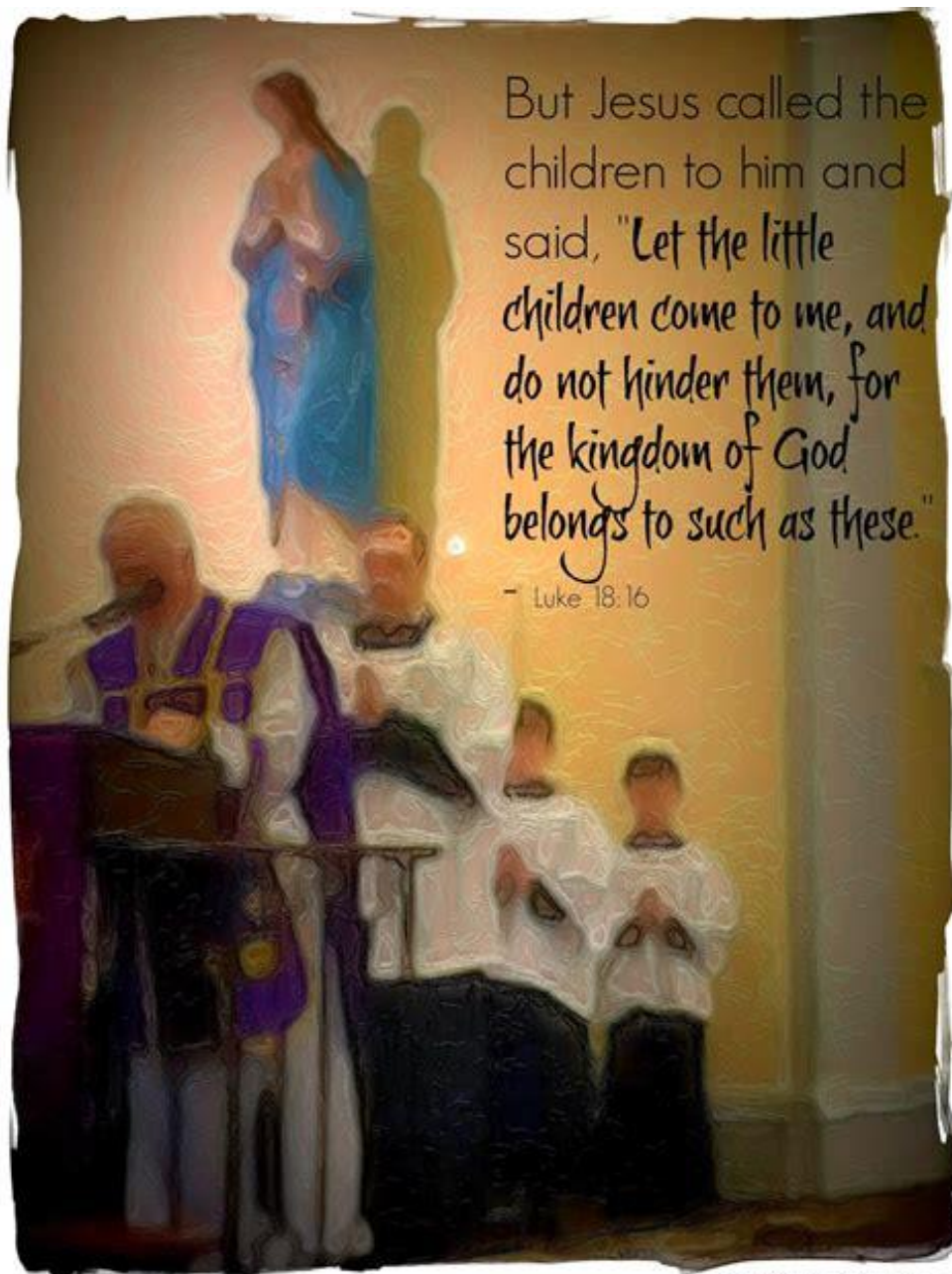


**FROM FATHER JOHN:** "Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness; in the greatness of your compassion wipe out my offense. Thoroughly wash me from my guilt and of my sin cleanse me. For I acknowledge my offense; and my sin is before me always: "Against you only have I sinned; and done what is evil in your sight." That you may be justified in your sentence, vindicated when you condemn. Indeed, in guilt was I born, and in sin my mother conceived me. A clean heart create for me, O God, and a steadfast spirit renew within me. Cast me not off from your presence, and your Holy Spirit take not from me." ~ Psalm 53

***Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned!!!***



But Jesus called the children to him and said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."

- Luke 18:16

The children of our parish have a special ministry in the Church. Namely, being an **Altar Server**. It is the altar servers who have the privilege to assist the priest at the altar. Unfortunately, the pandemic caused the suspension of this special ministry.

***We are going to re-institute the service of Altar Servers here at St. Ann's.***

Altar servers are a very important part of the church and every altar server is enriched through their dedication and service to the Lord our God and to the people of our parish. Children who serve at the altar during mass have been called by God to give their service during the celebration of the sacred liturgy.

