



Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary
Parish of Drumbo & Carryduff
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Code of Conduct for Supervisor of Altar Servers in the Parish of Drumbo and Carryduff

“Conduct yourselves in a way worthy of the gospel of Christ so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear news of you, that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind struggling together for the faith of the gospel.”

As church personnel in the Parish of Drumbo and Carryduff, in the Diocese of Down and Connor, we too must conduct ourselves in a way that is “worthy of the Gospel of Christ”. We are further challenged in this letter of Paul to the Philippians to do, *“whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious”*

Our children are the most important gifts God has entrusted to us. As a supervisor of young altar servers (age 8 to 16 yrs), giving time to teach and instruct children and young people is also a gift and should be approached in an open and transparent way for all children and young people with whom you come into contact.

In line with the Diocesan Child Protection Policy and Procedures, all Altar Server Supervisors **must adhere** to a Code of Conduct and follow the rules and guidelines as a condition of providing services to the children and youth of our Diocese.

An Altar Server Supervisor must:

- Treat all children and other volunteers with respect, patience, courtesy and dignity (this means listening to and taking seriously what they say, asking how they would like to be assisted if they need it, be aware of the things which may make them vulnerable- disability, communication difficulties or illness, and not behave in a discriminative way towards any individual on the basis of their age, race or culture).
- Avoid situations where he or she is alone with children and/or youth at church activities.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition or comparison when working with children and/or youth.
- Refrain from giving expensive gifts to children and/or youth without prior written approval from the parents or guardian and the Parish Priest or Administrator.
- Comply with the Diocesan guidance and procedures on use of email or texting when communicating with children /youth

- Inform parents/ guardians and the Parish Priest immediately in the event of any accidents or significant incidents with respect to any of the children and record this using the parish **Accident / Incident Form ***
- Report suspected abuse of children or concerns you may have to the Designated Officer for the Diocese using the **Allegation or Concern of Abuse Form ***
- Co-operate fully, if required, with any investigation of abuse of children and /or youth.
- Ensure that parents and /or guardians have given their consent to their son / daughter undertaking altar serving duties by signing the **General Information and Consent Form ***
- Ensure they take action to prevent the spread of **serious** infections. For example, tuberculosis, hepatitis, measles, meningitis.
- Keep parents and /or guardians fully informed of the rota, times for serving, training and other events which may be required and inform parents / guardians that they are welcome to be present also, if they so wish.
- Ensure that parents and /or guardians are provided with details of who to contact should they have any queries or issues regarding their child in respect of altar serving.

An Altar Server Supervisor must not:

- Smoke or use tobacco products in the presence of children and /or youth.
- Use, possess or be under the influence of alcohol at any time while volunteering.
- Use, possess or be under the influence of illegal drugs at any time.
- Use physical punishment or restraints of any kind with children and/or youth.
- Humiliate, ridicule, threaten or degrade children and /or youth.
- Touch a child and/or youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
- Use any discipline that frightens or humiliates children and/or youth.
- Use profanity in the presence of children and /or youth or inappropriate language or humour.
- Show or distribute inappropriate pictures, images, photographs, drawings or other similar materials, to children and young people

Altar Server Supervisors should fully understand that any action inconsistent with this Code of Conduct or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in removal as an Altar Server Supervisor or volunteering with children and/or youth.

**** All forms can be found in the Sacristy of the Church and the Parish Centre.***



