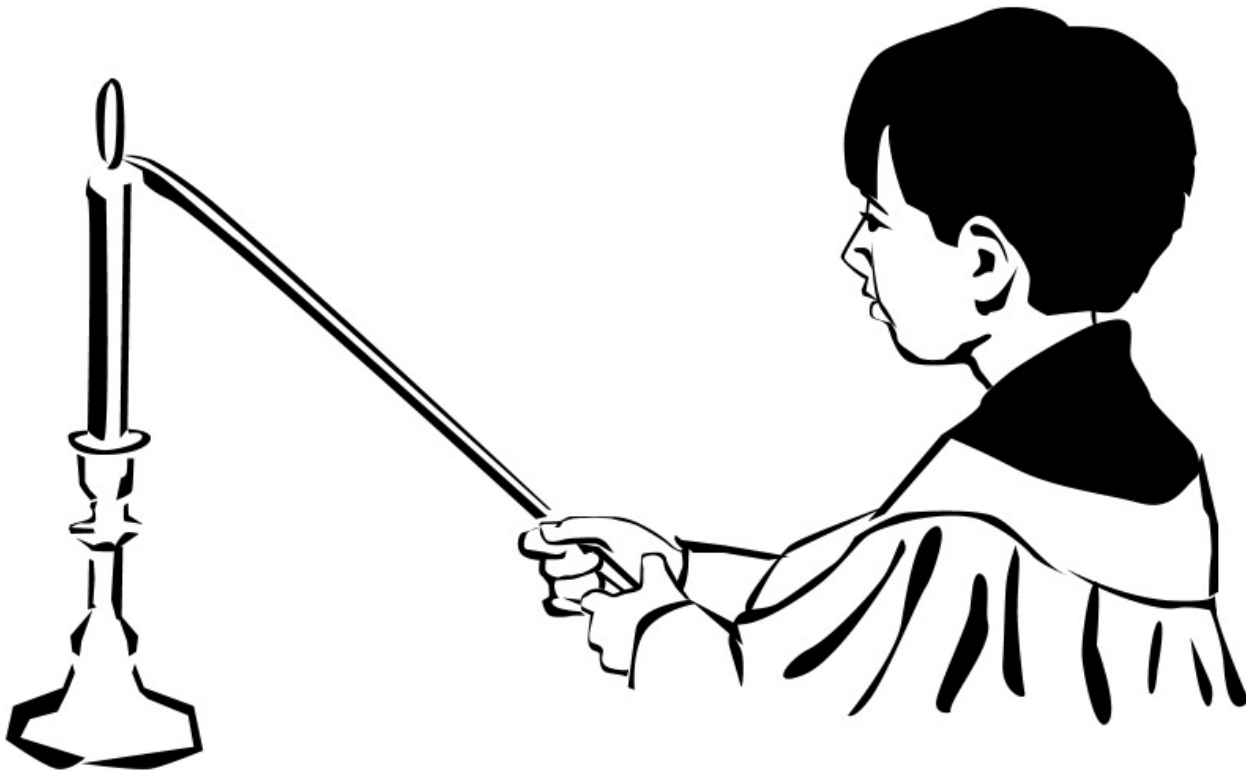


Serving at the Altar of God

An Instruction for Children and Youth



YOUR NAME: _____

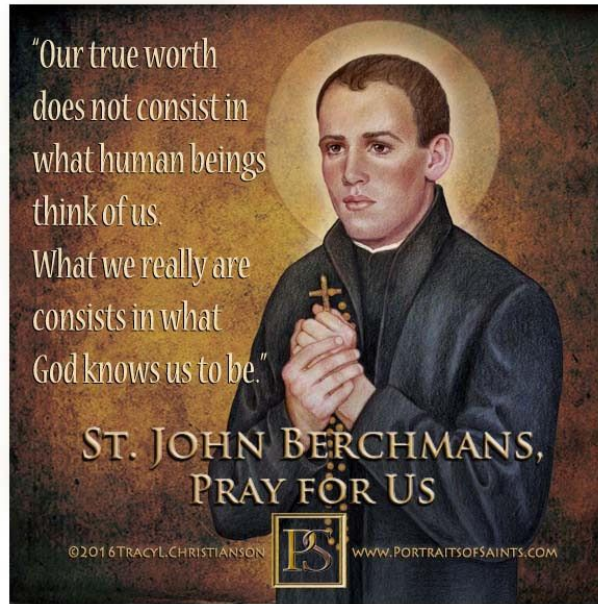
TODAY'S DATE: MARCH 5, 2023

PACKET NO. 6

*Saint Vincent de Paul Catholic Church Religious Education Program
Berkeley Springs, West Virginia*

Serving at the Altar of God

An Instruction for Children and Youth - Saint Vincent de Paul Catholic Church Religious Education Program



Prayer for Altar Servers

by St. John Berchmans, Patron of Altar Servers (adapted)

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 girls and boys.

