

We are delighted to have you as a part of this Awesome Ministry!

Welcome to Altar Servers! 2009-2010

You are an important part of something awesome! You will learn a great deal about the Mass, your Parish, and your Catholic faith. You'll get to learn these things while serving at Mass and at the Altar Server Meetings and other Altar Server activities. You'll have opportunities to participate in parish life at Mass, in community service activities, and even fun events especially for Altar Servers.

You have several people to help you grow in your Altar Server Ministry. The Altar Server Leaders have 2 different roles: Meetings/Training and Scheduling/Attendance. There are both English and Spanish speaking leaders.

For Meetings & Training, the leader is:

Laura Chun: 760-726-2486
chun@pacbell.net

For English Scheduling & Attendance, the leader is:

Theresa Mathison: 760-631-5790
jtmze@cox.net

The Spanish Speaking Masses, the leader is:

Lucila Marez: 760-529-0828
marezlucy@yahoo.com

For Spanish Scheduling & Attendance, the leader is:

Jessusa McCleary: 760-967-9999
jessusamc@yahoo.com



This is the Altar Server manual. This is a great place to go to for help in being an Altar Server. Please read it at home and even ask your parents to read it with you. It will help you to understand about being an Altar Server.

The Parish Website is there for you: If you have a computer, please visit the Altar Server page of the parish website at: <http://www.sanluisreyparish.org/altarservers.html> (you could also go to the parish homepage and then search on 'Altar Server').

Bookmark the Altar Server page and check back often. You'll find the Altar Server schedule posted there each month, an Altar Server Newspaper/blog with current news, photos, or even video clips of what the kids are doing in the Ministry. There's a link for 'Learning about Liturgy,' where just some of the things we'll learn in our meetings are posted, including guides to liturgical vocabulary, the Order of the Mass, and even this manual. So, please – bookmark the Altar Server page and check back often! 😊

Please note: Rosters with Altar Server names, phone numbers and email addresses (for your use when you may need to find a substitute to serve in your place) will be distributed at meetings *and* sent directly to Altar Server families via email. Rosters with personally identifiable information will *not* be posted on the parish website.

People to help you: In addition to the Leaders adult leaders of the Ministry (Mrs. Chun, Mrs. Mathison, Mrs. Marez, and Mrs. McCleary), your greatest help can come from *other* experienced Altar Servers. There is an Altar Server assigned as a 'Cross' at each Mass. The 'Cross' Altar Server is *also* a Leader. They are there to help you, too!

During Mass, Fr. Chuck, Fr. Raul, and Fr. Adrian will also support you. Always watch them very carefully though the *entire* Mass. They will discretely signal to you if there is something special they need you to do – but you'll have to be watching them to see it!



Some Important Words to Think About:

Reverence: Respect somebody or something deeply.

Honor: Great privilege: a special privilege that is cherished.

Responsibility: Accountability. You can be counted on to do what you say you are going to do.

Grace: God's gift of Himself to us. Be open to God's grace each day, and *especially* at each Mass. Fully participating in the Mass is an experience *full* of Grace. By fully participating in the Mass, you are an important part of something incredibly **AWESOME**.

What does an Altar Server Do?

Altar servers today perform most of the functions of the former “minor order” of ordained clerics known as acolytes (from the Greek word *akolouthos* or “attendant”). Church writings from the second and third centuries talk about the role of acolytes, giving the role great importance and honor in the history of the Church. Altar servers today are not ordained, but are “commissioned” by their parish priest.

The primary role of the altar server is to assist the priest in the celebration of the liturgy. This is done helping the priest, setting an example to the congregation by really participating in the Mass (singing, saying the responses, sitting or standing at the right time, etc). Always be attentive, watching Father closely the entire Mass.

What to Wear to Mass:

Boys should wear dress shoes. Pants should be semi-casual or dress pants. Shirts should be semi-casual or button-down shirts. No shirts with big logos or pictures because those patterns will show through your alb. Hair should be neatly combed or styled. Always be neat and clean, including your hands. There is a rest room in the Altar Server vestry that we share with the Eucharistic Ministers. You may want to wash your hands prior to putting on your white alb.

Girls are asked to wear dress shoes or sandals. Pants should be semi-casual or dress pants. Dresses and skirts are always welcome. Hair should be neatly combed or styled. For girls, if your hair is long and falls in your face, you may want to pull your hair back in a barrette or in a ponytail. Always be neat and clean, including your hands. There is a rest room in the Altar Server vestry that we share with the Eucharistic Ministers. You may want to wash your hands prior to putting on your white alb.

