



St. Francis of Assisi

CATHOLIC CHURCH

ALTAR SERVERS

Grow in *Stewardship* and *Understanding of the Mass*

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Mathew Suresh, OSB,
Our Parochial Vicar
*"Meeting Spiritual Needs
Wherever I Am Able"*

After receiving First Holy Communion, becoming an altar server is something of a rite of passage for many Catholic youth. We are called to full and active participation in the Mass and being an altar server is a great way for kids to experience that. While sitting in the pew, it can be easy for your mind to wander and to become distracted. However, when one is serving on the altar, attention is needed to fulfill your duties and participate in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

Deacon Chris Kennedy has recently taken over the altar server training program.

"We have different levels for our altar server training so that kids get the opportunity to learn and gain experience," Deacon Chris says. "This also allows them to learn from older servers and to really get to know the different parts of the Mass."

These different levels that the altar servers train for have different names as they learn the roles. In the beginning, new servers are on the altar with older and more experienced youth. This level is called Guardian Angel because they "stand guard" on the altar. At this level, they learn when to sit, stand, and kneel. They learn what



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A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

Christ the King of the National Eucharistic Revival, Our 135th Anniversary, and the Perfect Example of Stewardship!

Dear Parishioners,

May the Lord give you peace!

With the liturgical year ending soon and Advent and Christmas close behind, I want to share with you the profound significance of the Solemnity of Christ the King on Nov. 26. This feast holds a special place within the heart of the Catholic Church and shows us what true stewardship is all about. We invite you to join us, not only for Mass, but for our Forty Hours Devotion that same weekend. We will begin following evening Mass on Saturday, Nov. 25 and conclude with morning Mass on Tuesday, Nov. 28. Our Adoration Chapel will be open for Forty Hours of continuous adoration of Christ our King in the Holy Eucharist throughout that time!

From Nov. 18-26 in Assisi Hall, we will also be hosting a display of Eucharistic Miracles that have occurred throughout the history of the Church. You can reserve a visit by SignUpGenius.

The Solemnity of Christ the King, observed on the last Sunday of the liturgical year, invites us to reflect on Christ's universal kingship and reign over all creation. In a world often focused on power, control, and self-centeredness, this feast presents a countercultural message. It reminds us that Christ's kingship is marked by self-sacrifice, humility, and service. Our Lord's throne is not one of worldly grandeur but of the Cross, where He gave His life for our salvation. His Body and Blood given in Holy Communion is the core of every Mass we celebrate and the National Eucharistic Revival we are called to share with others!

This feast is a powerful reminder of our 135th Anniversary and the core values of Catholic stewardship. If Christ were not King of this parish, we never would have made it for 135 years! With Christ as King, we will continue on until He returns in glory! This month, we will be making an appeal to everyone to: 1) Set aside time for personal prayer and family prayer every day. 2) Choose at least one ministry where you feel God is calling you to get involved in the life of our parish. 3) Strive to give five percent of your income to the offertory collection.

is a gift from God — our time, talents, resources, and even our very lives. Just as Christ, the King, entrusted His life for our sake, we are called to be faithful stewards of the gifts He has bestowed upon us. We are caretakers of His creation, called to use our resources wisely, generously, and in ways that bring about His kingdom on Earth.

Christ's kingship and stewardship are deeply intertwined. By recognizing His authority over our lives, we acknowledge that our role as stewards is to use our gifts in accordance with His will. This means serving others, working for justice, promoting human dignity, and caring for the Earth and its resources. Our actions as faithful stewards should reflect the self-giving love that Christ displayed during His earthly life and His very Body and Blood that we receive and carry within us!

The Solemnity of Christ the King is an important day in the Catholic Church because it brings our focus back to the heart of our faith. It reminds us that Christ's reign extends beyond the confines of time and space, touching every aspect of our existence. This feast challenges us to evaluate our lives in light of His kingship and to ask ourselves whether our choices and actions align with His teachings.

As we approach this solemn feast, let us take the opportunity to recommit ourselves to Christ and the principles of stewardship. May we strive to be faithful stewards of His grace, using our gifts to build a more just, compassionate, and harmonious world. Let us remember that Christ, the King, calls us not to a life of privilege but to a life of service, solidarity, and sacrificial love.

I invite you to join us in celebrating the Solemnity of Christ the King with hearts full of gratitude and reverence. Through our worship and reflection, may we be renewed in our dedication to Christ's reign and to the active stewardship and discipleship He calls us to embrace.

May the Lord give you peace!

Reverend Mark Zacker
Pastor



Cristo Rey del Renacimiento Eucarístico Nacional, Nuestro 135° Aniversario, y el Ejemplo Perfecto de Corresponsabilidad!

