

Acolyte's Reference Card

If you are not absolutely sure of what to do, keep this sheet with you. If in need of further help, don't be afraid to ask. Please be careful with candles and tapers - we don't want to set fire to anything or drip wax anywhere. When at the altar platform, sit or stand when the other servers do.

Before the Service

Put on your robe and then light the candles. When lighting candles behind the altars, always light the right-hand one first, then work across to the left. You can work together or separately at this - whatever you feel happier with. Don't forget to ask the crucifer or anyone else for help if you need it.

There are quite a few candles:

- 1) Six behind the high altar.
- 2) Four behind the sacrament chapel altar.
- 3) The votive candle (to the right of the altar platform and in front of a picture of the Virgin Mary.
- 4) The candles on either side of the votive candle.
- 5) The oil burners on the main (nave) altar.
- 6) The candles (called "tapers") you carry in the service.

Be ready to join the procession. The server's prayer we all say beforehand is:

"Almighty God, give us grace to remember that we are in your holy presence. Help us to serve you with reverence and attention, through Jesus Christ our Lord,

Amen".

When the Service Starts

Follow the MC, carrying your candles. The clergy will follow you. When you get near the main altar, reverence it (by bowing you heads briefly). Go one either side of the main altar, place your candles in the holders and sit down. Don't follow the crucifer all the way to the high altar!

Gradual Hymn

At some point in the hymn, the crucifer will go and get the cross. Be ready to follow the crucifer when he or she returns. When the crucifer stops and turns around (in the centre of the church), you should move so that you are one either side of the person holding the book. After the reading follow the crucifer to the main altar and return to your seats as you did in the entrance procession.

Offertory

Be ready to follow the crucifer as before, but this time we go to the back of the Church, round the font and back again without stopping. Return to your seats when we get to the main altar as before. Be ready to help, including taking the collection plates from the MC and putting them in the pulpit. Take anything placed on the corner of the altar nearest you by the clergy and put it on the offertory table (the table to the right of your seats).

Recessional (the final hymn)

Be ready to follow the MC as he or she leaves.

After Processing Out

When everyone has left the Church, the Celebrant will say:

"The Lord be with you."

You say: "And also with you."

Celebrant: "Let us bless the Lord."

You say: "Thanks be to God."

Celebrant: "May the souls ..."

Tidying Up

Put out the candles. When extinguishing candles behind the altars, always start with the left-hand one, then work across to the right. Be ready to assist if anyone else needs it. Don't forget to take off your robes as you might look a bit odd outside otherwise!

Many thanks for helping with this important task. Wonderful things can happen when we all do our bit with help from God. The service at St. Mary's is a good example.