Five Things to Check at Home before Mass:

1. Hair
2. Hands
3. Shoes
4. Clothes
5. Heart



Altar Server Meeting Schedule

Updated 8/01/09



2009-2010 Meetings: Meetings are monthly in the Serra Center at 6:30PM. Altar Servers are asked to attend at least one meeting EVERY two months – so try not to miss 2 meetings in a row. If you are new or nervous, please attend more often – the meetings are here to help you!

Make sure Mrs. Chun and Mrs. Mathison have your email address and you will receive meeting and schedule reminders via email. Other fun community service events will be added through the year.

Date	Day	Theme
08/20/2009	Thursday	New Altar Server Training 6:30 PM in Serra Center
09/17/2009	Thursday	Altar Server Campfire & S'mores behind the Tennis courts at 6:00 PM
10/15/2009	Thursday	Altar Server Mtg. in Serra Center 6:30 PM
10/25/2009	Sunday	Altar Server Food Sales after the 8am, 10am, and Noon Masses
11/19/2009	Thursday	Altar Server Mtg. in Serra Center 6:30 PM
12/06/2009	Sunday	Altar Server Food Sales after the 8am, 10am, and Noon Masses
12/11/2009	Friday	Altar Server Advent Party in the McKeon Center, 6:30pm.
01/21/2010	Thursday	Altar Server Mtg. in Serra Center 6:30 PM
02/18/2010	Thursday	Altar Server Mtg. in Serra Center 6:30 PM
03/18/2010	Thursday	Altar Server Mtg. in Serra Center 6:30 PM
04/15/2010	Thursday	Altar Server Mtg. in Serra Center 6:30 PM
05/20/2010	Thursday	Altar Server Mtg. in Serra Center 6:30 PM
06/17/2010	Thursday	Altar Server Mtg. in Serra Center 6:30 PM

Monthly Schedules: Scheduling requests are due to Mrs. Mathison by the 1st day of the previous month. The schedule will be completed around the 15th and will be e-mailed to Altar Server families and also posted on the Altar Server page of the parish website: www.sanluisreyparish.org/altarservers.html. Paper copies will be placed on the Altar Server bulletin board in the Altar Server Vestry for kids to take home and put on the family bulletin board. Your presence is very important. Please serve when you're scheduled, or find a substitute ahead of time when you can't.

You are an important part of the Mass. Your priest and your congregation *depend* on you. Please serve when you are scheduled to do so – or find a Substitute Altar Server to serve in your place.

Finding a 'Planned' Substitute: If the schedule is already published and you discover you can't serve, please arrange for a substitute. The Altar Server roster with everyone's contact information will be emailed to all Altar Server families and available at each meeting (contact Mrs. Chun or Mrs. Mathison if you would like another copy). You show great Reverence and Responsibility when you make sure your spot is covered if you can't serve and it is VERY much appreciated! When you find a planned substitute, please send an email or inform Mrs. Mathison or Mrs. McCleary because finding a substitute when you need one definitely COUNTS as good attendance.

Arrival Time: You need to be at Mass early.

Please arrive **20** minutes prior to Sunday Mass – and *sign in* in the Altar Server notebook. Be there **30** minutes early for a special Holiday Mass (Christmas, Easter, Confirmation, etc). If you are at Mass but not scheduled to serve that day, check in and see if you are needed anyway! Sometimes a person may have a last minute emergency and has not arranged for a substitute. You can be an 'Emergency Substitute' and to jump in help whomever might be having a difficult morning. At 10 Minutes before a Sunday Mass, emergency substitutes should step in to serve, and *no less* than 20 minutes prior to a major Holy Day Mass.

What should I do if I arrive 10 minutes prior to Mass and an Emergency Substitute has already stepped in for me? If you arrive late and there is already a substitute ready to serve, PLEASE let them have your place and THANK THEM for jumping in to help! Please be very gracious. ☺



If you are an emergency substitute, sign in next to the name of the person you are subbing for and write 'Emergency sub.' We keep track of attendance based on the sign-in sheets. Your willingness to serve as an Emergency is greatly appreciated, too!!!

Albs: At most Masses, the Altar Servers wear the white albs in the Altar Server Vestry. Choose one that fits; a little shorter is better than *too* long (keeps *it* clean and keeps *you* from tripping over it!). When you attach or detach the velcro tab, get your fingers under the tab itself and pull it off gently, do not pull or tug on the alb material itself. Make sure the cincture or rope you choose is the correct Liturgical color (check the liturgical calendar on the wall for the color of the day), tied on the left, not too loose, and not too long. After Mass, hang the albs nicely in the closet.