Queridos feligreses,

¡Que el Señor les dé la paz!

Con el año litúrgico terminando pronto y el Adviento y la Navidad muy cerca, quiero compartir con ustedes el profundo significado de la Solemnidad de Cristo Rey el 26 de noviembre. Esta fiesta ocupa un lugar especial en el corazón de la Iglesia católica y nos muestra en qué consiste la verdadera corresponsabilidad. Les invitamos a unirse a nosotros, no sólo para la Misa, sino para nuestra Devoción de Cuarenta Horas ese mismo fin de semana. Comenzaremos después de la Misa vespertina del sábado 25 de noviembre y concluiremos con la Misa matutina del martes 28 de noviembre. Nuestra Capilla de Adoración estará abierta durante cuarenta horas de adoración continua a Cristo Rey en la Sagrada Eucaristía. Del 18 al 26 de noviembre, en la Sala Asís, también tendremos una exposición de Milagros Eucarísticos que han ocurrido a lo largo de la historia de la Iglesia. Puedes reservar una visita mediante SignUpGenius.

La solemnidad de Cristo Rey, que se celebra el último domingo del año litúrgico, nos invita a reflexionar sobre la realeza universal de Cristo y su reinado sobre toda la creación. En un mundo a menudo centrado en el poder, el control y el egocentrismo, esta fiesta presenta un mensaje contracultural. Nos recuerda que la realeza de Cristo se caracteriza por la abnegación, la humildad y el servicio. El trono de Nuestro Señor no es el de la grandeza mundana, sino el de la Cruz, donde dio su vida por nuestra salvación. Su Cuerpo y Sangre entregados en la Sagrada Comunión son el núcleo de cada Misa que celebramos y del Renacimiento Eucarístico Nacional que estamos llamados a compartir con los demás.

Esta fiesta es un poderoso recordatorio de nuestro 135 Aniversario y de los valores centrales de la corresponsabilidad católica. Si Cristo no fuera el Rey de esta parroquia, ¡nunca habríamos cumplido 135 años! Con Cristo como Rey, continuaremos hasta que El regrese en gloria. Este mes, haremos un llamamiento a todos para: 1) Dedicar un tiempo diario a la oración personal y familiar. 2) Elegir al menos un ministerio en el que sientas que Dios te llama a participar en la vida de nuestra parroquia. 3) Esforzarse por dar el 5% de sus ingresos a la colecta del ofertorio.

Corresponsabilidad significa reconocer que todo lo que tenemos es un regalo de Dios - nuestro tiempo,

talentos, recursos, e incluso nuestras propias vidas. Al igual que Cristo, el Rey, confió su vida por nosotros, estamos llamados a ser fieles administradores de los dones que nos ha concedido. Somos los guardianes de su creación, llamados a utilizar nuestros recursos con sabiduría, generosidad y de forma que se haga realidad su Reino en la Tierra.

La realeza de Cristo y la corresponsabilidad están profundamente entrelazadas. Al reconocer Su autoridad sobre nuestras vidas, reconocemos que nuestro papel como discípulos es utilizar nuestros dones de acuerdo con Su voluntad. Esto significa servir a los demás, trabajar por la justicia, promover la dignidad humana y cuidar la Tierra y sus recursos. Nuestras acciones como fieles discípulos deben reflejar el amor oblativo que Cristo mostró durante su vida terrenal y su Cuerpo y Sangre que recibimos y llevamos dentro.

La solemnidad de Cristo Rey es un día importante en la Iglesia católica porque nos devuelve al centro de nuestra fe. Nos recuerda que el reinado de Cristo se extiende más allá de los confines del tiempo y del espacio, tocando todos los aspectos de nuestra existencia. Esta fiesta nos desafía a evaluar nuestras vidas a la luz de su realeza y a preguntarnos si nuestras elecciones y acciones se ajustan a sus enseñanzas.

Al acercarnos a esta fiesta solemne, aprovechemos la oportunidad para volver a comprometernos con Cristo y con los principios de la corresponsabilidad. Esforcémonos por ser fieles discípulos de su gracia, utilizando nuestros dones para construir un mundo más justo, compasivo y armonioso. Recordemos que Cristo, el Rey, no nos llama a una vida de privilegios, sino a una vida de servicio, solidaridad y amor sacrificado.

Les invito a unirse a nosotros en la celebración de la Solemnidad de Cristo Rey con el corazón lleno de gratitud y reverencia. A través de nuestro culto y reflexión, que seamos renovados en nuestra dedicación al reinado de Cristo y a la corresponsabilidad activa y el discipulado que Él nos llama a abrazar.

¡Que el Señor les dé paz!

