

Queen of the Holy Rosary



CATHOLIC CHURCH

Altar Servers Set Example for Our Mass Participation

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While altar servers are a crucial part of the celebration of the Mass from the standpoint of the priests and deacons, they also set an example for parishioners, encouraging them to participate in the Mass with reverence and respect.

There are currently 65 altar servers at our parish. Students in fifth grade and older are invited, but not required, to undergo training conducted by two adult volunteers. Our high school altar servers assist in the training by walking the prospective servers through the Mass, and by teaching by example. The new servers are required to shadow other servers at various Masses to grow their confidence, comfort level, and Mass reverence which enhances their relationship with Christ.



“We have servers of various ages,” says Denise Godinez, Director of Religious Education. “The fifth through eighth-grade servers serve on weekends, at school Masses, funerals and so forth. The high school servers also help with weekend Masses, as well as specialized Masses with the archbishop and special feasts and holy days. The adult servers help with weekday morning Masses and any other special Mass requests.”

The servers not only assist the priest, but they also help lead the worship by literally bringing the light of Christ with the entrance of the crucifix, candles and the Word of God.

“Altar servers remind us that each of us is called to represent Christ Himself toward one another,” Denise says. “By their presence, reverence, listening and their participation, they help to lead the congregation in celebration of the Eucharist. They help display all that God has given to each of us and help us to reflect on the great love God has for each person.”

Although altar servers are trained in the procedures and protocol for Mass, they also are receiving training of another kind — they are learning responsibility and commitment.



The Challenge of DISCIPLESHIP

God calls us to give Him everything – our whole heart, our whole soul, and our whole mind. This is the challenge of discipleship – a lifelong process of more fully placing our lives under the lordship of Jesus Christ.

The reason that God can ask such complete service from us is that He made us. Everything we have belongs to Him! This includes our intelligence, our physical ability, our artistic talent, our family, our finances, our government – anything we may typically think of as “ours.”

It takes courage to recognize that we are not the masters of our possessions and ourselves. Furthermore, as Christians, we believe that because everything we have is a gift from God, we are called to give Him thanks. We express our thanks by using our gifts to further His kingdom on earth. This is the basis for our understanding of stewardship.

We refer to “time,” “talent,” and “treasure” in order to differentiate between the various parts of our life that belong to God. “Time” is the duration of life that God has given us. “Talent” includes the special gifts or strengths God has nurtured in us. “Treasure” is what we have earned through our time and talent.

Even though we identify these three aspects of stewardship, they are still part of the same Gospel-based concept. And even when we focus separately

on these parts, it should not signal that one is more important than the other. Instead, focusing on each aspect one at a time helps us to better concentrate on that area in our lives.

Stewardship is, after all, an attitude. If our goal is to become better stewards, we must have a reason in our minds to do so. Here are the basics of a stewardship attitude:

“God made everything!”

A wholehearted trust that God made all things is essential to understanding stewardship. Recognizing God as the Creator is one of the most basic, profound beliefs of Christianity.

“I am truly blessed!”

It takes humility in order to truly acknowledge God’s goodness. Every great triumph and every little pleasure is a blessing from above, and every strong character trait we possess is a gift from God.

“I believe I am to use God’s gifts for His glory!”

What better way to thank God for His goodness than by using our personal gifts to glorify Him? We are not the owners of our time, talent or treasure. But we are caretakers given the responsibility of spreading God’s kingdom on earth.





A Letter From Our Pastor

Celebrating *God's Love*



Dear Parishioners,

What is the most widely observed saint's day in February — the one that is kept even by those who aren't practicing Catholics? Undoubtedly, it would be St. Valentine's Day, Feb. 14.

So who was St. Valentine? The saint we celebrate was a priest of Rome martyred in the late third century. But that doesn't explain how his feast came to be celebrated as the day for sending letters, cards and presents as expressions of romantic love.

The truth is that the custom of sending tokens of love comes not from any direct connection with St. Valentine, but from the ancient belief that birds begin to pair off on Feb. 14. And if courtship in the natural world occurred then, it must be appropriate for humans, as well. The association between St. Valentine and love notes is a later development.

Nevertheless, it's not wrong to connect the two. Love has many aspects, and our conception of it is richer if we keep more than one of them in mind. Martyrdom is the result of loving God more than our earthly life. St. Valentine was a martyr because of his love — his love for Jesus Christ and the Church. If he had not loved God so much, he could have repudiated his Lord and saved his life. We, in turn, express our love by sending cards and gifts on St. Valentine's Day.

But isn't that what stewardship as a way of life is, a little martyrdom? Not to push the image too far, but when we are faithful stewards, we give up a little portion of our lives out of our own love for Christ. Most Christians will not be called on to be martyrs, in the sense of forfeiting our physical lives for God. But we are called to give up some of our comforts, indulgences and riches because of our love for Him.

