

## MASTER OF CEREMONIES FOR HIGH MASS (MISSA CANTATA)

### REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS OF A MASTER OF CEREMONIES

A master of ceremonies (MC) must be what his title entails: the *master*, or expert, on the liturgical ceremonies. Hence, he must not only fully know the positions of the inferior ministers at High Mass, but also be acquainted with the celebrant's actions. Additionally, the MC should have a thorough understanding of the general principles of the Roman Rite,<sup>1</sup> be acquainted with the various liturgical books,<sup>2</sup> the liturgical office of the schola and how it affects the MC's position,<sup>3</sup> and of course, the layout and preparation of the missal.

The MC must also know how to correct a problematic situation with tact and discretion; this is especially true when advising the celebrant (C). In dealing with the servers, any corrections made (especially from a distance) should be as inconspicuous as possible. For minor matters, it is often better to simply let the matter pass and address it later outside of the ceremony in the sacristy.

### CONCERNING THE ORGANIZATION OF THE PREPARATIONS BEFORE MASS

The MC must oversee all of the preparations that are necessary before the beginning of Mass. You must ensure they are done correctly and on time so that Mass may start as scheduled. As MC, you should remain the sacristy as much as possible, directing the preparations from there (there should be a permanent duties checklist in the sacristy assigning each server a specific duty to complete before Mass). In this way, you can ensure the servers are keeping silence in the sacristy, are organized and that any last minute details can be taken care of easily (such as replacing late servers). Whenever possible, *delegate* any additional duties to the servers to handle, so your own hands are kept free. The MC must sometime before Mass begins, check the sanctuary to ensure all tasks have been completed correctly.

### GUILD PRAYERS (for the chapters of the Archconfraternity of St. Stephen)

Ten minutes before Mass, the MC leads all of the servers into the sanctuary for the before Mass prayers. All line up *recta linea* at the foot, MC signals a genuflection and then a kneel. All servers respond together at a moderate pace according to the directions on the card. After having said the prayers, MC signals all to rise, then signals a genuflection and all return to the sacristy.

### LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

Ten to five minutes before Mass, AcI should light the High Mass candles.

### GENERAL RULES FOR THE MC DURING HIGH MASS AND OTHER CEREMONIES

#### Signaling

-Signaling is done to coordinate C and the servers when to genuflect, kneel, stand and even sometimes to sit.

-Signaling is done by clapping<sup>4</sup> in three types of volume (loudness):

1. For C (when MC is next to him); loud enough (very soft) so that only C may hear it.
  2. For servers: loud enough so that only those in the sanctuary can hear it.
  3. For the congregation; loud enough so that all in the nave can hear it (if music like the *Te Deum* is being played at the same time, it will have to especially loud so that it can heard *above* the music).
- A **single clap** is used to signal:
    - a. a single knee genuflection (occasionally as on Good Friday to perform a moderate bow in place of a genuflection)
    - b. to stand
    - c. to sit
  - A **double clap** is used to signal:

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The General Principles of the Roman Rite (For Inferior Ministers)* from Romanitas Press (2008). Some of these principles will be mentioned in passing within these notes.

<sup>2</sup> For High Mass, this includes the *Missale Romanum*, the *ordo* (for determining the calendar rubrics; a copy of *The Rubrics of the Roman Breviary and Missal* available from Preserving Christian Publications is also helpful), *Liber Usualis* (for looking up the various chant cues), and even the intonation card often used for the *Gloria*, *Credo*, and *Ite, missa est*.

<sup>3</sup> E.g., when there is time to sit at the sedilia during the chanting of a *Kyriale* part or the pre-Gospel chant propers.

<sup>4</sup> The snapping of fingers is inappropriate and undignified for use in the sanctuary, nor can the volume be controlled accordingly.

- a. to kneel
- b. perform a double knee genuflection (*i.e.*, two claps, then kneel, make a moderate bow and then rise without signaling again).

A clap is made in two ways:

1. Clapping the tips of your folded hands together (this method allows you to control the volume of the clap).
2. Clapping the extended fingers against the *flat open palm* of the opposite hand; do not clap your hands cupped palm to palm (*i.e.*, as would be done usually).

### **Solita oscula**

*Solita oscula* is Latin for “with the customary kisses.” These are given to certain objects and C’s right hand as signs of reverence. At times the rubrics call for most of them to be omitted (the only truly necessary ones is during a Solemn Mass when the deacon present the prepared chalice to C at the Offertory and when the deacon presents the paten to C after the *Pater noster*): *i.e.*, during a Requiem Mass, Mass with the Blessed Sacrament Exposed, and during Good Friday.

The mode of giving the *solita oscula* is as follows:

- **when giving:** Object first, then C’s hand (if C is a bishop, you kiss his ring in all cases instead)
- **when receiving:** C’s hand first, then object

The only objects and what parts you kiss during a High Mass are as follows:

- biretta; kiss the side of the biretta, not the pompom or fins.
- aspergil (sprinkler); kiss towards the end of the handle.
- incense spoon; kiss towards the end of the handle.
- thurible; kiss the disk (where all of the chains join at the top).

There are **two exceptions** to the rule regarding the **reception of sacramentals**:

- candle when receiving from C (on Candlemass): kiss the candle *first* and then C’s hand
- palm when receiving from C (on Palm Sunday) same as for candle

When presenting anything else, no *solita oscula* are given.

