

**Pastor's Notes: The Altar Ministry**

November 1, 2020

For my pastor's notes on All Saints Day I want to highlight a liturgical ministry served by women — women who love Our Lord and work throughout the year behind the scenes with humility to glorify Him. We have known this ministry as the Altar Guild, and it now continues at the Basilica with a new name: The St. Martha Altar Ministry. Tia Yunker is taking the reins following the dedicated service of Shirley Lautigar, who has moved up to Alexian Village. A few of our core members have moved recently or are unable to serve during the pandemic, and we now need to expand this essential ministry. I am making a special call to all women of our parish to consider serving the Altar Ministry in a capacity that would fit with your stage in life and vocation. We have a couple of experienced volunteers who are looking forward to showing you the ropes, and we will have information sessions this Sunday and next Saturday. Below I share with you some information about the Altar Ministry from our website.



## St. Martha Altar Ministry

The Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul is blessed with an abundance of beauty glorifying God in his Church. The stained glass windows, the Stations of the Cross, and the Sanctuary and Altar are an apostolate of beauty - a visible sign of faith to all who enter, worship, and receive the Sacraments.

Preservation and daily care of the Basilica is an apostolate in itself. It is a necessary, yet prayer-filled opportunity to become closely united with the Sacraments, especially the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.

The Saint Martha Altar Ministry is comprised of parishioners who wish to care for the vestures of the altar to make it ready for the Most Blessed of Sacraments, the Holy Eucharist. It is part of an unbroken tradition reaching back to the faithful women who provided for Jesus during his lifetime. Mark 15: 40-41~ Matthew 27:55

Members of the Altar Ministry recognize St. Martha because of her practical life of active service and because she was among the first to recognize Jesus as the Messiah. John 11:7-29

As hostess to our Lord Jesus and servant to his care, we implore the intercession of St. Martha, as patroness of those who care for the needs of the altar at the Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul.



*Saint Martha, pray for us that we might serve Jesus better.*

*Help us to overcome our distractions and worries to listen to His words and be present to Him this day. Amen.*

## What does the Altar Ministry do?

- provides for the proper care and cleansing of altar linens, vestments, albs, and other vestures, including washing, stain removing, ironing, sewing, repairing, dry cleaning, etc.
- serves to provide for the proper care of the altar candles, vigil candles, holy water fonts, and altar flowers.
- coordinates among team members to pick up used linens in the sacristy following Mass 2-3 times a week and return those linens to the sacristy or parish office in a timely manner.
- works in conjunction with the rector and sacristans to ensure that the textile accrements necessary for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist are correctly prepared and presented, including those for funerals (pall) and weddings (kneeler cover).
- cares for the Basilica's relics collection and sets out a rotating display of relics in the sanctuary.
- members are encouraged to meet monthly in order to plan the needs for monthly and seasonal settings, including the decoration of the altar at Christmas and Easter.

## Interested in joining the Altar Ministry?

**We are hosting Information Sessions in the church at 10:15 am on Nov. 1 & 4:00 pm Nov. 7, 2020.**  
All current and prospective members of the Altar Ministry are encouraged to attend one of the sessions.

We would be so glad to welcome you!

Contact our Altar Ministry coordinator, **Tia Yunker**, at [tiayunker@yahoo.com](mailto:tiayunker@yahoo.com) or 865-684-6441.

You may also join the Altar Ministry Group on myParish app.

*Almighty God, grant we beseech thee, that we may handle holy things with reverence, and perform our work with such faithfulness and devotion that it may rise with acceptance before thee and obtain thy blessing; through Christ our Lord.*  
*Amen*