The mass is a public act of worship that the church gives to God which means that the service that altar servers provide during mass is both extremely important and spiritually life-giving for the altar server and our parish community. Our children who serve have the opportunity to be one of the closest people to the Altar and to the Priest Celebrant during the celebration of the Mass and the consecration of the Sacrament of the Eucharist. Being an altar server means serving God and His people at Mass.

We will be training all new altar servers and re-training all existing altar servers. ***There will be a training session on Wednesday, August 11<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 pm and another session on Sunday, August 15<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am.*** Attendance at ***one*** of the two sessions is required. If need be, we may have an extra session for those who want to be an altar server but can't attend one of these sessions.

When we celebrate the Holy Mass, we celebrate the life, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and how we share in that life, death and resurrection. It is the time we come together as the Mystical Body of Christ to encounter the Risen Lord and to have his sacrifice on Calvary made present to us in the here and now. It is the source and summit of the Christian life and it is the time when our Lord Jesus us gives us His Body and Blood, humanity and divinity, body and soul so that we might have life within us.

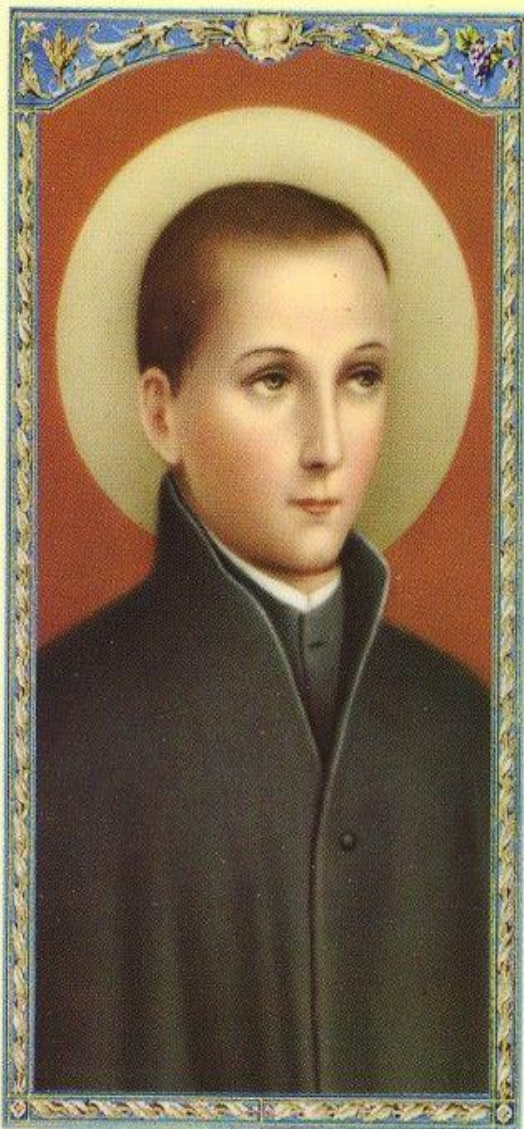
The mass does not belong to any one individual. The mass does not belong to me as the priest, it does not belong to any of my brother priests and it does not belong to the bishop. The mass is a gift from Christ Jesus to the universal Church for the salvation of souls and it belongs to all of us as members of the Church and the Mystical Body of Christ.

What does this mean for us here at St. Ann's? It means that I can't really celebrate Sunday Community Mass all by myself. I can celebrate mass alone, by myself, but if I do, it's not a mass celebrated by our parish community coming together as the Mystical Body

of Christ. Mass is not an individual thing – it is a communal thing and the community is the parish and the Church. Priests lead the parish community as we all celebrate mass together.

This means that I need your help in order to lead the community at mass. I cannot do it alone. It is a joint responsibility of all Catholics, each and every single one of us, to help with the mass and to participate in the mass. This is why it's so important that we bring the service of Altar Servers back to our parish.

May God Bless you and all those who love the Lord.



### To an Altar Server

*To be Christ's page at the altar,  
To serve him freely there,  
Where even the angels falter,  
Bowed low in reverent prayer  
To touch the throne most holy,  
To hand the gifts for the feast,  
To see Him meekly, lowly,  
Descend at the word of the priest  
To hear man's poor petition,  
To sound the silver bell,  
When He in sweet submission,  
Comes down with us to dwell.  
No grander mission surely  
Could saints or men enjoy;  
No heart should love more purely,  
Than yours, my altar server,  
God bless you, forever,  
And keep you in His care,  
And guard you that you never  
Belie the robes you wear .  
For white bespeaks untainted  
A heart both tried and true;  
And red tells love the sainted  
And holy martyrs knew.  
Throughout life, then, endeavor  
God's graces to employ;  
And be in heart forever  
A holy altar server*

**St. John Berchman, Patron of Altar Servers**