### **GIVING THE THURIBLE**

Whenever the MC gives the thurible to C, he does so not only with the *solita oscula* in their proper order, but also in this fashion: Holding the disk in the right hand, and the middle part of the chain in the left, give the thurible to C with your *right hand over your left hand* (another words, give the disk first, then the chain). This motion will be assumed throughout these instructions.

### **POINTING OUT TEXT**

Many times during Mass, the MC will need to indicate the proper text that C will read; this is a part of the MC’s duty, and he should always look at the texts slightly ahead of pointing them out so that he may do so correctly. When indicating a text, the MC does so by laying his right hand (palm upwards with fingers touching and extended) for a brief moment above the text that C is suppose to read.

### **BOWING**

All three types of bows are employed during High Mass by the MC (and Th). Simple and moderate bows are performed as when you would during a Low Mass. The difference is, when standing, pivot on your feet and face the tabernacle to make the appropriate bow, then turn back to face in your former position. The profound bow (made low enough so your fingers could touch your knees) is only made before and after incensing C.

-At the sedilia: Whenever C sits at the sedilia, the MC signals C when he should remove his biretta and bow. The MC does this by turning towards C and bowing slightly at him before the word or phrase arrives at which a reverence must be made, and then by making a right turn, facing the tabernacle and making a simple bow. Then turning back in the opposite direction (*i.e.*, left) to face the nave again. These occasions occur namely:

- During the *Gloria* (for all of the words that require a bow as at Low Mass)
- During the Gradual-Alleluia (or if the Alleluia is substituted with a Tract, or added to with a Greater Alleluia, and/or Sequence) (cf. below)
- During the *Credo* (cf. below for the MC's position during the *Credo*)

-During the Gradual, etc.: If the choir sings the Gradual, etc., in the full Gregorian chant, instead of Psalm toning it, the MC must consult the *Liber* before Mass to know the proper word to use as the cue for signaling C to return to the altar. This word should be on the fourth line from the bottom of the last text to be sung. However, during a Sequence, the MC should use a word from about the tenth line, since a Sequence is generally sung at a quicker pace.

## GENUFLECTING

Genuflections are made as usual, with exception to the rules of *ratione accommodationis* and *coram Sanctissimo* which both occur during a High Mass for the MC.

***Ratione accommodationis:*** This Latin phrase means *with reasonable accommodation* and describes a circumstance where an inferior minister breaks the normal rule that applies to him to be in unison with a sacred minister's action. This rule has its effect on the MC during the Canon of the Mass in regards only to the genuflections (not the liturgical gestures). While inferior ministers are not allowed to genuflect on the predella, the MC (and Th) does so at these times:

- During each incensation of the altar in conjunction with C.
- During the Canon, after the Consecration, when C does so.

Also in both cases listed above, the MC puts his inside hand under C's elbow each time C genuflects.

***Coram Sanctissimo:*** This phrase in Latin means *in the presence of the Most Holy* and describes the condition when the Blessed Sacrament is considered exposed. During High Mass, this takes place *for the MC only* when he is on the predella,<sup>5</sup> from the Consecration until C's *Domine non sum dignus*. Thusly, when the MC leaves the predella before C's Communion, he must make a genuflection *in plano* due to this condition. This condition also occurs for everyone else during the Distribution of Communion who before ascending to or descending from the predella or upon entering or leaving the sanctuary (in this instance, a double-knee genuflection is made).

## RESPONDING

The MC is to make all of the responses as he would if he were serving a Low Mass, except that where required, the MC should sing them in a moderate voice.

## ASSUMPTIONS

Within these instructions, it is assumed that the MC already perfectly knows from having served Low Mass when and for what he ought to bow and when he assists C with his alb while ascending steps. Therefore, these items will not be mentioned generally in the instructions.

## ARRIVAL IN THE SACRISTY

The MC should arrive in the sacristy no later than thirty minutes before the start of Mass in order to have his duties completed before the first server arrives,<sup>6</sup> so he may supervise the servers unimpeded. The MC must also be prepared to make any special preparations or arrangements particular to a ceremony. It is ultimately up to the MC to ensure that everything that is needed for a smooth ceremony is properly prepared.

-After having vested, the MC must perform these four duties:

- I. Consult an appropriate *ordo* for the proper Mass and for any special rubrics (and where necessary, a ceremonial manual such as *The Ceremonies of the Roman Rite Described*<sup>7</sup>).

<sup>5</sup> For those *in plano* (on the floor), the Blessed Sacrament is not considered exposed when it is on the mensa. However, if they were to ascend to the predella for some reason, the inferior minister would have to genuflect *in plano* first, then ascend and then upon descending, genuflect again *in plano*. Cf. L. O'Connell, p. 38, ff. 18, d; and SRC 4135<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> I.e., the thurifer at twenty minutes before Mass.

<sup>7</sup> By Fr. Adrian Fortescue and edited by Rev. J.B. O'Connell. Ensure the edition is up to date for the 1962 edition of the *Missale Romanum* to comply with the 1960 code of rubrics.