Ways Altar Servers Help Prepare for Mass: After *you* are prepared for Mass, it's time to help get the church ready, too. The Cross needs to make sure the following tasks are done. The Cross can ask the other Altar Servers to help, too. If you notice that the Chalice with Purificator and Pal are not on the credence table, please make sure to tell the EM Steward for that Mass. The Steward is the Eucharistic Minister who is in charge of the Eucharistic Ministers for that Mass.

Five Things to do at Church just before Mass

1. Reserve Altar Server Seats with Rope or 'Acolyte' Chair Sign
2. Chalice with Purificator and Pal on Credence Table
3. Water Cruet, Washing Bowl, Hand Towel on Credence Table
4. Light Candles - 10 Minutes prior to Mass
5. Water for Father at his table next to the Presiders' chair, if needed

You are very visible at Mass: At one point or another, every person at Mass will be looking at you – so be a *great* example for them! Smile and greet people before Mass. As you process with Father in church, fold your hands in front of you in respect. During Mass, all Altar Servers stand up and sit down in unison.



Be Prayerful: sounds obvious, doesn't it? When Father leads the congregation in prayer, say the prayers, too. When the choir sings, join in and sing joyfully! If you just *have* to yawn, be **very** discreet. At the Sign of Peace, offer Father your hand and say 'Peace be with you,' then turn and offer the Sign of Peace to your family and to the congregation. Be attentive, sitting up straight and watching Father the *entire* Mass. After Mass, process out reverently. The Mass is our most sacred and beautiful prayer – and *you* are a living and breathing part of that prayer.

Altar Server Roles

New Altar Servers usually start as the **Fourth**. The Fourth processes in at Mass behind the Cross Bearer and two Candles. You will not be directly assisting the priest. As Fourth, your job is to watch closely and learn during each Mass. Study what the other Altar Servers do. Please listen carefully to the 'Cross.' The Cross Bearer (and Candles, too) will help you. ☺



Candle Bearers are next. There are usually two Candle Bearers. On special occasions, the Candle Bearers may actually carry candles, although this does not happen on regular Sundays. The 'Candles' process together at the beginning and end of Mass. During the offertory, you will go to the back of the Church and escort the gifts to the front of the Church. Candle Bearers always walk together in unison. You assist the priest in washing his hands and help clear the Altar. The Candle Bearers must always keep their eyes on Father during Mass in case they are quietly called to assist in some way. Try not to cross in front of Father if it can be avoided.

The **Cross Bearer** is the lead Altar Server. The Cross Bearer lights the candles ten minutes before Mass. The Cross Bearer tries to find Emergency Substitutes for any scheduled Altar Servers that are not there. The Cross checks with Father before Mass to see if he has any special requests (a glass of water or Kleenex near his chair or an urgent errand). Try not to cross in front of Father if it can be avoided. You assist the priest in receiving the gifts at the Offertory. You also will hold Father's book during Mass. Watch Father attentively during the entire Mass; Father may need your help and will signal to you. You are the priest's assistant and your job is very important – even for such things as knowing where the Serra Center air conditioning switch, light switch, Sacristy Key, and Serra first aid kit are. You will be carrying the cross in the front of the procession before and after Mass. Always be “Reverent” with the cross. If the cross becomes heavy as you stand during the recessional song, gently place the base on the floor. As you process out after Mass, make sure the Cross does not hit the ceiling. Help the other Altar Servers understand what they need to do. Be kind, patient, and discreet as you provide direction to the other Altar Servers. The younger Altar Servers look to you to help them and be their good example.



Thank you so much for Altar Serving! You are showing your love to God and are graciously serving our Community. You are an important part of something awesome!

Many thanks to Marge & Joe Ontiveros, whose 2006 Altar Server manual has been used as a reference for this edition. This manual was written by Laura Chun and edited by Theresa Mathison. Send any comments or suggestions to chun@pacbell.net. Current as of 8/01/09. Images are licensed to Laura Chun.



This is your certificate for a prize from
The Altar Server Prize Box!

Did you read and understand this manual? If so, just sign below!
Bring this certificate back to the 10/15/09
meeting to redeem for a prize.

Altar Server Signature

Parent Signature

Parent email and phone

And remember,
Whenever you have any questions about being an Altar Server, you
can ask them at *any and every* Altar Server meeting.

