



DIOCESE OF HARRISBURG
THE CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT
OF
CONFIRMATION WITHIN MASS
NOTES FOR ALTAR SERVERS



INTRODUCTION

These notes are supplied with the purpose of aiding the individual responsible for preparing the altar servers for the administration of the Sacrament of Confirmation. It is important that the servers understand the significance of their role in the liturgy and be prepared to carry it out in a reverent and respectful manner. During the actual ceremony, the servers will be supervised by a Master of Ceremonies assigned by the Bishop's Office. The servers should be informed that they are to follow the directives of the Master of Ceremonies. Servers should be reminded that they are to dress appropriately for the Confirmation ceremony. "Jeans and sneakers" are not acceptable.

THURIFER

The Thurifer will come to Bishop prior to start of procession and the Bishop will impose incense. After imposing, the Bishop will then bless the incense burning on the charcoal. Then the Thurifer closes the lid of the thurible. The Thurifer will lead the procession into the church. The Thurifer will carry the thurible and boat with incense. Upon arriving at the altar, the Thurifer will make a reverence to the altar and then move to the left side of the sanctuary to the left of the altar. The Thurifer will be prepared to approach the Bishop after the Bishop reverences the altar. The Bishop will impose incense. The Thurifer should give thurible to the Deacon, who in turn will hand the thurible to the Bishop. If no Deacon is present, then the Thurifer will hand the thurible directly to the Bishop. The Thurifer should return to his place at the left of the altar as the Bishop circles the altar, incensing it. Immediately after the Bishop has incensed the altar, the Thurifer moves to receive the thurible from the Deacon (or from the Bishop if there is no Deacon) and goes immediately to the sacristy.

After the Second Reading, the Thurifer approaches the Bishop and bows. The Thurifer hands the Master of Ceremonies the boat, kneels before the bishop, and opens the thurible for the imposition of incense. After, the Thurifer stands and goes to the ambo and stands

behind it. After the salutation and announcement, the Thurifer hands the thurible to the Deacon or Concelebrant who is to read the Gospel. The Thurifer remains near the ambo throughout the proclamation of the Gospel, swinging the thurible to his side. When the proclamation of the Gospel is completed, the Thurifer returns to the sacristy.

The Thurifer will again be needed during the preparation of the gifts. Immediately after the Candle Bearers give the celebrant the water and wine for the preparation of the chalice, and before the Bishop washes his hands, the Thurifer moves to the side of the altar and makes ready to move up to the Bishop. The Thurifer goes to the Bishop as the Acolyte returns to the credence table with the cruets. He hands the boat to the Deacon (if present). The Bishop will impose incense and then the Deacon will take the thurible and give it to the Bishop. The Thurifer should return to his place to the left of the altar as the Bishop incenses gifts and the altar. If no Deacon is present, then the Thurifer will hand the thurible directly to the Bishop. When the Bishop has completed the incensation, the Deacon will incense the Bishop, then the concelebrants, and then the congregation. Afterwards, he returns the thurible to the Thurifer. The Thurifer will then return to the sacristy. If no Deacon is present, the Thurifer should be prepared to incense the Bishop, concelebrants, and congregation. This is done by a bow to the person(s) being incense, then three swings of the thurible, and then a bow to the person(s) being incensed.

The Thurifer will not be needed again until the recessional. The Thurifer will move to the altar rail or front of the sanctuary immediately following the final blessing. The Cross Bearer and Candle Bearers line up behind him or her. When the Master of Ceremonies gives the signal, all will make a reverence to the Blessed Sacrament and the Thurifer will then lead the recessional down the center aisle.

CROSS BEARER

The Cross Bearer will lead the procession into the church following the Thurifer and with the Candle Bearers with lighted candles walking one on each side. Upon arrival at the sanctuary, the Cross Bearer with the Candle Bearers will reverence the altar and then to the sacristy and put the cross and candles in a convenient place so that they can get them again for the recessional at the end of Mass. The Cross Bearers will also assist the Candle Bearers with the washing of the Bishop's hands following the anointing with Holy Chrism as well as the washing of the Bishop's fingers following Holy Communion (see below).