2. Consult the missal and ensure that it is set up properly; this is ultimately the MC's duty, not the sacristan's.
3. Consult the *Liber* for the proper cue as mentioned above for the Gradual, etc. (this is only necessary if the choir sings both of these propers; however this is almost always necessary if there is a Sequence).
4. Ensure that the chalice,<sup>8</sup> the altar and the vestments (both in the sacristy and in the sanctuary) have been properly prepared by the sacristan.

### **ADDITIONAL PREPARATIONS IF THERE IS AN ASPERGES**

Before every High Mass on Sunday, the *Asperges* ceremony is performed to remind us of our baptismal promises which we renew on the Easter Vigil and in commemoration of Our Lord's Resurrection and victory over death. During the Paschal time, the *Asperges* chant and text is replaced with the longer chant of *Vidi aquam* and "Alleluia" is added to the versicle and responsory that follows the sprinkling. This sprinkling with holy water is actually a completely separate rite from that of the Mass, and in its full form (which now is only performed on the Easter Vigil) the actual blessing of the water takes place. The *Asperges* replaces the taking of holy water at the font (this is true for the clergy, ministers and faithful).

-Because the *Asperges* is not part of the rite of Mass, the maniple and chasuble are not worn, but rather are set up in vesting order on the sedilia.<sup>9</sup> However, all of the other vestments (i.e., alb, amice, stole and cincture) are worn as usual, with addition to the cope, which is also the proper color of the Mass as the other vestments.

- The aspersory should be prepared in the sacristy for Th.
- The *Asperges* prayer card should be on the second altar step<sup>10</sup> where the MC will stand during the *Asperges*. Or the card can be placed on the credence and AcI can bring it over when needed.

-When the preparations have been completed, the MC lines the servers up in the sacristy in their proper order and gives any final instructions if necessary.<sup>11</sup>

-When C arrives in the sacristy, the MC assists him in vesting as AcI does at Low Mass.

### **THE PROCESSIONAL**

-If customary, incense may then be imposed. MC receives the boat, and presents the spoon to C with *solita oscula* as described above, and then bowing towards C says, "*Benedicite, Pater reverende.*"<sup>12</sup> MC then ensures that C says, "*Ab illo...*" and that C blesses the incense in the thurible.<sup>13</sup> MC then receives the spoon with *solita oscula* from C, and returns the boat (from hereon, all *solita osculas* will be assumed in regards to the spoon).

-MC then turns towards the processional cross,<sup>14</sup> signals a clap for all to turn and bow towards it,<sup>15</sup> and then says, "*Procedamus in pace,*" to which all including C reply, "*In nomine, Christi. Amen.*"<sup>16</sup> The processional now begins.

-The MC should ensure that the various pairs of servers do not process out too closely together; each pair should be at least four pews away from another.

### **THE PROCESSIONAL FORMATION**

The typical processional formation should be as follows:

- Thurifer (with or without the thurible) leads (if there is a boatbearer, he is to Th's left)
- Acolytes with their candles and the crossbearer follow shoulder to shoulder; they act as one unit
- Torchbearers (with their hands folded) then follow in pairs
- clergy in pairs
- MC

<sup>8</sup> Which should be set up on the altar as at Low Mass: the corporal unfolded, the burse against the gradine, and the chalice on the corporal.

<sup>9</sup> Strictly speaking, both of these are Mass vestments, and so they should not be worn outside of Mass. However, it is customary in the United States to remove only the maniple for the sermon, though some liturgical authors recommend removing the chasuble as well.

<sup>10</sup> Putting the card on the second step rather than on the first, will enable the MC to pick up the card easier.

<sup>11</sup> For chapters of the Archconfraternity of St. Stephen, the MC should also ensure that all of the servers have their medals and cords with tassels on correctly and evenly.

<sup>12</sup> "*Benedicite, Pater reverende*" is pronounced: *beh-neh-dee-chee-teh, pah-tehr reh-vehr-rehn-deh.*

<sup>13</sup> Rubricians say that three spoonfuls of incense should be imposed.

<sup>14</sup> Or the sacristy cross if there is not a crossbearer.

<sup>15</sup> Except the crossbearer and the acolytes who are carrying and accompanying an image of Christ.

<sup>16</sup> "*In nomine, Christi. Amen*" is pronounced as: *een noh-mee-neh Chree-stee. Ah-mehn.*

- Celebrant

### UPON REACHING THE FOOT

- Upon reaching the foot the MC goes slightly to the right of the foot, awaits the arrival of C, receives his biretta with *solita oscula* and gives it to Ac1, signals a genuflection, genuflects with C<sup>17</sup> and then signals all of the servers to kneel.
- The MC, kneeling slightly behind C, then leads the servers' responses for the Preparatory Prayers with the other servers following his pace and volume. The responses must be made at a moderate pace with the proper pauses, however, and during a High Mass they are made in a rather subdued voice, so that the choir is not drowned out.
- After C ascends to the predella, the MC signals all to stand, and then he goes to the Epistle side of the foot, meets Th there *on his left*<sup>18</sup> and receives the boat.

