

TEN GUIDELINES FOR MASTERS OF CEREMONY (MCs) IN THE HOLY MASS

Holy Cross, Catford, 2024

1. **Reverence for the Holy Mass:** The Holy Mass is our most sacred prayer, a celebration of God's mysteries. The sanctuary is a place of prayer, not mere activity. MCs should participate fully in the prayers and hymns of the Mass, setting an example for others.
2. **Early Arrival and Preparation:** Arrive at least 15 minutes before Mass. Ensure altar servers arrive on time, are properly vested, and maintain a prayerful atmosphere in the sacristy.
3. **Guiding, Not Replacing, Altar Servers:** The primary role of MCs is to guide and direct altar servers, not to perform their duties. Step in only when absolutely necessary.
4. **Minimizing Distractions at the Altar:** Avoid unnecessary movement at the altar. Altar servers should be well-trained beforehand to carry out their roles gracefully and efficiently.
5. **Gentle Correction:** If an altar server makes a mistake, offer private guidance after Mass to avoid causing embarrassment.
6. **Liturgical Knowledge:** Familiarize yourself with liturgical rules, colours, and the names of liturgical objects. Review the rubrics for special celebrations like Holy Week and Christmas.
7. **Lectionary and Missal Familiarity:** Gain a solid understanding of the Lectionary and Missal, including the proper readings and responses for each Mass.
8. **Recruitment of Altar Servers:** Be attentive to the congregation and identify potential new altar servers.
9. **Spiritual Mentorship:** Embrace your role as spiritual mentors and directors for the altar servers. Pray for them, organize retreats and outings, and consider forming an altar servers' club.
10. **Safeguarding:** Strictly adhere to safeguarding regulations. Any inappropriate behaviour can cause harm to the Church and deep spiritual pain to the victim. Avoid physical contact, being alone with children, or transporting them alone in your car. Remember, safeguarding also protects you from false accusations.

With every blessing,

Fr. Antony