So then, as you prepare to celebrate and share your love with your valentine this month, remember St. Valentine and his love for Christ. As well, keep in mind that God loves us, and return that love with your own toward Him. Loving God will be reflected in how you prioritize your use of the time, talent and treasure God has entrusted to you. As St. John wrote (1 Jn 4:19), "We love because he first loved us."

Happy St. Valentine's Day!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. William Bruning
Pastor





Welcoming Others to Christ: *The Evangelization*

For most of us, the Church — as both our family of faith and the building in which we worship — is something we consider “home.” But what about those who aren’t so familiar with our faith or what it means to enter our church doors every week?

“I think most Catholic Churches are designed for the people who come there all the time and know what happens,” says parishioner Mike Brown. “We want to start to thinking about those people who literally walk in the doors of this church twice a year. How do you welcome them? How do you make them feel at home? How do you bring Christ to them?”

Last year, one of the fruits of our visioning process was the formation of the Evangelization and Conversion Team. With Christ’s call to share the Gospel at the heart of their mission, this group is currently working to evaluate needs and reach out to the community outside of our church doors. Whether someone has fallen away from their faith, or has never before heard the message of God’s love, this ministry seeks to open doors that welcome people to seek Christ and His Church.

“Our team is the intersection of mercy and marketing,” Mike says. “We’re about making God’s mercy known to people.”

For Mike, who coordinates the ministry, the call to be involved was very personal.



The Evangelization and Conversion Team helped to welcome the larger community to our picnic last September.

“I’m a returning Catholic,” he says. “Twenty years ago, I came back to the Catholic Church. That was such a gift and blessing and grace, if I can in any small way be part of extending that to someone else, I feel called to do that.”

The group meets regularly to plan events and various outreach projects. In the past several months, they have reached out to the community in a variety of different ways, from welcoming the community to the parish picnic, to hosting the parish mission this past fall, creating a welcome brochure for those wanting to learn more about what’s going on in the parish, and more. The team is regularly working to better understand the needs and experiences of those who may be on the fringes of our community

and remove any obstacles to them feeling welcome and comfortable.

“We did an ‘experience audit,’” Mike says. “We attended one of the Masses and deployed our folks around to all the doors and looked from the outside in to see, ‘How welcoming is our environment?’ When you take on the eyes of somebody who isn’t an active parishioner you start to see things very differently.”

Mike also notes that this ministry is not only about bringing in those who are outside of the Church, but also inviting those who are in the Church into a more deep and meaningful relationship with Christ, through things such as distributing books intended for spiritual growth at the Christmas Masses.

“It’s not just about welcoming new folks,” Mike says. “It’s also



Evangelization and Conversion Team



The Evangelization and Conversion Team works to ensure that all people feel welcomed and encouraged to grow in their faith.

about welcoming people into a deeper relationship with Christ through conversion.”

So what does Mike hope will be accomplished by the efforts of the Evangelization and Conversion Team?

“Queen of the Holy Rosary is a parish full of a lot of very dedicated Catholics who have been there a long time,” Mike says. “Part of what I hope would change would be that we’d become a more diverse parish — not diversity for the sake of diversity, but that people who have been on the margins, or have been hurt, or have become disaffected, or fell away through apathy, now feel that there’s a place where they can come and feel very welcome. I hope they feel this is a place where people can worship and experience

Christ in the Eucharist in a very meaningful way.”

Mike encourages parishioners to consider whether they are called to serve with this ministry.

“People say, ‘I could never evangelize, I’m not going to get up and preach to people,’” Mike says. “Well, that isn’t what this involves. It’s not about preaching — it’s about reaching out and listening, and caring about people. It’s not about reciting the *Catechism* to somebody or debating with them — it’s listening to

them and saying, ‘How are you hurt? What can we do for you? Can we pray for you?’

“We want people in this ministry who can relate to the people who are coming here,” he adds. “That’s part of the vulnerability of this — we have all got to be able to tap into that time when, even if we weren’t away formally, maybe we felt wounded or hurt and found our way back. People are coming back because of Jesus, and we need to be the conduit, we need to help make that invitation.”

And regardless of whether or not you choose to be involved with this ministry in a particular way, Mike reminds us that we’re all commissioned by Christ to share His love and welcome people to His Church.

“The largest Christian group in the United States is Catholics, and the second largest Christian group in the United States is former Catholics,” Mike says. “Probably everyone has someone in their family who used to be in those pews and isn’t anymore. Wouldn’t you love to see your family member be back in those pews?”