### FIRST INCENSATION OF THE ALTAR

- The MC and Th then immediately ascend to the predella,<sup>19</sup> and the MC stands near the front edge of the predella facing the altar, while Th stands nearest the front edge of the altar facing C. The MC presents the spoon, says, "*Benedicite, Pater reverende,*" ensures that C blesses the incense, and then holds out the boat for the appropriate server to retrieve.<sup>20</sup>
- The MC presents the thurible to C as described above in the section, GIVING THE THURIBLE.
- The MC then goes to C's right, while Th goes to C's left. C, the MC and Th should turn, genuflect and walk as one unit. There should not be a gap between any of these ministers. The MC does not signal any of the genuflections during any of the incensations of the altar.
- All genuflect towards the tabernacle, and then C incenses the altar (and reliquaries if any) as prescribed by the missal and rubricians.<sup>21</sup> Every time C genuflects, the MC puts his left hand under C's elbows.<sup>22</sup> When C turns to face the reliquaries so he may incense them, the MC and Th turn with him. It may be necessary to point out the reliquaries as a reminder to a priest unfamiliar with the altar (or unaware of their presence).
- Upon reaching the Epistle side of the altar,<sup>23</sup> the MC must step back to the corner of the predella, so as not to impede C when he incenses the side of the altar.<sup>24</sup>
- Upon reaching the Gospel side of the altar, the MC remains to C's right until he begins to return to the center of the predella.
- When C incenses the front of the Epistle side of the altar again, the MC descends to the second altar step, turns to the left (inwards towards Th) and receives the thurible from C with *solita oscula*.
- MC then descends *in plano* with Th and turns inwards again towards Th (now on MC's left) and directly standing in front of and facing C, proceeds to incense C with three doubles, making a profound bow with Th before and after.

### INTROIT

- The MC then returns the thurible to Th, ascends to the second altar step,<sup>25</sup> standing inside the edge of the altar, and directly next to and facing the missal; this is the MC's *normal missal position on the Epistle side*.

<sup>17</sup> The MC does not genuflect *until* C arrives at the foot.

<sup>18</sup> While normally according to the rules of precedence, Th would be on the MC's right, this done out of practicality so that the MC and Th do not have to switch sides on the predella before the imposition of incense.

<sup>19</sup> A bow should *not* be made *in plano* before ascending to the predella to impose incense. This is not prescribed in *any* of the rubric books. As L. O'Connell says on page 43, in *Special Notes On Reverences, #9*, "*Bows should not be made unless they are required by the rubrics.*"

<sup>20</sup> This should be Ac2 who in conjunction with Ac1 retrieving the missal, ascends to the predella (not to the second altar step only), turns inwards with Ac1 and then returns the boat to the credence. Otherwise, the boatbearer does this.

<sup>21</sup> It is assumed that the MC learned these rubrics when he was a thurifer, so they are not mentioned in these instructions. However, these can be found in the front of the *Missale Romanum* (NB: only the post-1960 editions demonstrate the incensation of a free-standing altar).

<sup>22</sup> If C is wearing a lengthy gothic-style chasuble that covers C's forearms, MC and Th may hold back the edges so that C is not impeded while incensing. In this case, every time C genuflects was incensing the altar, the MC and Th momentarily release the chasuble so they may support C's elbows taking hold of it again after standing. This motion can take some practice to master.

<sup>23</sup> This is assuming that the altar being incensed is fixed against the wall instead of being a free-standing altar, which is the more correct form. If the altar is free-standing, then the MC simply remains to the right of C while walking around the entire altar. NB: A genuflection is *not* made while crossing *behind* the tabernacle; this is only done when crossing the *front* of the tabernacle, just as one does not genuflect when crossing past the side of the tabernacle.

<sup>24</sup> Or if room on the predella does not allow, he may descend one stepwise.

<sup>25</sup> Or the predella, if it is wide enough on the sides.

-The MC then points out the *Introit* and turns and bows towards the tabernacle in unison with C for the *Gloria Patri*.

### **KYRIE**

-When C begins the *Kyrie*, the MC turns towards the acolytes, to signal them to make the responses with the MC. When the *Kyrie* is completed, and if there is a *Gloria*, the MC then turns left (towards C), and goes to the foot, standing in line with the Epistle edge of the altar; this is the *MC's normal Epistle position in plano*.

### **GLORIA**

-When C intones "*Gloria in excelsis Deo*," the MC bows towards the tabernacle. After the intonation however, the MC should simply bow straight ahead while C recites the remainder of the *Gloria*.<sup>26</sup>

-When C makes the sign of the cross, MC does so likewise, however, he does not genuflect when C does to leave the predella, but simply goes immediately to the sedilia.<sup>27</sup>

-Upon arrival at the sedilia, the MC immediately picks up the biretta by the right fin, and steps back to allow C to sit. If necessary, MC assists C with the back of his chasuble so that he does not sit on it. The MC then presents the biretta to C with *solita oscula* and faces the nave with eyes slightly downcast.

-Slightly before each word or phrase that requires a bow, the MC turns to C, bows to him to doff his biretta, and then turns towards the tabernacle and bows for the duration of when the word or phrase is sung.<sup>28</sup> The MC then turns back to face the nave.

-During the phrase, "*Cum Sancto Spiritu...*," the MC makes the sign of the cross, receives the biretta with *solita oscula*, places it back on the sedilia, and then leads C to the foot, stepping back for him when he arrives.

-MC signals a genuflection and then returns to his Epistle missal position.

