

## MC2 AT HIGH MASS

It is customary to employ an MC2 at Solemn Mass; of course, the pontifical ceremonies presume its use. Fortescue<sup>1</sup> describes MC2's duties for all of the various seasonal ceremonies in their solemn form. An MC2 can also be employed at High Mass with minor adaptation to assist MCI with the more complex ceremonies or to add solemnity to a festive occasion.<sup>2</sup> The method described herein is an adaptation for High Mass of MC2's duties during a Solemn Mass.<sup>3</sup>

### GENERAL RULES

-MC2 is usually on the left, while MCI is on the right.

### DUTIES

-MCI has charge of C and overall supervision of the ceremonies, while MC2 has charge of the sacred inferior ministers. Hence, MC2 must have a perfect knowledge of the other servers' duties in addition to his own.<sup>4</sup>

-In certain cases, MC2 may also have to coordinate or prompt the clergy who are in choir, as well as the laity in the nave. In both cases this must be done discretely without causing undue distraction.

-MC2 has two other consistent duties during Mass:

1. **moving the missal** during each incensation of the altar.
2. **marshaling processions:**
  - processional
  - Gospel action
  - whenever the Tbs are led into or out of the sanctuary
  - recessional

### PROCESSIONAL

- a. **if Th is carrying the thurible with blessed incense:** MC2 follows behind Th at a distance of 4 pews.
- b. **if Th is not carrying the thurible:**<sup>5</sup> MC2 processes at the head of the ministers with Th on his left. If there is a boatbearer, Th processes with Bb behind MC2.

-upon reaching the foot, MC2 genuflects, goes to the Gospel side of the foot and faces across the sanctuary awaiting the arrival of C.

-when MCI arrives at the foot, he also turns to face across the sanctuary, and when C arrives at the foot, MC2 turns towards the altar and genuflects again upon MCI's signal.

### IF THERE IS AN ASPERGES

-MC2 remains at his normal position (Gospel corner of the foot), and leads the servers while bowing towards the altar for the *Gloria Patri*.

-after the *Asperges* is finished, MC2 turns inwards with MCI and then shoulder-to-shoulder with MCI leads C to the sedilia, where MC2 takes his place on the left-hand side of C while he vests.

-when C has finished vesting, MC2 goes shoulder-to-shoulder with MCI to lead C back to the foot, pairing off with MCI to leave space for C upon arriving there. MC2 kneels on MCI's signal for the Preparatory Prayers.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Ceremonies of the Roman Rite Described*, Adrian Fortescue (Burns & Oates, 1962—St. Austin Press, 1996).

<sup>2</sup> NB: It is not proportionate to employ a second MC during a High Mass offered on a second class Sunday or third class feast, ferial or any other lower ranking day or office, unless a complex ceremony accompanies (e.g., an ordination)..

<sup>3</sup> In turn adapted from his duties at a solemn Pontifical Mass.

<sup>4</sup> In chapters of the Archconfraternity of St. Stephen, a qualified MC should hold this position.

<sup>5</sup> Either Th has his hands folded, or is accompanying C with MCI for the *Asperges* in holding the aspersory.

## PREPARATORY PRAYERS

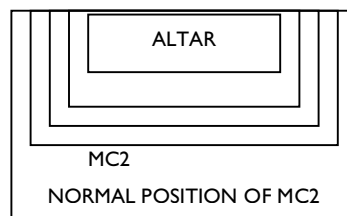
-MC2 acts as Ac2 at Low Mass during the Preparatory Prayers. When finished assisting with C's alb, MC2 rises, meets MCI at the center of the foot, genuflects, turns inward and goes with MCI shoulder-to-shoulder to the Epistle side to remove the missal during the first incensation.

## FIRST INCENSATION OF THE ALTAR

-MC2 removes the missal at the appropriate moment<sup>6</sup> in conjunction with the server who retrieves the boat (either Ac2 or Bb).

## NORMAL POSITION OF MC2

-after returning the missal to the altar, MC2 goes to the foot, genuflects in unison with the (last) genuflection made by C while incensing the altar, and goes to his normal position: the Gospel corner of the foot (opposite of MCI's usual foot position). During Mass, MC2 leads the turns and bows towards the altar for the servers.



## DURING THE GLORIA

-towards the end of the *Gloria* said by C at the altar, after bowing for "*Suscipe deprecationis nostram*", MC2 meets MCI at the center of the foot. MC2 remains there until the cross is signed during "*cum Sancto Spiritu...*", then both MCI and MC2 genuflect in unison, turn inwards and go to the sedilia.

## WHENEVER C SITS AT THE SEDILIA

-whenever C goes to the sedilia, MC2 accompanies MCI to lead C there.

[should C and MCI go *per brevior* (e.g. for the *Kyrie* or *Gradual*), MC2 genuflects at the center of the foot alone, and joins them at the sedilia]

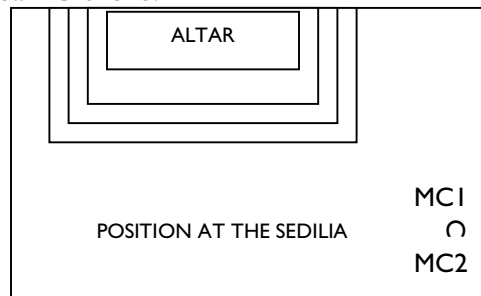
-C, MCI and MC2 genuflect, turn inward, and MC2 meets MCI shoulder to shoulder, and then both lead C to the sedilia.

