

# GUIDELINES FOR SACRISTANS

## St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, Hiawatha

*(Revised – 3/1/08)*

### ROLE

A sacristan serves the parish community in a valuable role by making physical preparations for the liturgy, assisting with needs during Mass and in attending to necessary details as the liturgy concludes. With time and experience, a sacristan becomes familiar with the many regular details needing careful attention at Mass each weekend and learns to anticipate additional needs when special events such as baptism are celebrated.

**Because of the many details which sacristans are responsible for, it is vitally important that you are here for your scheduled times. Arrive at least 30 minutes before Mass.** Please find a substitute if you are unable to be here.

### BEFORE MASS

1. Please dress to the dignity of the role.
2. Turn on all church and narthex lights, and parking lot lights, if needed.
3. ***Make sure the ushers open the coatroom door to help the traffic flow before and after Mass.***
4. Turn on sanctuary lights (switch on wall near amplifier in music area). This is on a dimmer switch and needs to be turned all the way up.
5. Turn on sound system (switch on wall near cry room).
6. Make sure the parish office door by the cry room is unlocked (If locked, the key in the keypad outside the church doors will unlock this door.).
7. Check sanctuary lamp (replacement votive lights in the sacristy).
8. Place key in tabernacle and check to see how many hosts are reserved (no more than about 20 hosts needs to be kept in reserve).
9. Set up credence table

#### **At all Masses:**

One corporal

One bowl and towel for washing hands

Cruet with fresh water

Pyxes prepared for taking communion to the sick on the small tray

Appropriate numbers of cups, purificators and bowls to be set up and ready as follows: ***(Please do not stack the gold bowls. Gold plated vessels scratch easily.)***

**For the 7 am Mass:** two cups, two purificators and ***two*** bowls.

**For the 5 pm, 9 am and 11 am Masses:** four cups, four purificators, and ***four*** bowls.

**For the 6 pm Mass:** four cups, four purificators and ***three*** bowls.

***At all of the Masses set out an additional gold bowl (with the numbers listed above) to enable to you to fill it to give to communion distributors that run out of hosts.***

10. Set out bread (**450** hosts per bag) and wine to match the size of the assembly. Be attentive to whether you need to remove or add more hosts as Mass begins to accommodate the number present. Note: We plan to have people receive from hosts that are consecrated at the Mass at which they attend. Too many hosts reserved in the tabernacle may make this impossible. No less than half of what is needed should always be consecrated at Mass. If there are many hosts reserved, you may want to ask Fr. Neil or Fr. Dennis how to best handle this. ***Pay attention to amounts of consecrated wine and bread left over at the end of communion. Use this information to adjust amounts in weeks to come.***
11. Check on petitions and readings.
12. Check ministry list five minutes before the Mass is to begin to make sure all ministries are filled. If not, find replacements.

## DURING MASS

1. ***Sit directly behind the altar servers in order to assist them in their duties when necessary. It is always helpful to sit close to the altar servers and priest in case a need arises during Mass.***
2. ***Be aware that due to a change in regulations, the priest will fill the four communion cups with wine at the altar during offertory. Bring the 4 cups to the altar as the altar servers are preparing the altar. (Note that the four purificators are not brought to the altar until right before communion.)***
3. At the beginning of the Sign of Peace, come forward with the other communion distributors. Help Bread 1 bring up the bowls and see that cups and purificators are brought up by the altar servers and arranged neatly on the altar.
4. The priest will give communion to you with other communion distributors. After receiving from the cup, give the cup and purificator to the Eucharistic minister next to you.
5. Be ready to give directions to the communion distributors when necessary.
6. Be attentive to all receiving. See that the communion distributors do not overlook those who are sick or infirm. ***Communion should be distributed first to the sick of infirm in the first row of seats before distributing to the rest of the assembly.***
7. Get hosts from the tabernacle after communion to the faithful begins, and return what is left after communion to the tabernacle.
8. ***If a communion distributor runs out of hosts, have an additional gold bowl filled and ready to hand to the distributor. Then fill the emptied bowl again to be ready if another distributor runs low.***
9. After communion help consume remaining consecrated wine at the credence table. ***Please make very effort to discreetly consume the remaining consecrated wine turning to the side as this is done.***

## AFTER MASS

1. The vessels are to be washed by the Eucharistic ministers in the sink located in the parish office workroom. Eucharistic ministers are to use the office door by the cry room to get to the workroom. After all vessels have been washed, place the gold chalice, platter, and bowls in the workroom cupboard. Place the pitcher back in the sacristy, and make sure the cups are put back on the credence table. Also, put used purificators in the basket for dirty linens (in the sacristy), and put out a clean corporal if necessary.
2. After the 5 pm, 11 am and 6 pm Masses, the tabernacle is to be locked and the key put away in the sacristy.

3. In addition, note if front doors need to be closed or parking lot lights need to be turned off following the 5 pm, 11 am and 6 pm Masses.

### **WHEN CELEBRATING BAPTISM AT MASS (clipboard in sacristy has schedule)**

1. Siphon holy water from the font into the 5 gallon pails and dump it outside on the grass: not onto the cement or down the drain. (Holy water should go back to the earth and not end up in the sewer). Wipe the sides of the font with a paper towel, then refill with all hot water. Buckets and a siphon hose are in the sacristy.
2. Turn on the lights for the font before Mass so the priest and family will be more visible and less shadowed at this location.
3. Reserve two rows of space for family(s) using seat savers (on the shelf in the coatroom).
4. Place an individual boxed baptismal candle, baptismal certificate and white personalized stole out on reserved seats for family.
5. Make sure an altar server lights the Easter Candle.
6. Place towels (one for each child and one for the priest) at the baptistery. Place a small towel at the font if the baptism is by infusion, i.e., pouring water; place a large towel at the font for each child if the baptism is by immersion.
7. In cases where immersion is being celebrated, a small table to dress the child must also be placed in the vicinity of the font and a large towel folded over on it to make a comfortable surface to lay down the infant.
8. Greet families for baptism, introduce yourself as sacristan and guide them to their seats. Be sure to let them know that the priest will be with them shortly for further directions.
9. Open the ambry and set the bowl of Sacred Chrism (the scented oil) out at baptistery right before Mass.
10. Have the handheld microphone ready and available for the priest so that he can question the parents as the baptism rite begins.

### **Other Items to Note...**

1. ***Be aware that we have a few parishioners that are gluten intolerant. They need to receive a special low gluten host. There is a small supply of these hosts in the freezer in the office workroom. The individuals needing these will alert you. Note that it is important to keep these hosts separate from the regular hosts. Put however many hosts are needed in the small glass bowl designated for this and make sure this glass bowl is placed on the altar during offertory. The priest will always be the one to distribute these hosts to these individuals. Have them tell you where they will be seated and then inform the priest of their location.***
2. The sacristan is responsible for putting the tabernacle key out and to safely put away as necessary.
3. Sacristans, along with ushers, need to know how to lock open the crash bars on the front doors and how to operate the parking lot lights. All four doors need to have the crash bars locked open as this helps prevent any dragging of the doors; hence, the electronic door may not open when needed.
4. **Sacristans need to be trained on how the shut off / reset the fire alarm after verifying it was set off inadvertently, and how to reset the elevator in an emergency.**

AFTER ANY MASS, IT IS HELPFUL FOR YOU TO GIVE RE-DIRECTION WHEN A MINISTER IS INCORRECT IN FOLLOWING PROCEDURE.

**Though most of what you do is “behind the scene,” your role is very important. Thank you for your time and dedication as a sacristan.**