

ALTAR SOCIETY SHARED STANDARDS

Serving the Church. Strengthening the
Parishes. Supporting One Another.



WHY THIS GUIDE MATTERS

Every Altar Society in our pastorate has its own traditions, structure, and ways of serving. That's something we want to honor and preserve. But we also want to bring clarity to our priests, parishioners, and anyone new to ministry about the Altar Society's core purpose and expectations. This guide reflects shared standards that were prayerfully discerned in collaboration with Altar Society leaders from across our pastorate.

OUR SHARED PURPOSE

To serve our parish and support the spiritual and parish life of the Church by caring for the sacred, welcoming the faithful, and stewarding hospitality through acts of love and service.

SHARED STANDARDS

Every Altar Society across Our Lady of Grace Pastorate commits to the following:

- **Care for Altar Linens** – Ensure the proper care and rotation for altar linens, including purificators, corporals, altar cloths, and server albs. This involves regular washing, ironing, and replacing items as needed. (*instruction booklet included*)
- **Decorate for Liturgical Seasons** – Coordinate seasonal church decorations that reflect the liturgical year. This includes maintaining live plants and preparing the worship space for the major seasons of the Church year. (*A seasonal reference guide included*)
- **Support Funeral Hospitality** – Provide comfort to grieving families, help coordinate and serve funeral meals. Each parish can organize this effort in a way that fits its community.
- **Support Sacraments and Religious Education** – Support parish life by celebrating sacraments and faith formation. This may include hosting receptions for First Communion or Confirmation, helping with Vacation Bible School, or offering appreciation meals or gifts for catechists. Each parish is encouraged to express this support in ways that fit its unique gifts.

STEWARDSHIP

Each Altar Society maintains its own checking account, which requires an officer structure. For transparency and diocesan alignment:

- A Treasurer's Report and meeting minutes must be submitted to the Business Manager after each meeting.
- An annual list of members who have paid dues must also be submitted so it can be included in the parish's End-of-Year Report for parishioners.
- Each Altar Society should maintain written bylaws that outline the roles, responsibilities, and general operations of its officers.

MOVING FORWARD

These shared standards are a starting point that brings clarity, consistency, and collaboration across our pastorate. If you have any questions or support, the Director of Discipleship & Evangelization is your primary contact for all things related to Altar Society.



"The heart of the Altar Society is love – Love for the Eucharist, for the Church, and for one another in service."

–Father Richard Fox
Our Lady of Grace Pastor