Reverendo Mark Zacker
Párroco

St. Francis of Assisi

CATHOLIC CHURCH

Basic Questions About Our

COME FOLLOW ME ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI



2023 Commitment Card

My Offering of Time, Talent & Treasure

First & Last Name

Phone

Email

Spouse: First & Last Name

Spouse: Phone

Spouse: Email

Address

City State ZIP

After completion, please bring this card to Mass on
November 18/19 or mail it to the parish office.
Thank you and God bless you!

What is a Stewardship Renewal?

This isn't a parish fundraiser – far from it. Our annual Stewardship Renewal is the time when we ask each other to re-prioritize the way we use God's gifts in the Church. It is the time when we discern how God is calling us to use our time, talent, and treasure to grow closer to Him.

Why should I fill out a commitment card?

Your Commitment Card allows you to make commitments to prayer, parish ministries, and offertory giving, or what we at St. Francis of Assisi call "time, talent, and treasure." There's a two-fold reason to complete your card. First, it is an excellent opportunity to move forward spiritually and personally. Second, when you fill out a card, our parish is much better able to manage our many volunteers and make budgeting decisions.

How many parish ministries are there at St. Francis of Assisi?

"Ministry" is a general term for any parish group, organization, or regular activity. There are dozens of ministries in our parish. You can sign up for certain ministries, or re-commit yourself if you're already involved.

What if I sign up for a ministry, but later find I'm not very interested?

You are not making a solemn promise to participate in a particular ministry when you mark it on your commitment card. If you find that the parish group is different than you thought, or simply that their meeting time doesn't fit your schedule, you can change your mind. There are plenty of other ministries to consider.

I'm hesitant to make a firm financial pledge. What if I lose my job?

Your commitment card isn't a legal contract. If your circumstances change, your gift will change. In Scripture, we are asked to "give according to our means." So if you lose your job, you may be unable to give at the level you pledged. Likewise, if you get a promotion, you may be able to give more. That is why at St. Francis of Assisi, our standard of giving is based upon a percentage of income.

What happens if I don't fill out a commitment card?

Returning a card is an important part of being an active member of St. Francis of Assisi. If for some reason you lose your card, we'll send you a reminder letter. Please make every effort to return it!

Please bring your Commitment Card to Mass on Commitment Weekend, November 18-19. How will you use your time, talent, and treasure in our parish?



STEWARDSHIP RENEWAL

TIME, TALENT, AND TREASURE

Stewardship of Time

Our definition of Stewardship of Time: Using my time on earth wisely; making time for personal prayer, family prayer, and quality time with friends and loved ones.

The bottom line about prayer: Without prayer, we cannot thrive spiritually. As Catholic Christians, it is a necessity to spend time each day speaking to God. This includes reading Scripture and saying prayers such as the Our Father and Hail Mary, but even more importantly, it should include a heart-to-heart conversation with Jesus. He wants us to bring him all our fears, longings, needs, and desires.

What kind of Time commitments should I make? Your commitment card lists several suggestions for how to spend time with God in prayer. Review your current prayer life and take a step forward. For instance, start having daily prayers with your children or spouse. Commit to praying the rosary on the way to work or reading scripture before bed each night.

Stewardship of Talent

Our definition of Stewardship of Talent: Using my God-given abilities to strengthen the Church and help others, especially through parish ministries and activities.

The bottom line about parish ministry: No Catholic Christian exists in a vacuum. Scripture makes it clear that we must function within the wider faith community, putting our gifts in the service of others. It's not enough to go to Sunday Mass; we need to be involved in parish life and ministry.

What kind of Talent commitments should I make? If you're not involved in anything in our parish, now is the perfect opportunity to take a step forward. Check

out your commitment card for a list of ministries. If you're already involved, re-commit yourself to the important work you do. And if you feel God is calling you forward – sign up for something new!

Stewardship of Treasure

Our definition of Stewardship of Treasure: The wise and just management of my financial resources; giving a proportionate amount of my income to the parish.

The bottom line about financial support: We need to take seriously the Biblical concept of the tithe, and start giving based on a percentage of income. It's our responsibility to support the Church with our personal involvement *and* our financial support.

What kind of Treasure commitments should I make? Our goal at St. Francis of Assisi is to give five percent of income to the offertory. Grab a calculator and figure out your target gift based on your total household income. Then make a plan for increasing your gift incrementally to reach five percent. During our Stewardship Renewal, choose a weekly or monthly gift to the parish, and be faithful to it for the next year.



GETTING TO KNOW

FR. MATHEW SURESH, OSB,
OUR PAROCHIAL VICAR

*“Meeting Spiritual Needs
Wherever I Am Able”*



As Parochial Vicar, Fr. Mathew hopes to support us in our faith journey through prayer, the sacraments, preaching and hosting classes to share his faith.

