

Hello Parents and Altar Servers,

I would like to take this opportunity to provide an update on the St. Mary's Altar Serving Program and what we are planning in the near future. Our goal is to provide the youth with a special service opportunity with a sense of service, faith formation, responsibility, and fellowship (and fun) in Jesus Christ.

First, I want to express my appreciation to all the servers and the parents, for their commitment and dedication over this past year. I have received numerous positive feedback from parishioners who have complimented on the increased awareness and dignity exhibited by the Server Corp. over this past year – KEEP IT UP AND PRAISE BE TO JESUS CHRIST!

### **SERVER TRAINING:**

Our goal here is to build on the skill and understanding of the altar serving program so that every server can feel confident in conducting his or her service. We also provide an educational component so our Server Corp. can continue to grow in their "faith and understanding" of the liturgy, what the church says is "*the source and summit of the Christian life*" (*Lumen gentium*, no. 11; cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 1324).

Serving Training Requirements for all Servers

Novices (5<sup>th</sup> Graders and Beginners):

- Completed Registration/Commitment Letter (Enclosed)
- Two Server Training Sessions (See Attached Schedule of Dates and times)
- Complete and pass a simple written exam.

Veterans (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Graders with 1 + year experience):

- Completed Registration/Commitment Letter (Enclosed)
- One Refresher Practice (See Attached Schedule of Dates and times)
- Complete and pass a simple written exam.

Serving Wedding/Funerals: Offered for Veteran Servers

- Indicate your interest on Registration/Commitment Letter (Enclosed)
- Complete One Practice Sessions (TBA)

### **ALTAR SERVER GUIDE**

A new (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition) edition of the "Guide for Altar Servers" will be issued with a copy of the take home exam. The guide is designed as a reference for each server to keep.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

I will focus on an increased presence of our “Religious Education” students in our Server Corp. I will visit all 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Religious Education classes to give all students an opportunity to sign up. If there are other ways our Server Coordinating Group (Myself, Cathy Williams, Ellyn von Huben, and Kathy Grum) can help to facilitate this increased presence, please let us know.

## COMMUNICATION

### E-Mail Address

Much thanks to Ellyn von Huben who has been providing scheduling reminders and other “information blasts” throughout the year via e-mail. **I would like to request from parents updated e-mail addresses representing the “server’s family email” that we can use in our “Server Database.”**

Please send a signed note with the e-mail address to the attention of Ellyn von Huben (175 E. Illinois Rd., Lake Forest) or send e-mail to her at: [evonhuben@churchofstmary.org](mailto:evonhuben@churchofstmary.org)

### Parish Website

You can visit the parish website ([www.churchofstmary.org](http://www.churchofstmary.org)) and go the Altar Server link to reference schedules and download other available documents such as “Registration/Commitment” Letter, Exams, and the “Guide for Altar Servers”, and any other current fliers or forms for events.

### Here are a few REMINDERS for our current servers:

-Dress shoes only. No gym shoes. Remember that we do provide dress shoes in the sacristy for those who need them.

-Altar Servers, please hang up your robes on a hanger marked with a number that matches the robe’s size.

-Please do not “unravel” the ends of the Cinctures (waist chords).

-BE SURE TO SIGN IN. There have been cases where servers came for their scheduled time but were marked absent on their score sheets because they forgot to sign in. We want to give you the proper credit that you earned – Please sign in.

## **WHAT' S NEW – High School Server Program**

One is never too old to serve. In fact, Catholic high schools, Catholic colleges and Universities, as well as parishes next to state universities and colleges have servers who are high school and college aged. We are extending the altar server program for those who desire to begin or continue serving while in high school. High School servers will be scheduled to serve only with other High School servers and preferably on nights that the COR ministry meets on Sunday evenings (@ 6 pm Mass). We also are inviting those high school students interested for a graduated level of serving called “Master of Ceremonies.” We have a few interested already in this program and would like to extend this invitation to those who are now in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and to those currently in high school whether or not you have served before. We will be scheduling a separate practice session for this program (schedule to follow at a later date). Please contact Ellyn von Huben or Fr. Don Woznicki to sign up or for more information (847-234-0205).

## **FUTURE EVENTS AND OUTINGS**

### **Altar Server Dinner & Service Recognition Night**

In the summer of 2010 (after the completion of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Schedule Cycle for the 2009/10 Year), all servers (including this years Novices) will be invited to attend an informal dinner and service recognition night to be held at St. Mary's. We would like to recognize all servers for their service and especially those who excelled with “Perfect Attendance” and “Subs and Volunteer” records [More details on this to follow].

The Altar Serving Coordinating Team look forward to working with all the parents and altar servers who will make up our 2010/11 Server Corp at the Church of St. Mary. Thank you all again for your continued interest in serving at the Altar of sacrifice – and May our Lord Jesus Christ bless and protect your families.

In Praise and Honor of Jesus Christ,

Fr. Don Woznicki

Holy Mary, Mother of Christ – Pray For Us!

Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati – Pray For Us!