Holy Apostles Altar Guild  
Customary  
for Holy Eucharist

To the Altar Guild:

Thank you for the essential work that you do! The parish owes you untold gratitude for serving as the helpmates of Christ in preparing the church for the Holy Mysteries each week.

This customary is designed to be a helpful guide to you as we all become comfortable in the new church. Much of what is compiled here you already know—and about some of it you could undoubtedly teach me a thing or two! If it raises questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to let me know.

As always, it is my desire to facilitate your ministry so that it is spiritually-fulfilling to you and life-giving to the congregation.

Christ’s peace,  
Fr. Barkley+

The Arrangement of the Sanctuary

The sanctuary is that part of the church to the east* of the altar rail and which encompasses the altar and its environs.

Directly behind the altar is the long retable. The week’s floral arrangement sits in the center of the retable, and three brass candlesticks sit on either side.

On either end of the retable are the credence tables.

On the Gospel side credence table sits the aumbry, which houses the reserve sacrament. Consecrated oil for both unction and chrismation is also housed in the aumbry. The key to the aumbry is never to be removed from the lock, even temporarily, for any reason.

During times that the church is not prepared for Holy Eucharist, the altar book stand and altar book are set on the epistle side credence table. For Holy Eucharist, the epistle side credence table is where the vessels for Holy Eucharist are placed.

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* Regardless of geography, in ecclesiastical terms the “east” side of the church is always where resides the altar. The meaning of this symbolism is that the sun rises in the east; east is thus the direction of Resurrection.
During times that the church is not prepared for Holy Eucharist, on the altar are a fair linen, sometimes a frontal cloth, two brass candlesticks, and, in the center, the brass altar cross.

**Instructions for 9:00 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist**

I. All set-up for Holy Eucharist should be completed no later than twenty minutes prior to the beginning of the service.

II. On the altar the altar book stand and altar book are placed on the epistle side hand side. In the center of the altar is placed the veiled stack. The stack consists of, from bottom to top:
   A. Brass chalice
   B. Brass paten
   C. Pall
   D. Veil (according to seasonal color)
   E. Burse; within which are:
      1. corporal
      2. two purificators

III. On the epistle side credence table are set:
   A. 2nd brass chalice
   B. Paten with one round loaf of Communion bread
   C. Lavabo bowl and linen
   D. Silver spoon
   E. Paten with three rice wafers in a ziplock baggy. (Set these on the credence table for the 9 a.m. Eucharist. If after that service they remain, leave them in place for the 11:15 a.m. Eucharist. If after the 11:15 service they still remain, ask the celebrant whether they have been consecrated. If so, place them in their baggy in the aumbry. If not, return them to the sacristy.)

IV. At the back of the nave next to the baptismal platform is a third table identical to the credence tables. It is from this table that the oblationers will retrieve the elements and process them to the altar at the offering. Upon this table are set:
   A. Cruet of wine to be consecrated (estimate 140 communicants for 9 a.m.; estimate 100 communicants for 11:15 a.m.)
   B. Cruet of water
   C. Paten with round loaf of Communion bread

V. On the shelf in the pulpit, please place two cups of water.

VI. When the altar has been prepared, before leaving the sanctuary please make sure that any trays or other items used during set-up are removed. Also, please make sure that the kneeling cushions are in
place, with a space Gospel side in front of the altar rail gates, and that the altar rail gates are open.

Instructions for 5:15 p.m. Bluegrass Mass

I. All set-up for Bluegrass Mass should be completed no later than twenty minutes prior to the beginning of the service.

II. On the altar are the candlesticks, the altar book stand, and the altar book.

III. On the epistle side credence table are set:
   A. Ceramic chalice
   B. Ceramic paten
   C. Wooden ciborium with at least 45 Communion wafers and one large host wafer
   D. Cruet with wine to serve approx. 50 communicants
   E. Cruet of water
   F. Corporal
   G. Purificator
   H. Lavabo bowl and linen
   I. Silver spoon

IV. After Bluegrass Mass, the celebrant will return the used altar vessels to the sacristy. The Altar Guild is responsible for cleaning them prior to the following week’s Bluegrass Mass.

For a Baptism

Baptism always occurs in conjunction with a celebration of Holy Eucharist. In addition to the regular preparation for Eucharist, for a baptism the following set-up is needed on the baptismal font platform:

I. The small baptismal table is to be placed at the back of the platform in front of the columbarium. (This table is kept in the choir vesting room.)

II. Upon the table are to be placed:
   A. Oil stock of chrism (brass; kept in the aumbry)
   B. Baptismal candle and lighter
   C. Towel
   D. Large pitcher of warm water
Additional instructions

I. Each week prior to the 9:00 a.m. Eucharist, please check:

1. The fair linen. If dingy, please replace.

2. The reserve sacrament (both wine and wafers) in the aumbry.
   
   A. If the **reserve cruets of wine** is less than half full, then an extra cruets of wine should be set out on the epistle side credence table to be blessed at the 9 a.m. Eucharist. After the service this wine is to be added to the cruets in reserve.

   B. If the **brass ciborium of consecrated wafers** has fewer than forty wafers in it, then wafers should be set out in the wooden ciborium to be blessed at the 9 a.m. Eucharist. After the service, these wafers are to be added to the brass ciborium in the aumbry.

3. The liquid wax level in the candles on the altar, on the retable, and in the torches. (Liquid wax is to be stored in the sacristy) Refill as necessary.

4. When the acolytes inform the altar guild that the wicks in the candle snuffers need to be replaced, the altar guild replaces them. (The candle snuffers are kept on the wall to the epistle side of the epistle side credence table. Extra wicks are to be stored in the sacristy.)

5. The reserve sacrament candle. This candle remains burning whenever there is reserve sacrament in the aumbry. Please replace as necessary. (Extra candles are to be stored in the sacristy.)

6. The hymn numbers on the hymn board. Please check the service leaflet and place the correct hymn numbers on the board.

II. After any service of Holy Eucharist, if there is consecrated wine remaining in the chalice, it is to be poured down the piscina. If there is consecrated wine remaining in the cruets, check to see if there is room for it in the reserve cruets in the aumbry. If there is no room, pour it down the piscina.
III. After any service of Holy Eucharist, if there is consecrated bread remaining, members of the Altar Guild may consume it (taking care not to drop crumbs) or may return it to the earth on the parish grounds.

IV. A week prior to each new liturgical season, please confer with the rector to determine which hangings and frontals should adorn the church.

V. For feasts and fasts (Ash Wednesday, Holy Week, Observed saints’ days, etc.), the rector will confer with the Altar Guild in advance to determine liturgical colors to be used as well as any variations in preparation for the service.