### **COLLECT**

-When C returns to the missal after saying, "*Dominus vobiscum*," the MC indicates the oration, turns towards the tabernacle and bows for "*Oremus*," and then remains facing the missal. The MC turns and bows for the Holy Name if mentioned during the oration or during the conclusion. If the name of Our Lady or of a saint(s) is sung, a simple bow is made facing the missal.

### **EPISTLE**

-The MC then turns slightly towards the acolytes and signals them with a slight bow to sit during the reading of the Epistle.

-When C has finished reading the Epistle, the MC does not answer with "*Deo gratias*" as at Low Mass.<sup>29</sup>

### **IF THE GRADUAL AND ETC. ARE SUNG IN THE FULL GREGORIAN CHANT**

-After C has read the text of the Gradual and whatever else follows, and if the choir is rendering the texts in Gregorian chant (plainsong), the MC turns in unison with C, bows to the tabernacle<sup>30</sup> and then leads C to the sedilia *per brevior*<sup>31</sup> and performs the same functions as at the *Gloria*.

-If during the any of these texts a word or phrase is sung that requires a bow, the MC acts as for such texts found in the *Gloria*.

-When the proper word for the cue is sung, the MC then steps slightly in front of C, signal him to stand with a bow, and performs the return to the foot as for the *Gloria*.

### **IF THE GRADUAL AND ETC. ARE NOT SUNG IN THE FULL GREGORIAN CHANT**

-After indicating the Gradual or if necessary, turning the page and switching the ribbon, the MC descends immediately *in plano* and meets Th for the imposition of Incense in preparation for the Gospel.

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<sup>26</sup> This is a practical measure, since it is often difficult to hear C above the choir, and therefore it is difficult to coordinate the turns and bows towards the tabernacle while C is reciting the *Gloria* or the *Credo*.

<sup>27</sup> Since the MC is not next to C when he genuflects, this would not follow the rule of *ratione accomodationis*, and thereby there is no reason for the MC to make a genuflection.

<sup>28</sup> If it is polyphonic Mass, and a certain word or phrase is telescoped (that is repeated by the various groups of singers one after another), one is only required to make a bow for the *first* word or phrase mentioned.

<sup>29</sup> A said response is not made to something sung.

<sup>30</sup> Here the MC performs a bow that he would not normally perform because of the rule *ratione accomodationis*.

<sup>31</sup> That is, in a direct or the shortest path from the missal to the sedilia.

## GOSPEL IMPOSITION OF INCENSE

- Then as exactly at the first incensation of the altar, the actions are repeated. The MC meets Th and ascends to the predella, incense is imposed and blessed, and then the MC gives the boat to Th.<sup>32</sup>
- The MC then picks up the missal, turns towards the tabernacle (left) and descends *per brevior* to the center of the foot, meeting Th shoulder to shoulder on his right.<sup>33</sup>
- The MC genuflects in unison with Gospel formation on Th's signal (because MC cannot) and then ascends *per brevior* to the Gospel edge of the altar and puts the missal in the Low Mass Gospel reading position.
- The MC then descends *in plano*, receives the thurible from Th,<sup>34</sup> and then re-ascends to the predella, going to C's right side.
- When C signs himself for the pericope, the MC does not, because he is holding the thurible.
- The MC then presents the thurible to C as usual, and bows moderately in unison with C before and after he incenses the *Gospel*.
- The MC then receives the thurible with *solita oscula* from C, and if the Holy Name is mentioned within the first five seconds, the MC remains on the predella,<sup>35</sup> bows towards the *Gospel* and then returns to Th's right side *in plano*, returning the thurible to him.<sup>36</sup>
- When C reaches the conclusion of the Gospel (he drops the pitch), the MC receives the thurible from Th. As with the Epistle, neither he nor the servers respond with "*Laus tibi, Christe.*"
- After C has kissed the missal, returned it to the stand, and turn towards the MC, the MC and Th make a profound bow and incense C as usual.<sup>37</sup>
- The MC then returns the thurible to Th, ascends to the predella, and moves the missal to the Canon position (near the tabernacle and at about a forty-five degree angle, but not touching the corporal).

## IF THERE IS A SERMON

- The MC then assists C with removing his maniple (if assistance is necessary).
- The MC then bows in unison with C towards the tabernacle,<sup>38</sup> and cutting in front of C, descends *per brevior* to the right side of the foot (while turning inwards, *i.e.*, left), leaving room in the center for C
- When C is ready, the MC signals a genuflection, turns inwards and leads C to the pulpit, and remains there standing to the left side of it for the duration of the sermon.<sup>39</sup>
- When the sermon is concluded, the MC leads C back to the foot, signals a genuflection and then goes to his Epistle position *in plano*.

## IF THERE IS NOT A SERMON

- C remains in the center of the predella, and immediately begins the *Credo* (if there is one). Meanwhile, the MC after having moved the missal to the Canon position, descends *per brevior* to the right side of the center of the foot, signals a genuflection for the Gospel formation, and then returns to his Epistle *in plano* position.

## CREDO

- If there is a *Credo*, the MC goes to his Epistle *in plano* position, turns and bows for "*Credo in unum Deum,*" and then bows straight ahead for the other bows. The MC and other servers genuflect when C does so while saying the *Credo*; the MC may signal for this if necessary.
- When C is finished reciting the *Credo* the MC and servers make the sign of the cross in unison with him, and then the MC goes to his right side of the center of the foot, standing about a foot away. C then descends to the foot.
- When "*Descendit de caelis*" is sung by the choir, the MC signals loudly for all in the church to kneel, and then bows at "*Et homo factus est.*"

<sup>32</sup> Or to the boatbearer if there is one.

