



# St. Michael the Archangel Parish

## Altar Servers Find Great Joy in Sharing Talents with God and Parish at Mass

**W**e know how vital altar servers are in assisting our clergy with the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Altar servers also have a meaningful impact on their own families as they bring them closer together and closer to the liturgy.

“The impact that the servers have on their families is priceless,” says Ivan Toguchi. “I enjoy watching how much the servers really look forward to serving Mass. When the servers are scheduled, their parents are there to support them. I have seen extended fam-



ily members attend Mass just to see and support their family members.”

St. Michael’s altar servers contribute to the liturgical celebration of the Mass in a variety of ways.

“Fr. Lio loves giving the altar servers a lot of responsibility, and the servers absolutely love it,” Ivan says. “Some of their roles include setting up the altar, holding the missal and binders for the priests, and even assisting Father with the incense. Other responsibilities include retrieving patens and purificators left on the altar, as well

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## Altar Servers Find Great Joy in Sharing Talents with God and Parish *continued from front cover*

as assisting the Eucharistic Ministers, when asked, in guiding the elderly and handicapped to their pews.”

In total, St. Michael currently has 24 altar servers, and Ivan believes the longest serving assisted at the altar for nearly 11 years. Ivan himself has been a St. Michael’s parishioner since moving to Kona in 1984 and became an active member after the new church reopened on March 25, 2015, as the location of the church is close to his office.

“At that time, I was willing to help with whatever the parish needed, from being a Eucharistic Minister to helping with daily Mass and teaching catechism and RCIA,” Ivan says. “As time went on, there became a need for someone to help with the Altar Server Ministry. As I enjoyed teaching the youth about our faith, I thought the opportunity provided a very meaningful chance to get the youth involved directly with our worship ministry.”

Today seven of the current altar servers generally serve at the Spanish Mass, which is held every Sunday at 11:30 a.m.

“All of these servers have been attending Mass with their parents since they were born,” Ivan says. “Some of these servers were invited by sacristans to become servers and others became interested after receiving their Sacraments of Confirmation, First Holy Communion, and Reconciliation.”

The other 17 altar servers serve at the English Masses. Many of these servers have also grown up in

the church with their families, and many have had the desire to become altar servers while going through catechism classes.

Generally, most altar servers experience some nervousness while serving at Mass because of their desire to do well.

“They want to do the right things at the right time,” Ivan says. “For example, they want to take the Roman Missal to the priest at the right time and wash the priests’ hands without spilling any water on the floor. Many of the servers get very excited to serve during special Masses like Holy Week and Christmas. Then there is more pressure not to make mistakes.”

Interested altar servers attend a training meeting once a year, but they also receive one-on-one training to address their specific questions and concerns. Anyone interested in becoming an altar server is welcome to reach out to Ivan.

“The altar servers feel special when they serve at Mass and love when longtime parish members and strangers alike thank them for their service to the church,” Ivan says. “Many have said that they just feel like better people in serving our Lord.”

*To learn more about St. Michael’s altar servers, contact Ivan Toguchi at [itoguchi@yahoo.com](mailto:itoguchi@yahoo.com) or 808-430-3331.*





## Stewardship: *Living in Love*

**"G**od is love, and he who abides in love abides in God and God in him" (1 Jn 4:16). As Christ's disciples, we are called to live lives of love. When asked which commandment is the most important, Jesus answered, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might." He immediately followed this command with, "Love your neighbor as yourself. No commandment is greater than these" (Mk 12: v29-31).

The life of a Christian is, essentially, all about love! This doesn't mean that Christ preached an abstract Gospel, or that we need to love simply because "it feels good." The reality is quite the opposite. Indeed, Christ's Gospel of love is one of dramatic action, and living in that love calls each of us to action.

What is this love, then, of which Christ speaks? How are we to live it out today?

Christ, the God who, as John tells us, "is love" Himself, came to Earth out of pure love for us. So that we might have everlasting life, Christ took the punishment for our sins. He, the Lord of all creation, was mocked, scourged and ultimately murdered on the cross to atone for the sins that we, His creatures, have committed. Now, that's love! And it is the love that we are called to imitate throughout our lives.

Notice the selfless nature of Jesus' act. He gained nothing in return for what He did, and He calls us to love in the same manner. How do we do that here and now? Do we die on our own personal crosses? The answer, in a way, is "yes." We don't necessarily die on the wood of the literal cross as Christ did, but we must die

to self for the sake of others. That is the love of Christ, and that is the love He calls us to every day. If we want to truly love God, we must love others. God Himself showed us the reality of this need when he commanded that we love our neighbor just as we love Him. And then Christ explained, "Whatever you do to the least of those, you do to me." If we are called to love God, then we are called to love our neighbor, for Christ resides in each one of us. It must be a love like Christ has shown us – one of selflessness. We should want for nothing more than the good of our neighbor.

