



Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Detroit

Greek Orthodox Church of Saint Nicholas

3109 Scio Church Road, Ann Arbor, MI. 48103 Phone: 734/332-8200 Fax: 734/332-8201 Rev. Father Nicolaos H. Kotsis

Altar Boy Directions

This guide will help you understand when to get ready for a procession, when to get ready for an entrance, and what to get ready.

1. Five minutes before the Divine Liturgy starts, someone should make sure that the censor is ready for the priest and should hand it to him.
2. Once the Liturgy starts, the first thing needed is for you to get ready for the Small Entrance. That happens after the choir sings “Soson Imas Yie Theou” and “O monoyenis Yios...” 2 Altar boys need to get the lanterns ready. When the priest goes around the Altar Table with the Gospel Book, you start the Small Entrance.
3. The next thing to prepare for is going out for the Gospel reading. While the epistle is being read, 2 altar boys should prepare the lanterns for the Gospel reading. When the priest says, “Sofia, orthie..” or “Wisdom, arise...” they should go out for the Gospel.
4. After the Gospel and after the sermon, the next thing to prepare is the censor. The priest needs the censor just before the Great Entrance.
5. While the priest is censuring the iconostasis and the people, the altar boys should prepare the lanterns, fans, and cross for the Great Entrance. When the priest is done with the censuring, he’ll give you a nod so you know when to go out and start the procession.
6. After the procession and after the priest goes back into the altar, the altar boy holding the censor should be the first one back in. As soon as that altar boy goes in, he should give the censor to the priest.
7. After the Great Entrance, the next thing is for the altar boys to go out and help the congregation read the Creed. The key to know when to do this is to watch the priest. He’ll look at the congregation in the pews and say, “Peace be with you all” or “Ireenee pasee.” That’s when half the altar boys need to be ready to leave from one door, and the other half from the other door. After the priest then lifts up his arms and says, “Let us love one another...” or “Agapeesomen, alleelous...” they should go outside and line up. The altar boys should say the creed in unison and loudly as they are leading the parish in its recitation. After the creed is read, they should turn to the icon they are in front of, do their cross, then come back into the altar. (Remember, you start saying the creed after the priest holds up the cloth (aeir) and says “The doors the doors...” or “Tas theeras, tas theeras...”)
8. After the Creed, you need to then be ready for when you kneel. Also, right after the creed is completed, plug in the hot water pot so the water has time to heat up. When you kneel, do not put your heads on the ground, just kneel on your knees. When the priest says, “Ta sa ek ton son..” or “We offer to you these gifts” as he lifts up the



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patton and the chalice, an altar boy should prepare the censor before he kneels. After we are done kneeling, he should give the priest the censor.

9. After we are done kneeling, you also need to give the bread to the priest so he can bless it for antithoron.
10. The next thing is to go out for the Lord's Prayer. When the congregation sits down as the priest says petitions, the altar boys should line up and great ready to go out just as they did for the creed. When the priest says, "And count us worthy master..." or "Kai kataxioson imas despota..." go outside and line up just like for the creed. After you lead the Lord's Prayer in Greek and English, come inside just like you do for the creed.
11. The next thing is to give the HOT water to the priest. After the Lord's prayer, when you come back into the altar, one of the altar boys needs to pour the hot water into the pitcher and bring it close to the priest.
12. While the priest is pouring the hot water into the chalice, the altar boys should start reading the prayers that are to be said just prior to communion.
13. After you are done with those prayers, some of the altar boys need to get ready to take some of the antithoron out for communion. The captain (and another older altar boy if there is more than 1 priest) should help the priest with the communion cloth.
14. When the priest is communing the people, someone should get the censor ready. When the priest comes back into the altar after communion, he needs the censor. After the priest uses the censor, stay near him. When he brings the chalice to the side table (prothesis) you need to cense in front of him (since he's carrying the communion in the chalice).
15. After communion, and if there is a memorial, the altar boys should get ready for it. Take two lanterns and the censor. The priest will go in front of the icon of Christ to read a prayer, when he comes back inside, go out and stand on each side of the table on the solea. When the memorial is done, just go back inside.
16. After the announcements, get ready for the antithoron.
17. While some are helping with antithoron, the rest **MUST** clean up the altar boy area. There should be no bread crumbs on the ground, **ALL** robes and belts should be hung properly, and everything should be left in an orderly manner.

TO BE TONSURED AS A READER

When the Metropolitan comes to visit our parish, likely in December, I ***may*** submit to him a list of names of acolytes who are prepared to be honored by being tonsured as readers in the Church. This is an honor and a



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privilege and must be earned. The following set of criteria must be met in order for you to be tonsured as a reader:

1. You must be at least 12 years old (*If you are younger than 12 years old, I suggest you start practicing your reading by using the list below*)
2. You must have excellent attendance on the days you are scheduled for altar duty (not good or okay attendance – EXCELLENT attendance)
3. You must behave appropriately in the altar or any church events (including GOYA events)
4. You must behave appropriately at school and home
5. You must know the Creed by heart (English or Greek)
6. You must know the directions on the “Altar Boy Directions” sheet
7. You must be able to read well and when asked to do so

You will be tested on the following material. You should study this material and be ready to read it by January 1st, 2009:

- Psalms from the Orthros: 3 (O Lord, why are they...), 37 (O Lord do not rebuke me...), 62(63) (O God, my God...), 87(88) (O Lord God of my salvation...), 102(103) (Bless the Lord...), 142(143) (Lord hear my prayer...)
- Psalm from Vespers: 103(104) (Bless the Lord, O my soul...)
- Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans (all of it)
- First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (all of it)
- Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians (all of it)
- Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians (all of it)
- The First Epistles of St. Peter and of St. John (all of them)
- Matthew (Chapters 5-7)
- Mark (Chapters 15-16)
- Luke (Chapters 1-4)
- John (Chapters 1, 6, 10-11, 13, 15, 19-21)
- Genesis (Chapter 1)
- Jonah (Chapters 1-4)
- Daniel (Chapter 3)
- Ezekiel (Chapter 37:1-14)



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