<sup>33</sup> If necessary the MC should wait until Th is already there before descending, so that the Gospel procession movement of Th and the acolytes is not impeded.

<sup>34</sup> This action should not be performed by the MC reaching down from the predella or an altar step to Th *in plano*; this looks very sloppy and undignified.

<sup>35</sup> If the Holy Name is *not* mentioned within the first five seconds, the MC does not bow at all, but simply descends to his position.

<sup>36</sup> All of the rubricians agree that Th should be holding the thurible for the duration of the Gospel, as this is his duty, to bear the thurible and not the MC's.

<sup>37</sup> Though in the 1962 missal rubrics it is stated that the celebrant is not incensed at this time during a *missa cantata*, as this was not the case in the pre-1960 code of rubrics, many places retained the custom of incensing the celebrant at this time as at Solemn Mass.

<sup>38</sup> This follows the rule of *ratione accommodationis* again.

<sup>39</sup> In some places, it is the custom to have the MC sit during the sermon. If this is the case, he should sit at a stool near the sedilia, but not at the sedilia, as this is reserved for the sacred ministers. This stool can be removed by an acolyte after the sermon.

-When “*Crucifixus etiam pro nobis*” is sung by the choir, the MC signals loudly for all in the church to stand, then softly signals a genuflection for himself and C, turns inwards and leads C to the sedilia, where the normal actions are performed.

-The MC signals C to bow for “*simul adoratur.*”

-During the phrase “*Et vitam venturi saeculi,*” the MC makes the sign of the cross, receives the biretta as usual, leads C to the foot, signals C to genuflect, and then the MC returns to his Epistle position *in plano*.

### **OFFERTORY**

-After turning and bowing for “*Oremus,*” the MC then ascends to the predella, receives the chalice veil, tri-folds it lengthwise,<sup>40</sup> places it to the left of the Epistle altar card, turns towards the tabernacle (left), descends to his Epistle position *in plano* and then turns right.

-The MC remains at this position until the acolytes have ascended to the altar to present the cruets. Then the MC meets Th on his left side, and receives the boat.

### **OFFERTORY INCENSATION OF OBLATIONS**

-When the acolytes have returned to the credence, both the MC and Th go to the Epistle side of the foot and await C to make the arc motion for *Veni sanctificator*. When he does, both immediately ascend to the predella as usual.

-When C blesses the incense, the MC should ensure that C uses the Offertory formula for blessing the incense, “*Per intercessionem Michaellem...*” which is often found on the center altar card.<sup>41</sup> Then without genuflecting, C incenses the oblations first, then the altar and reliquaries (if there are any), followed by the MC incensing C as usual.

-The MC then returns the thurible to Th, turns inwards with him (if room provides), and then walks shoulder to shoulder to the center of the foot.

-The MC signals a genuflection, ascends *per brevior* to the Canon missal position, turns right towards Th, bows to him in return and receives one double from Th. The MC then returns the bow to Th and turns back to face the missal at about a forty-five degree angle. This is the MC’s normal Canon missal position.

### **SECRET**

-The MC then finds the Secret in the propers.

-When C returns from the *Lavabo*, he will first say *Suscipe, sancta Trinitas*, and then turn around to say, “*Orate, fratres*” to which the MC and servers respond with the *Suscipiat*. Then the MC indicates the Secret to C. The MC does not bow when C bows for the conclusion, if the Holy Name is mentioned, as he is not reading the text aloud.

### **PREFACE**

-After C has read the conclusion to the Secret, the MC switches the pages to the Preface. The MC sings the responses and bows in unison with C when he says, “*Gratias agamus Domino Deo nostro.*”

-The MC may recite the *Sanctus* with C, slightly bowing his head, and making the sign of the cross with C.

### **CANON**

- From this point forward, the MC does not perform any of the gestures or bows with C, as he is not reciting the text aloud.
- During the Canon, the MC switches the pages with the tabs as required.

-During the *Memento pro vivis*, the MC turns to his right, takes a step or two back (do not walk backwards) and then turns to face the tabernacle again. The MC bows when C does during the *Memento*.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> In some cases, due to a lack of space on the mensa, it may be necessary to tri-fold the veil again widthwise. In either case, the emblem should be facing upwards.

<sup>41</sup> While it is assumed that C has this blessing memorized, it may happen that he does not. If this formula is not on the center altar card, the missal should not be removed by Acl until C has said the blessing and the prayers while incensing the oblations and altar in their entirety. However, a better solution to this problem would be to make a small laminated card with these formulas printed on them, so in this way the missal can be removed as usual.

<sup>42</sup> This follows the concession made for the deacon at a Solemn Mass, who normally would not bow at all when C does during the Canon.

-When C reaches the *Qui pridie*, the MC goes to the edge of the predella, slightly to the left and behind of C. When all of the servers are in their proper positions, and C has wiped his forefingers and thumbs on the corporal, the MC signals all to kneel, and then kneels in this position, but at a forty-five degree angle facing C.