“We’re here to call people to Christ,” he adds. “We’re getting out of the way and letting Christ and the Holy Spirit do their work.”

If you would like to explore becoming involved with this team, or if you have a friend or family member to whom you would like to reach out and need support or resources, please contact Mike Brown at mike.brown@brainzooming.com or 816-509-5320.



MASS REVERENCE *and* ETIQUETTE

For many of us, when we are invited to a wedding, one of our first considerations is “what am I going to wear?” We wouldn’t think of showing up at a formal event in our workout clothes. How many of us search for just the right outfit to wear to our annual office party or on a date? Compare that to how much thought we put into what we wear to Mass on Sunday.

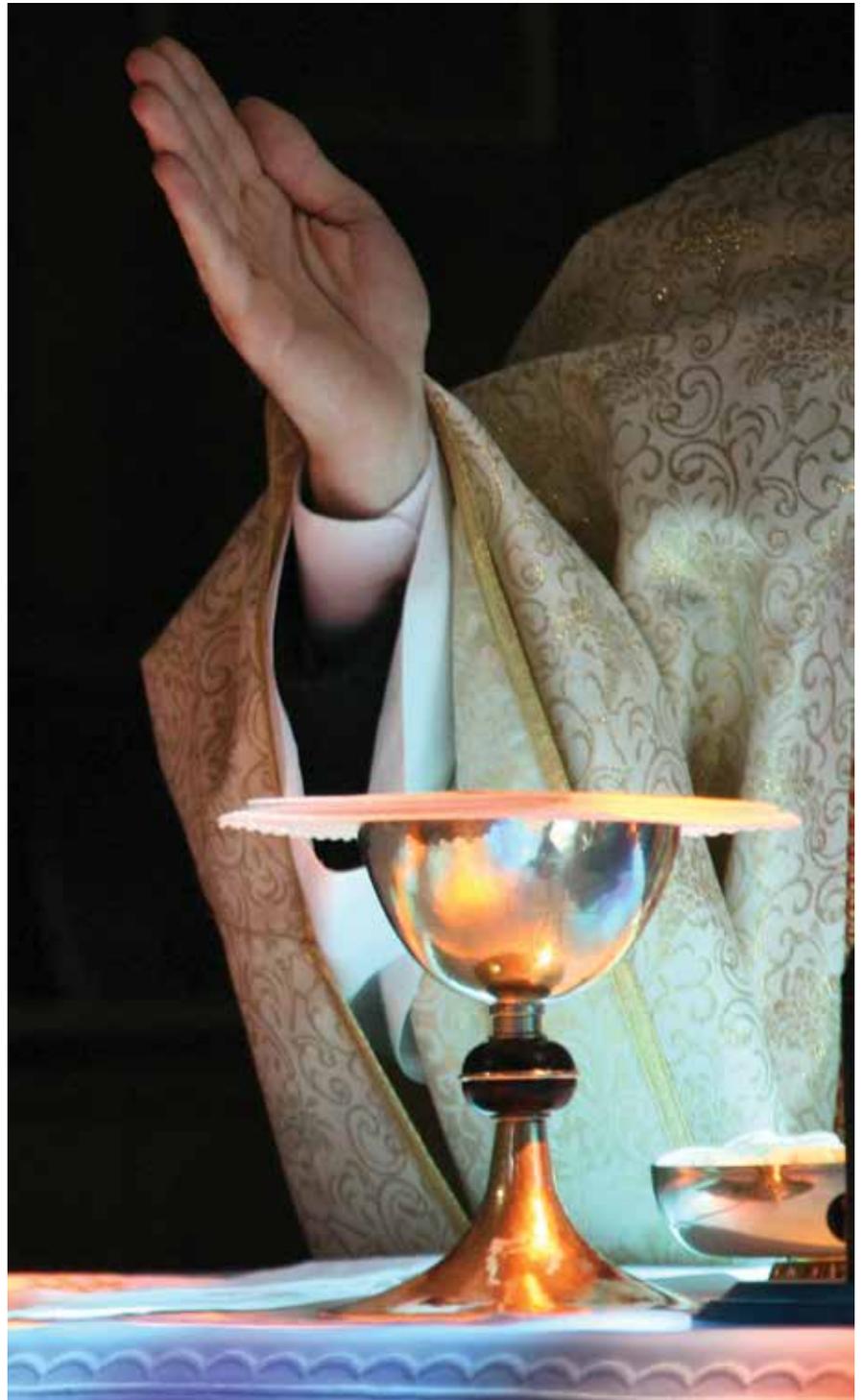
How we dress for an occasion indicates the importance that we place upon that particular celebration. At Mass, we encounter God through the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Dressing appropriately for Mass is one way that we show respect both for God and for our faith family. And this respect is important at all Masses – no matter what time of day or night.