There are many ways that we can show our love to others, particularly through prayer and service. Here at our parish, there are many ministries that offer us the opportunity to serve our neighbors. If we offer a little bit of time, we can help out in the parish office doing seemingly menial yet important tasks, such as stuffing inserts into the bulletins so that fellow parishioners are aware of news and events within the parish. Those of us with an aptitude for teaching may be called to serve others through RCIA or our Religious Education program. There is also always a need for more lectors and Eucharistic Ministers to aid the priest in bringing Christ to other parishioners at Mass.

These are but a few of the countless opportunities we have to serve our parish and local community. However we are called to do so, one thing is for certain: the love of Christ calls us to action. How will we show our love for God this year? Remember, "Whatever you do for the least of those, you do for me."



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## Lector Ministry: Procla



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*Alysha Naone began serving as a lector when she was a teenager and would attend the Youth Mass that was offered at the parish.*

**S**t. Paul has much to say in his letter to the Romans about those who bring the Word of God to others — “For ‘Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’ But how can they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how can they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone to preach? And how can people preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring the good news!’” (Romans 10:13-17).

We are called to share the Good News of the Gospel and Bible in our daily lives and actions. Within our own parish, there is a special way of sharing the Word of the Lord with others, as lectors proclaim the Word of God for all to hear.

Alysha Naone began serving as a lector when she was a teenager and would attend the Youth Mass that was offered at the parish.

“The youth of the parish would fill the different roles at Mass,” Alysha says. “This was an assignment that I could help with. When I went to college, I wasn’t around much so I wasn’t active in the ministry. But when I moved back after graduation a couple years ago, I got involved again.”

For Alysha, one added benefit of proclaiming the Word is that it gives her the opportunity to dive deeper into God’s Word.



*Lector Mary Reynolds serves at Mass.*



## Timing God's Word for All to Hear

"I was never one who studied the Bible extensively, and when I began lectoring, it led me to do just that," she says. "I connect more with God's Word and at the same time, I enjoy finding the right tone and inflection to bring the reading to life. Through my studying of the readings, I find the way to speak it so I can reach the people."

Some may feel they would be too nervous to speak in front of others. But this is something that many people find that they can get comfortable with over time.

"I was definitely nervous when I first started, but the more you practice and get familiar with the routine, the easier it gets," Alysha says. "Even if you didn't read perfectly, you know that you did something that fits with your talents and served God in a beautiful way. It isn't about being perfect — in fact, perfectionism can hold you back. It is about your heart and your desire to proclaim God's Word, not being perfect."

Judy Chaput has been coordinating the Lectors Ministry for the weekend Masses over the last nine years. She says that it's common for lectors to be nervous when first starting with this ministry — and she notes that she still gets a little bit nervous when she's scheduled to proclaim.

"But once I sit down and read the Scripture, through that study of the readings, it becomes a prayer and the confidence of being prepared gives way to placing ev-

erything in God's hands," Judy says. "I have a final prayer on my way to the ambo, that I may proclaim the Word for the benefit of the people and for God's glory. After that, I disappear and become the conduit. Being a lector is an exercise in humility."

Those interested in serving as lectors for the weekend Masses go through a one-on-one training with Judy. This training gives her the opportunity to give them suggestions on pace, enunciation, and posture. Judy and the prospective lectors also go over scheduling, as well as the correct ways to approach the altar and ambo with reverence.

The role of our lectors is to bring the Word of God to the people. This active participation in the Mass is an important part of the worship of God in the Mass.

There are other opportunities in the parish to be a part of the Lector Ministry, as well — these include the Spanish Mass, weekday Masses, and volunteering for weddings or funerals. These are coordinated by other individuals and anyone interested in them may reach out to the parish office and they will put you in contact with the correct coordinator.

*For more information, contact Judy Chaput at 808-322-6466 or chaputee@yahoo.com.*

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*— Alysha Naone*

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## Gratefully Celebrating the Completion of Our Grace Parish Center

**S**eventeen years since the October 2006 earthquake and eight years after the dedication of St. Michael's Church, the long-awaited Grace Parish Center has been completed! Despite a recession, COVID-19, setbacks, and, at times, frustrations, we are now blessed with facilities that will serve our Catholic community for decades. Construction has been completed — however, a few items from the punch list remain to be rectified.

We are anxious to begin new programs and activities and expand others in the Grace Parish Center. The center will be a place where we can celebrate and offer additional ministries and community gatherings. We have already begun putting the center to good use for faith formation for both children and adults, Bible studies, the Vicariate Spring Youth Festival, the Knights of Columbus dinner dance, Marriage and Engagement Encounter, Good Samaritan hands-on CPR training, parishioners' social events, and our upcoming Feast Day celebration.