-During the Consecration, the MC acts as Ac2 at Low Mass, making a moderate bow when C genuflects and raising the chasuble with *both* hands during each Elevation. When C has made the last genuflection, the MC signals all to stand, and then he returns to his normal Canon position, turning the page immediately if the layout of the missal demands this.

-The MC steps back and performs the various actions for the *Memento pro defunctis* as for the first *Memento*.

-The MC does not strike his breast at "*Nobis quoque peccatoribus.*"<sup>43</sup>

**From this point forward, whenever C genuflects, the MC does so too, while supporting C's elbow with his right hand. C will genuflect every time he removes the pall and after replacing it on the chalice.**

-The MC bows at "*Oremus*" for the introduction of the *Pater noster* and sings the response.

-The MC may recite the *Agnus Dei* with C. The MC also bows and strikes his breast in unison with C.

-There are three prayers that follow the *Agnus Dei*; depending on the layout of your missal, the actions of the MC will be slightly different:

**A. The page does not have to be turned after *Panem caelestem accipiam* is said:**

-In this case, the MC may descend from the predella sometime immediately after the *Agnus Dei*. Upon descending *via* the Gospel side of the altar steps (not the front), the MC turns right to face the altar, and then genuflects as he left the predella under the conditions of *coram Sanctissimo*.

**B. The page does have to be turned after *Panem caelestem accipiam* is said:**

-In this case, the MC must remain on the predella, until C has said this prayer, then the MC genuflects with him, turns the page, descends *via* the Gospel side of the altar steps (not the front), turns right to face the altar and then genuflects.<sup>44</sup>

-In either case A or B, the MC then goes to the foot, standing in line with the Gospel edge of the altar.

-When C bends over to consume the Sacred Host, the MC turns towards the tabernacle and makes a moderate bow. Afterwards, the MC should ensure that the servers line up properly at the foot (while the acolytes turn over the Communion cloth) in this order:

MC Ac2 CB AcI TH<sup>45</sup>

## THE DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

-Once all are lined up, the MC signals a genuflection, and then a kneel. When C consumes the Precious Blood, all make a simple bow.

-When C has placed the chalice back on the altar, the MC makes a moderate bow with the servers and then all recited the second *Confiteor* following the MC's pace.

-After C gives the *Indulgentiam*, the MC signals all to stand, then to genuflect,<sup>46</sup> then all ascend to the predella, where the MC signals all to kneel again.

-After the MC has received Communion and holding the Communion plate, he rises by himself (the others remain kneeling), and leads C with the Blessed Sacrament to the Epistle side of the Communion rail. The MC assists with the plate as usual.

-When the distribution is completed, the MC gives the plate to C, and then accompanies C to the foot. The MC remains at the center of the foot, genuflects in unison with C,<sup>47</sup> and then goes to kneel on the Epistle side of the sanctuary (somewhere out of the way of the other servers).

## ABLUTIONS

<sup>43</sup> L. O'Connell, p. 212 in directions for the deacon at Solemn Mass.

<sup>44</sup> The first genuflection performed by the MC in conjunction with C *cannot* be used for the genuflection for leaving the predella *coram Sanctissimo*. This first genuflection is only being made to meet the rule of *ratione accommodationis*, whereas the genuflection *in plano* fulfills the rule for inferior ministers under the conditions of *coram Sanctissimo*.

<sup>45</sup> If there is a boatbearer, he kneels to TH's left. It is assumed that the torchbearers are kneeling in the chancel. Otherwise they would kneel behind this formation of servers, or on each side of the altar.

<sup>46</sup> This is because of the rule *coram Sanctissimo*.

<sup>47</sup> Though the MC is accompanying Our Lord, he still must cross the center of the altar, *after* he leaves the ciborium.

-When the tabernacle door has been closed, the MC signals all to stand. The MC should ensure that the various servers are performing their duties correctly and on time, while yet remaining on the Epistle side of the sanctuary and out of their way.

### **THE SWITCHING OF THE MISSAL AND THE CHALICE VEIL**

-When the acolytes have changed the missal and the veil, the MC ascends *via* the steps on the Epistle side (not the front) to the predella and switches the pages back to the propers and then resumes his position at the missal on Epistle side.

### **THE COMMUNION AND POSTCOMMUNION**

-When C returns to the missal (after having reassembled the chalice), the MC indicates the Communion proper, which C reads.

-After C has said, "*Dominus vobiscum*" and has returned to the missal, the MC indicates the Postcommunion, and bows where required as for the Collect.

-When C has finished the Postcommunion and stepped away from the missal, the MC ascends to the predella, closes the missal, turns right and then descends *via* the Epistle side (not the front) *in plano* and then goes immediately to his Epistle *in plano* position.

### **ITE, MISSA EST TO THE LAST GOSPEL**

-The MC remains there until C has chanted, "*Ite, missa est.*" Then in unison with C turning back to face the altar, the MC turns, proceeds to the center of the foot, genuflects and goes immediately to the Gospel side of the altar *in plano*, standing inside the edge of the altar.

-As soon as the choir finishes singing "*Deo gratias,*" the MC loudly signals a kneel for the entire church, kneels on the first altar step, signs himself, and then signals loudly for all to stand.