RESPONSIBILITIES OF CANDLE BEARERS

The Candle Bearers are the main altar servers for the Mass. They will carry the candles in the entrance procession and the recessional. During the Mass, they will be responsible for washing the Bishop's hands, bringing the water and wine to the altar at the preparation and assisting at the altar and ringing bells (if used).

If candles are used for the Gospel Procession, the Candle Bearers get their candles following the Second Reading. They come and stand in front of the altar, leaving room in between for the deacon with the Book of the Gospels. When the deacon arrives the Candle Bearers bow to the altar, then lead the deacon to the ambo. They stand on each side of the ambo, facing the deacon. While the deacon returns the Gospel Book to the Bishop, the Candle Bearers go immediately to the sacristy.

The Candle Bearers will be prepared with ewer and basin, lemon, bread and towels to wash the Bishop's hands immediately following the administration of the Sacrament of Confirmation. They should stand at the credence table. The Master of Ceremonies will instruct them when to approach the Bishop. After the Bishop has washed his hands, the Candle Bearers return to the sacristy. ***Please note:** The Bishop does not bring an ewer and basin with him. He will simply use what the parish has for the washing of his hands.*

During the preparation of the gifts, the Candle Bearers will assist in the acceptance of the gifts and take the cruets to the altar for preparation of the chalice. After the chalice is prepared, the Candle Bearers will return to the credence table to get the ewer and basin for washing the Bishop's hands. They will approach the Bishop after the Bishop has incensed the gifts and the altar, and washed his hands.

After the Bishop returns to the altar with the ciborium following the distribution of Holy Communion, the Candle Bearers should be prepared with ewer and basin and towel to wash the Bishop's hands. They will move in front of the Bishop after the distribution of Holy Communion has ended and the Eucharist has been reserved in the tabernacle. They should then return ewer and basin to the credence table and move to the sacristy to prepare for the recessional.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF BOOK BEARER

The Book Bearer walks at the end of the procession **behind** the Miter Bearer and Crosier Bearer. The Book Bearer carries the Book against their chest while in procession. Upon arriving in the sanctuary, the Book Bearer makes reverence to the altar with the Miter Bearer and Crosier Bearer and then moves to a chair close to the presidential Chair, and waits for the Master of Ceremonies to direct him or her to come forward. The Book Bearer should stay close to the Miter Bearer and Crosier Bearer and pay careful attention to the Master of Ceremonies. When the Bishop is not using the book, the Book Bearer returns to his place in the sanctuary. The Confirmation Ritual is needed for the opening prayer of the Mass, the Confirmation ceremony, the prayer of the faithful, and the closing prayers, and the Roman Missal is needed for the prayers at the altar.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF CROSIER BEARER AND MITER BEARER

These roles are not used when a bishop is not present. The Crosier Bearer and Miter Bearer are used to carry the miter and crosier when they are not being worn by the Bishop. In procession, they always walk **behind** the Bishop. On their arrival in the sanctuary, the Master of Ceremonies will take the crosier from the Bishop and hand it to the Crosier Bearer. He will then remove the miter and hand it to the Miter Bearer. They will then make a reverence to the altar and move to their chairs positioned near the presidential Chair. *Remaining in place*, the Master of Ceremonies will direct them as needed. The Miter Bearer and Crosier Bearer are to pay careful attention to the Master of Ceremonies since they will receive and take their respective insignia from him during the ceremony. As a general rule, the Bishop will remove the miter whenever he prays and during the Gospel. He will wear the miter whenever he is seated. The Bishop will carry the crosier in procession and he will hold it during the Gospel.

*The Office for Divine Worship
Diocese of Harrisburg
4800 Union Deposit Road
Harrisburg, PA 17111
Phone 717.657.4804 • Fax 717.657.1370*