-upon arriving at the sedilia, both allow C to pass through to sit, while simultaneously assisting him with his chasuble.

Both then face each other on either side of C (MCI faces the nave, while MC2 faces the rear sanctuary wall).

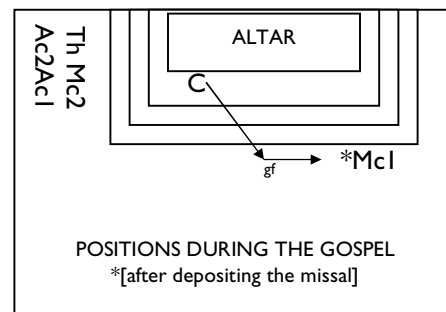
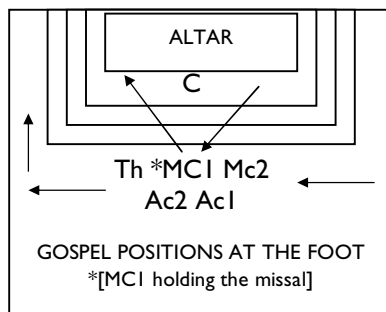
-both bow to C and towards the altar as usual for those times prescribed.

-when C returns to the foot, MC2 again goes shoulder to shoulder with MCI, genuflects at the foot, and then returns to his normal position.



## GOSPEL ACTION

-when MCI and Th ascend to have incense imposed, MC2 genuflects at the foot, and goes to the credence and takes his position at the front right-hand position of the box formation.



<sup>6</sup> Cf. Acolytes at High Mass notes.

-when all is ready, MC2 conducts Th and the acolytes to the foot for the Gospel, leaving room in the center for MCI.  
-when MCI descends with the missal, MC2 signals a genuflection, and then all go to their Gospel positions.

[**MCI:** After replacing the missal, MCI goes *per brevior* to his usual Epistle position at the foot for the reading of the Gospel, facing the missal]

-during the Gospel reading, MC2 performs all of the actions normally allotted to MCI.  
-when the Gospel is completed, MC2 moves the missal to the Canon position, and returns to his normal Gospel side position either for the intonation of the *Credo* or the sermon.

## **SERMON**

-if there is a sermon, MC2's takes his normal position at the sedilia.  
-if C gives the sermon, and if necessary to prevent turning his back to him, MC2 should face *across* the sanctuary. Otherwise, if C is seated at the sedilia, he will face MCI as usual.

## **CREDO**

-during the *Credo*, MC2 acts just like MCI, but on the opposite side.

## **OFFERTORY**

-MC2 removes the missal for the Offertory incensation as AcI normally would<sup>7</sup> and then returns to his normal position, where he is incensed with one double.  
-then MC2 meets Th<sup>8</sup> at the foot, signals a genuflection, and goes to his queuing position with Th (who goes to incense those in the nave).  
-MC2 ensures that the Tbs line up correctly, and when Th has returned from incensing the faithful and all are ready, signals a genuflection, and leads the Tbs out of the sanctuary with Th on his left.

## **SANCTUS**

-MC2 leads the Tbs in with Th on his left at the *Sanctus*, ensures they line up correctly, signals all to genuflect, then a kneel for just the Tbs, and returns to *MCI's normal position at the foot on the Epistle side*.<sup>9</sup> From there he ensures that the servers perform their duties, intervening discretely if necessary.

## **HANC IGITUR TO THE CONSECRATION**

-after the bell is rung for the *Hanc igitur*, MC2 imposes one spoonful of incense into the thurible, and takes position at the foot on the epistle side of the altar, with Th on his left.  
-during the Elevations, MC2 kneels on the first altar step with Th and makes the bows in unison with him for each accompanying genuflection.  
-after the Consecration action, MC2 signals all to rise, and resumes his former Epistle corner, foot position.

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. the Acolytes at High Mass notes.

<sup>8</sup> And where practiced, Cb (cf. the Crossbearer notes for Cb assisting with the Communion gate).

<sup>9</sup> While technically, MC2's position is on the Gospel-side of the sanctuary, it is often necessary for the coordination of the servers to position MC2 in MCI's normal position as MCI is involved with assisting C during the *Canon*.

## **C's COMMUNION**

-MC2 turns and bows with MC1 towards the altar center while C consumes the Host after which MC2 ensures that the servers line up at the foot for Communion (while the acolytes turn over the Communion cloth). MC2 then takes position to the far right of the formation; these are the *recta linea* positions at foot:

**MC1 Ac2 [Cb] Ac1 [Bb] Th MC2**

## **COMMUNION**

-after receiving, MC2 signals all of the actions for descending *in plano* from the predella and then resumes his *normal position* and signals all to kneel (MC2 kneels on first altar step).

## **ABLUTIONS**

-MC2 queues with Th, ensures first that the Tbs are lined up correctly, then signals a genuflection for all and leads them in and out as before.

-upon arriving back in the sanctuary, MC2 resumes his normal position.

## **LAST GOSPEL**

-after signing himself, MC2 ensures that the servers are lined up correctly for the recessional.

-when this has been done, MC2 takes position in the formation as he did for the processional.