We are extremely grateful for every person who contributed to making the Grace Parish Center a reality. Without your support, we would not be celebrating the completion of the building project. We recently installed our recognition wall near the main entrance to the church to recognize those who have made cumulative donations of \$5,000 and above.

We have established various levels:

\$5,000 - \$15,000	\$15,000 - \$50,000
\$50,000 - \$100,000	\$100,000 - \$250,000
\$250,000 - \$500,000	\$500,000 and above

We appreciate all donations at whatever level is comfortable for you. Many of you may have donated cash that we do not have individual records for, but the amazing cash donations total is over \$700,000! Please consider using an envelope with your name and address so that you can be recognized.

As we transition from the construction phase to repayment of debt, your continued support is appreciated. Phase 1 was completed during the construction of the church. Site preparation, concrete, plumbing & electrical work was completed at a cost of about \$1.4 million. Phase 2 has now been completed at a cost of \$5.5 million. This includes the construction of the center and all equipment, furniture, and fixtures for a total cost of \$6.9 million. We acquired a 20-year loan of \$3.5 million at the beginning of construction. After making a recent payment of \$1M, our balance is \$2.1M. This recent payment will enable us to retire the loan in 10 years and save \$700,000 in interest.

Again, thank you to all who have contributed to this amazing project — those who have given financially, those who have shared their talents, and those who have prayed for its success.

*If you wish to check your cumulative donations or arrange to make a new donation, please contact Jo Ann Dunn at 808-326-7771.*



## Feeding the Hungry with Malama Na Keiki



As Catholics, we are called to feed the hungry, especially in our own communities. In the State of Hawai'i, one in six children faces hunger and food insecurity. Here at St. Michael, the Malama Na Keiki ministry has partnered with Holualoa Elementary School — across the street from the Immaculate Conception mission church — to reach students who are facing hunger.

“It’s a Corporal Work of Mercy to feed the hungry, and there is great need here among the local people,” says ministry leader Jo Ann Dunn. “We all feel that through this ministry, we are doing something worthwhile and good.”

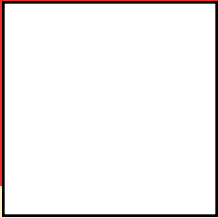
The ministry started in 2014 as a way to provide meals for children who receive free or reduced-cost breakfast and lunches at school, but may or may not have adequate food at home over the weekends. Teachers at Holualoa identify which children qualify for the program, and the ministry would put together backpacks of food for each child to take home at the end of each week.

“I have always done the shopping, and we had other volunteers who would get together and pack it all up,” Jo Ann says. “We would always include nonperishable items such as cereal, oatmeal, macaroni and cheese, and tuna. It would be enough to get them through the weekend, and we would distribute the backpacks every other week. It worked well for a while! After we’d pack the backpacks, we’d take them to the school and drop them off, and the school counselors would be able to give it to the kids who needed them.”

However, with the onset of COVID-19 and children home from school, it was necessary to modify the ministry’s approach.

“With COVID, our mission changed from feeding the kids on the weekends to supporting the school families that were in need,” Jo Ann says. “We started distributing bags of food every other week, and the parents were able to come and pick it all up. We also added a family bag that includes items like bread, peanut butter, rice, pasta, Spam, Vienna sausage, and

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## Feeding the Hungry *continued from page 7*

canned chicken and tuna. We are also able to give them fresh produce such as leafy greens, turnips, carrots, lettuce, green beans, and squash from our Immaculate Conception Sharing Garden. We've continued to operate this way since COVID, and it has worked out very well.

"Our biggest hurdle has been when families aren't able to get to us to pick up the food," she adds. "We have a teacher who is our contact at Holoalua who offered to be an alternative pickup place, so we've been able to take it to her house and the families can go pick it up from her when they are able. During the summers, we donate snacks to a local summer day camp, and also donate backpacks and school supplies to a local organization that holds a school supply drive."

Malama Na Keiki works closely with the Immaculate Conception Food Pantry and also receives donations from the local food bank as well as from generous parishioners. The ministry also relies on the work of dedicated volunteers to run smoothly, undertaking tasks such as food shopping, packing bags, distributing bags, and donating food and other items.

"We have one volunteer who likes to make special bags full of goodies for the kids for occasions like Halloween and Easter," Jo Ann says. "We also had another volunteer with a farm who would donate fruits and vegetables for the ministry. We really appreciate all our volunteers, and there's always an opportunity for something to do."

*For more information about Malama Na Keiki, please contact the parish office at 808-326-7771.*

### Mass Schedule

Saturday Vigil: 5 p.m. • Sunday: 7 a.m., 9 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 4 p.m. (English), 11:30 a.m. (Spanish) • Confessions: Saturday 9 a.m.  
Daily: Mon-Sat 7 a.m. • Mon-Tues-Thurs-Fri 5 p.m. (at Immaculate Conception) • Adoration: Wednesdays 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.