

# 5 REASONS YOUR CHILD SHOULD BE AN ALTAR SERVER

Written by Kathryn Whitaker for Real Life at Home

<https://www.reallifeathome.com/5-reasons-your-child-should-be-an-altar-server/>

## It's one less kid in the pew.

**1** I'm nothing if not practical. We have five children, so when our oldest serves it cuts down on the crazy factor. I'm certain the people in the pew behind us are appreciative. The bonus is it requires us to plan ahead so we arrive to Mass 20 minutes early. I find that we're actually *more* prepared on the days he serves.

## You're fostering a future vocation.

**2** According to a recent study, 75% of the 2012 class of Ordinands (seminarians) were altar servers. It's no coincidence that when your children fall in love with the Mass, they fall deeper in love with God. Whether your children choose a religious vocation or one of married life, the effect of experiencing the Mass in a personal way can only help to further their faith life in the very best of ways.

## Community with peers.

**3** It's become something of the "cool" factor among my son and his friends. They enjoy serving together. My son often drops by the altar server room before Mass just to see if they need an extra set of hands. He's gotten to be friends with other children outside his peer group, our parish's seminarian serving his pastoral year, and our priests and deacons. We are called to live in community and I can't think of a more positive bunch than that one.

## Respect and understanding of the Mass.

**4** In the early days, we struggled just to keep our son quiet in the pew. As he grew into a school-aged child, he was present but still very unaware and uninterested in the Mass. We tried it all—MagnifiKid subscription, books about Mass, pointing out key moments during the liturgy—all with mild success. It wasn't until he began serving that we saw almost an immediate shift in his approach to the Mass.

## An opportunity for leadership.

**5** When our son first began serving, he started by shadowing other altar servers. You could see his anxious nerves! Our priest was so kind and patient as he learned the ropes. Now, I see my son mentoring younger servers. I see him taking pride in making sure the Mass goes smoothly. I see him smiling on the altar as the priest gives him a word of encouragement. I see a fine young man learning to be a leader by example.

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