish ministers—that the service you will offer will help people participate fruitfully in the Mass.
- Ask for the grace to be attentive both as a minister and as a member of the assembly throughout the celebration.
- Ensure that you will be at church in good time to carry out any necessary preparations for Mass.

*Whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all.*

*For the Son of Man*

*came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.*

Mark 10: 43–45



**G**od of power and mercy,  
only with your help  
can we offer you  
fitting service and praise.

May we live the faith we profess  
and trust your promise of eternal life.

Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ,  
your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you  
and the Holy Spirit,  
one God for ever and ever.

Collect: 31<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

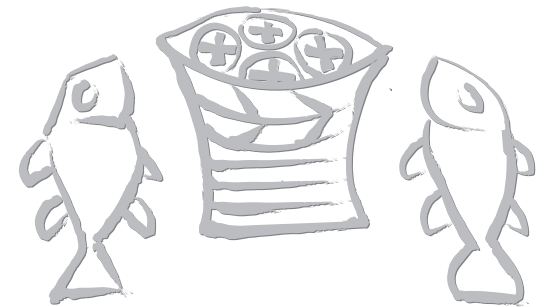
**Liturgy Office**  
ENGLAND & WALES

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www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources

## Servers and their ministry at Mass



*O come, bless the Lord,  
all you who serve the Lord,  
who stand in the house of the Lord,  
in the courts of the house of our God.*

PSALM 133

**T**he Eucharist is the vital centre of all that the Church is and does. At its heart is the real presence of the crucified, risen and glorified Lord, who continues his saving work among us. The Second Vatican Council reminded us: ‘the most holy Eucharist holds within itself the whole spiritual treasure of the Church, namely Christ himself, our Passover and our living bread’. (cf. *One Bread One Body* 3)

All who exercise a liturgical ministry need a proper preparation for their responsibilities. They are to have the competence to perform the particular ministry with which they have been entrusted. (cf. *Celebrating the Mass* 29)



This leaflet is one of a series of leaflets prepared for liturgical ministers to help them refresh their understanding of their role at Mass. The series draws on the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* and *Celebrating the Mass*, a document of the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales.

It is one of the collection of resources produced by the Liturgy Office to assist the work of liturgical renewal in England and Wales.

## What the Church says about...

The faithful should not refuse to serve the people of God gladly whenever asked to perform some particular ministry or role in the celebration. Women and men, the young and old, people of every race and way of life should avail of these opportunities so that the liturgy may be seen to be the work of the whole body of Christ.

Through the variety of liturgical ministries in the Church, the body of Christ is built up.

*Celebrating the Mass (CTM) 27–28*

### *The ministry of the server*

Service at the altar represents a long liturgical tradition. Servers exercise their ministry within the assembly and enhance the quality of celebration for the whole assembly by taking part in processions and by ensuring that all requisites for the celebration are available at the appropriate moments.

- Servers hold the book while the presiding priest proclaims the presidential prayers with outstretched hands. They bring and hold such things as books, thuribles, water jug and towel, plates and dishes, and microphones. They lead the entrance and concluding processions with the cross and candles; they escort the deacon (or priest) to the ambo and stand at his side while he proclaims the Gospel reading. They may, on more solemn

occasions, accompany the procession with the gifts. They look after the thurible, prepare it for the priest or deacon, and themselves may incense the assembly and other ministers.

- The number of servers will depend upon the circumstances and the tasks to be performed. Especially at large-scale celebrations, there should be a competent minister or master of ceremonies with responsibility for ensuring that these various tasks are properly assigned and carried out.

CTM 47

Even before the celebration itself, calm and opportunities for silent prayer and reflection have their proper place in the church, in the sacristy and in adjacent areas so that those gathering for the assembly of the Church may recollect themselves and begin to prepare for prayer together. Providing opportunities for such calm and quiet is one of the many ways in which a community is able to show hospitality to those gathering for worship.

CTM 92