Joining our community as Parochial Vicar, Fr. Mathew Suresh, OSB looks forward to getting to know the parishioners and supporting our spiritual needs. Having served as a priest for more than 20 years, he takes great joy in administering the sacraments, preaching and celebrating Mass.

Fr. Mathew previously served at Ave Maria Catholic Parish in Parker and came to us on July 1, 2023. He's been in the United States since November 2022. Fr. Mathew was ordained on Jan 6, 2001, by the late Bishop Emmanuel Pothanamuzhy of the Diocese of Mananthavady, Kerala, India. Fr. Mathew is a priest and monk of the Order of St. Benedict of St. Joseph's Priory, Makkiyad, Kerala. He went through minor seminary at St. Joseph's Monastery, Makkiyad. He studied philosophy at St. Joseph's Philosophy Institute in Makkiyad and received his bachelor's in theology at Kristu Jyoti College in Bangalore, India.


"Priesthood has been a wonderful and challenging experience with varied areas of ministry and work," Fr. Mathew says.

Fr. Mathew served in various ministries at the monastery, including as principal and teacher. He also managed philosophy students and was a Director of Junior of Monks. In addition, he served as a councilor of the Major Superior of the Monastery and financial administrator. In his role here at our parish, Fr. Mathew looks forward to serving all of us.

"I want to be a humble Parochial Vicar for everyone and to meet their spiritual needs whenever I am able," he says.

Back in India, Fr. Mathew has three brothers and his parents. His brothers are all married with children. It's hard to find any similarities between India and the United States, says Fr. Mathew — the weather, climate, food, lifestyle and language are all different.

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Fr. Mathew looks forward to getting to know the parishioners and supporting our spiritual needs.

Fr. Mathew Suresh, OSB *continued from page 6*

"I'm happy that I am here in the U.S., especially in the Diocese of Colorado Springs," he says. "I'm loved by people of both Ave Maria and St. Francis of Assisi."

Fr. Mathew has quite a few hobbies, including reading; listening to preaching and Christian music; watching soccer, volleyball, basketball and cricket; and keeping up on the news. He hopes to help us deepen our faith, as he believes we all need that, even Pope Francis.

"Our parishioners have wonderful faith in One and Triune God," he says. "Like the apostle Peter, I pray to increase my faith and that of our parishioners."

As Parochial Vicar, Fr. Mathew hopes to support us in our faith journey through prayer, the sacraments, preaching and hosting classes to share his faith. We joyfully welcome him to our faith community!

"Our parishioners have wonderful faith in One and Triune God. Like the apostle Peter, I pray to increase my faith and that of our parishioners."

— FR. MATHEW SURESH, OSB



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CATHOLIC CHURCH



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ALTAR SERVERS *continued from front cover*

is expected of them as well as getting a better handle on the order of the Mass. After they feel more comfortable at this level, they move on to the Torch Bearer level. Their duties include carrying the candles for the processional, Gospel, and recessional. Additionally, they bring the items from the credence table to prepare the altar for the Consecration. Cross Bearers lead the processional, as well as leading in the offertory procession when the gift bearers bring up the gifts. This level has the most experience and understanding of the order of Mass. They serve well to help the younger altar servers learn.

"We have found that the younger servers learn so well from the older kids," Deacon Chris says. "So part of our training program is to have the older and more experienced servers work to train and direct the younger ones. They pass on their knowledge and it is an important part of being engaged, and experiencing the Mass more deeply.

"I have had servers who have mentioned that to me, 'I never realized that before, but I am right there on the altar seeing it,'" he adds. "They are so privileged to be that close to where the sacrament is taking place. We hope to open their eyes to see that they are participating in *the sacrament* — the source and summit of the Christian life."

When the altar servers start to get into high school, the

opportunities for being involved in different ministries really open up. They can start getting involved as lectors, greeters, or Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. Servers need to be at Mass 20-30 minutes early. This is a great opportunity for the whole family to get involved in the different ministries that are available on Sunday mornings. While their children are preparing to serve, the parents and rest of the family can serve as greeters, lectors, or Extraordinary Ministers. With the ease of our scheduling app, this makes it possible to schedule the whole family to participate on the same day, at the same Mass time.

"Being involved at the church is important and keeping our kids engaged is crucial," Deacon Chris says. "By having parents involved as well, it really reinforces that message to the children. Additionally, they see what other opportunities are available to them as they get older and may no longer be altar servers. They are more likely to transition somewhere else and stay in ministry at the parish."

To learn more about the altar server training program, contact Deacon Chris Kennedy at 303-688-3025 or ckennedy@diocs.org.