

The Ministers at Mass

It takes quite a few people to celebrate Mass well. In larger parishes there can be as many as forty or fifty people ministering (if you count the choir). In smaller parishes, the number is usually far smaller. "To minister" means "to serve." So all of these people serve the community, helping them worship well.

Priest Celebrant - *This* is the priest who presides over the celebration of the Mass. Sometimes, at what is called a concelebrated Mass, there can be more than one priest. But the one who presides is the one you should be concerned most about. Mostly, your job is to help him.

Deacon — This person may or may not be part of your team. When present, the deacon usually proclaims the Gospel, preaches, prepares the gifts for Eucharist, helps to distribute Communion, and gives directions to the people.

Acolytes — You, and what this book is about.

Lector - **This** is the person who reads the first two readings. There can be two lectors: one for the first reading, one for the second. In some parishes, this person also leads the responsorial psalm.

Cantor - **This** is the leader of song. This person leads the hymns, acclamations, and frequently the responsorial psalm.

Music Director — This person is in charge of all the music in the parish. Frequently this person is also the choir director or organist.

Musicians - *These* people play the various instruments that accompany the music for the Mass. Choir members are also ministers.

Commentator - *This* person makes announcements and helps the congregation follow the order of Mass. The lector can fill this role.

Ushers - *These* people greet the community as they arrive for Mass. They try to be sure that everyone is comfortably seated. They take up the collection at Mass.

Sacristan —This person usually works before Mass, making sure that everything that is needed is where it belongs. You may be asked to help with his work.

Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist —*These* ministers assist at Communion. In some parishes they are part of the procession.