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 tolls love the sainted
The holy martyrs knew.

Throughout life, then, endeavor
God's graces to employ;
And be in heart forever
Holy altar girls and boys.

— St. John Berchmans

Serving at the Altar of God

An Instruction for Children and Youth - Saint Vincent de Paul Catholic Church Religious Education Program

St. John Berchmans was born in Belgium in the times of war between the Catholics and Protestants of the Netherlands (in the 1600s). He was the eldest of five children and was richly blessed by God with a kind, gentle and affectionate nature. Eager to learn and very intelligent, he used these gifts by studying hard to honor God.

When he was about seven years old, St. John started serving at two or three Masses on Sundays with deep reverence and devotion. He attended religious instruction and listened to Sunday homilies at Mass with great attention. As he grew older, he became very devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary. At any time, he would go out barefoot and make the Stations of the Cross in the town where he lived. Eventually, St. John discerned that he had a vocation to religious life as a Jesuit (a religious order of the Church; Pope Francis belongs to the Jesuit Order). He traveled to Rome to study for two years. When he returned to his home in Belgium, he became very ill and died at the age of 22. After he died, numerous miracles were attributed to him. St. John Berchmans' feast day is November 26th. He was made a saint by Pope Leo XIII in 1888. (Text adapted from the *Catholic Encyclopedia*.)

Let us ask Saint John Berchmans to help you discern today whether or not you would like to become an altar server here at St. Vincent de Paul: ***Saint John Berchmans - pray for me as I discern a calling to serve at the holy altar of God.***

+++++

LESSON 6: LET'S PRACTICE!

1. Before Mass: Vesting
 - Alb and Cincture
 - Cassock and Surplice (once purchased)
 - Altar Server Prayer before Mass (will be posted in the Altar Server Room)

*Go before us, O Lord,
In this our sacrifice of prayer and praise,
And grant that what we say and sing with our lips
We may believe in our hearts
And practice and show forth in our daily lives.
Through Christ Our Lord.
Amen.*

2. Assignment of Jobs and Responsibilities Before Mass
3. Preparation of the articles used at Mass
4. Processing In and Introductory Rites

Serving at the Altar of God

An Instruction for Children and Youth - Saint Vincent de Paul Catholic Church Religious Education Program

5. The Liturgy of the Word
6. The Liturgy of the Eucharist
7. Concluding Rites and Recessional
8. Completion of Jobs and Responsibilities at the Altar
9. After Mass: The Altar Server Room
 - Prayer After Mass (will be posted in the Altar Server Room)

Bless, O Lord, our hearts and minds,
And grant that as we leave Your house
We may continue to be aware of Your Presence.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

- Replacement of Vestments

+++++

CONGRATULATIONS! YOU HAVE COMPLETED ALTAR SERVER TRAINING!

Students who choose to join the Saint Vincent de Paul Altar Servers Guild will be installed by Fr. Mikee at the 9:00 a.m. Mass next Sunday, March 12, 2023.

At Mass, altar servers will receive a pin and special certificate indicating their completion of training and acceptance of the duties of an altar server for the parish.

New altar servers who have already received their First Holy Communion will be scheduled at upcoming Masses beginning March 19, 2023. Altar servers who will be receiving their First Holy Communion this coming May 7, 2023 will begin serving at Masses beginning May 14, 2023.

All new altar servers will continue hands-on training at Mass with a senior altar server until Mr. McBee and/or Father Mikee determine you are able to serve at the altar on your own (your guardian angel is always there to help you, as well). You will not be scheduled to serve at Mass on your own until Father or Mr. McBee thinks you are able to do so. Hope, pray, and don't worry! (St. Padre Pio said that.)

Be not afraid! May God bless you as you enjoy your new vocation as an altar server!