-The MC then immediately ascends to the second altar step and picks up the Last Gospel altar card, and holds it during the reading of the Last Gospel. During this time, the MC does not sign himself with the cross (because he is holding something), nor does he make any type of reverence at all at the words, "*Et Verbum caro factum est,*" as he is holding an image of Christ in the form of the text of the Last Gospel.

-When the Last Gospel is completed, the MC and the servers reply as usual, then the MC replaces the card on the mensa, and *per longiorem*<sup>48</sup> returns to the center of the foot.

### **RECESSIONAL**

-Unless one of the servers has brought over the biretta from the sedilia, the MC genuflects in the center, goes to the sedilia and returns to the foot with the biretta.

-The MC ensures that all are lined up correctly and are ready, signals a genuflection (loud enough so that the servers may hear the signal clearly over the music), gives the biretta with the *solita oscula*, turns towards C and then recesses out four pews behind the last group.

### **ARRIVAL IN THE SACRISTY AND THE SERVERS' BLESSING**

-Upon the servers' arrival in the sacristy, all return to their positions prior to the processional, and remain at attention, as the recessional does not end until all have bowed to the cross and C.

-Upon the arrival of C and the MC, the MC signals a bow towards the cross,<sup>49</sup> and then similarly to C. Then except for the acolytes and crossbearer, all kneel and receive C's blessing. During the blessing, all servers who are carrying items do not make the sign of the cross.

### **AFTER MASS DUTIES**<sup>50</sup>

-after Mass all of the servers go to the sacristy, where if necessary, corrections are made, and then the servers perform their various assigned duties. The MC supervises the entire time, and if necessary delegates extra tasks to other servers.

-Once the sacristy is in good order the MC may then dismiss the servers.

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<sup>48</sup> *I.e., by the long way.* In this case, by going around the Gospel side of the foot.

<sup>49</sup> Except for the crossbearer and the acolytes.

<sup>50</sup> For chapters of the Archconfraternity of St. Stephen, immediately after the choir is done singing the recessional, the MC leads all of the servers back into the sanctuary *recta linea* to say their after Mass prayers as prescribed.

## IF THERE IS AN ASPERGES BEFORE THE MASS

The MC should then ensure that all of the necessary preparations have been done as described above.

-All line up for the processional as described above, except that Th carries both the aspersory and aspergil in his right hand rather than the thurible and boat. He may either process in at the left of C holding the ophrey in his right hand or he may process at the head of the processional formation as usual.

-The MC however processes in on C's right hand side, holding the ophrey in his left hand. While the ophrey, he does not assist with C's alb while ascending steps.

-Upon reaching the foot, the MC goes to the right of the center of the foot, waits for C to arrive, receives the biretta from C with *solita oscula* and gives it to AcI, and then signals a genuflection for himself, C and Th.

-Then the MC receives the aspersory from Th, and signals all to kneel (he may do this by striking with his left hand the top of his right hand which is holding the aspersory, but in a careful manner that will not cause spillage).

-The MC then presents the aspergil to C with *solita oscula*. C then intones the *Asperges* (or the *Vidi aquam* if in Paschal time), sprinkles the front of the altar center, right and left, then signs his forehead with the aspergil with the cross and stands. C then sprinkles the MC, Th and other servers on the Epistle side. The MC does not sign himself with the cross when is sprinkled as he is holding the aspersory.

-The MC then signals all to stand, then a genuflection for himself, C and Th. Then the MC, C and Th turn inwards, and the MC and Th switch sides in front of C. The MC passes on the inside (closest to C), and Th passes on the outside (furthest from C). The MC then holds the ophrey of the cope in his left hand, while with his right he holds the aspersory, making it available to C when required.

-While proceeding down the center aisle of the nave, C should sprinkle those on the Gospel side first.

-Just moments before the *Gloria Patri* is sung, the MC should indicate to C that it is time to face the altar. The MC should release the ophrey just before turning to face the altar. All bow during the first half of the *Gloria Patri*, and then the MC and Th resume holding the ophreys and turn back to finish sprinkling the faithful.

-Upon reaching the rear of the nave (*i.e.*, where the narthax is), all turn and face the altar, the MC releases the ophrey, signals all to genuflect, and switches sides with Th as mentioned before.

-Then the MC holds the ophrey again, and C sprinkles those on the Epistle side of the nave.

-When C has finished sprinkling everyone, he will return the aspergil to the MC, who receives it with *solita oscula*. The MC then gives the aspersory and aspergil to Th behind C's back while walking and holding the ophrey.

-Upon reaching the foot, the MC signals a genuflection and picks up the *Asperges* card as he genuflects. The MC and Th both hold the card in front of C while he chants the responses and prayer. The MC bows for "*Oremus.*"

-When the *Oratio* is completed, the MC allows Th to take the card, then the MC signals a genuflection, all turn inwards, and then the MC leads C to the sedilia.

-At the sedilia, the MC steps back for C to stand directly in front of it. Then the MC stands behind C, and assists in removing the cope. The MC then gives the cope to AcI to return to the sacristy, by draping it lengthwise over AcI's outstretched arms.

-The MC then assists C in vesting with the maniple and chasuble as usual. Before leaving the sedilia, the MC should ensure that the biretta is suitably arranged on C's stool (*i.e.*, the right fin should be facing the front of the stool, so that the MC may be able to take hold of it quickly).

-When C is ready, the MC turns inwards and leads C to the foot for the Preparatory Prayers.