Think about what you are teaching your children when you all wear your “Sunday clothes” to Mass. You are reminding them that Mass is a special celebration. After all, we are going to Jesus’ house.

Some people may quickly point out that Mass shouldn’t be a fashion show – a place to show off your finery – and they are right! We also know that some parishioners come to Mass on their way home from work, and they certainly should not feel embarrassed about arriving at Mass in their work clothes. And no one should ever stay away from Mass because of simplicity of clothing.

But one rule should apply in all instances – our attire at Mass should always be modest. Our clothing should never distract others from what we are gathered together to celebrate – the life, death and resurrection of our Lord.

The celebration of Mass is always a holy occasion and thus should be treated in the most holy manner – in body, mind and spirit.





Providing Messages of Comfort Through the Bereavement Ministry

Bereavement is a burden we must all bear at some point in our lives. And though, as Christians, we have hope in the Resurrection during such times, we still can't help but mourn when faced with such loss and hurt. Jesus showed us this Himself when He wept at the tomb of his dear friend, Lazarus (John 11:35). That's why, says parishioner Patty Miller, it's so important that we support our grieving parishioners, offering them comfort whenever possible and reminding them regularly that they aren't alone in their sorrow.

"It's so important for us to remind the people from our church who have experienced this great loss that they are loved and not forgotten in their grief, for us to find little ways to encourage them by letting them know that someone is thinking about and praying for them — that we understand what they're going through," Patty says.

This is what Queen of the Holy Rosary's Bereavement Ministry aims to do by sending periodic words of comfort and encouragement throughout the year following a person or family's loss.

"Our goal is to show compassion to those experiencing that loss," Patty says. "Writers console and encourage

"Though a simple one, it's really a very rewarding ministry. You can do it all from home and it's a great way to remind grieving members that they aren't alone — that we as a faith community are here for them." — Patty Miller



Bereavement writers are given special packets containing all the tools and resources needed to write grieving parishioners.

them by writing letters or sending cards throughout the year. I provide a packet that includes all the cards, notes, stamps, as well as examples of verses or simple, little things to write in the card."

Guided by the Holy Spirit, bereavement writers then send cards of comfort roughly every month, making sure to give extra attention to holidays and special anniversaries. Though writers rarely meet the person or see firsthand the effects of their writing, they trust that God will use them as an instrument of comfort when needed.

"Most of the time we don't meet these people, but our hope is that our words will give the people who receive them a little lift when most needed," Patty says. "I think the Holy Spirit guides us, too — helping us send them at a time when the person maybe needs it the most."

Though the ministry itself is simple, requiring very little time or effort on the part of the volunteers, Patty says that it is extremely rewarding. All that is needed to get involved is a compassionate heart and a desire to help our grieving parishioners.

"You can do it all from home and it's a great way to remind grieving members that they aren't alone — that we as a faith community are here for them."

Parishioners interested in joining the Bereavement Ministry may contact Patty Miller at 913-384-4644. There will also be a Bereavement Ministry Reception on Sunday, Feb. 17, at noon, allowing current and prospective members to meet one another and consider new ways for the ministry to grow.



Queen of the Holy Rosary

CATHOLIC CHURCH



7023 W. 71st Street
Overland Park, Kansas 66204
(913) 432-4616 | www.queenoftheholYROsary.org

Altar Servers Set Example for Our Mass Participation

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“People are counting on them,” Denise says. “The celebrant needs to know that the server will show up on time, be prepared, and have a mind of reverence. It gives them confidence to openly respond to this call of ministry with a sense of dedication. Altar servers help things run smoothly, and by their participation and reverence, show the importance of prayer leadership at Mass.”

Altar servers also gain a better understanding of the Eucharistic Mystery and the reasons behind our Catholic traditions, as well as the meaning behind our liturgy.

“It is good to see how the ‘wonder and awe’ of the Eucharistic celebration begins to open up and strengthen a person’s faith,” Denise says. “They learn what the Mass offers to us and begin to appreciate how their interaction helps teach and lead the congregation.”

The service helps to strengthen the foundation of the servers’ faith in how they live their lives — leading some to consider a religious life.

Those wishing to become an altar server should contact the Religious Education office at 913-722-2206. They will then undergo server training, followed by shadowing other servers at Masses and learning the priest’s cues. Their names will be given to the ministry schedule coordinator, who will contact the servers’ parents to get the information needed to place the servers on the quarterly schedule, according to the information provided.

WEEKEND MASS

Saturday: 4:00 p.m. | Sunday: 7:00 a.m., 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m.

DAILY MASS

Monday - Friday: 8:15 a.m. | First Saturday: 8:15 a.m.