



**Empowering Youth in Liturgical Service: Nurturing Faith Through Participation**  
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The other day, I attended the 10:00 AM Mass at St Dominic Savio Church in Bellflower, CA. I was impressed with the way the liturgy took place. There was nothing out of the ordinary, considering the structure of the liturgy. However, something different and unique was happening. Children and young people were empowered to serve. From the greetings to the choir to the Eucharist Ministers, all were youth.

Having young people involved is a blessing that does not come for free. Listening to the children's voices, who were singing with all their love to Christ, sometimes out of tune, or having the collection basket pass three times by your pew—by a 5-, 6- or 7-year-old usher--or seeing how the child who is reading makes a mistake in pronunciation and just smiles from nerviness knowing that she made a mistake.



Some might think that having children and young people in the role of ushers, greeters, Eucharistic Ministers, sacristans, musicians and lectors is “not proper” and disrespectful to God. Yet when Jesus walked on this earth, he challenged us all to see God differently, to see God as a loving father and not as someone happy only with perfection and upset with anything that is less than perfect.



## St Dominic Savio Catholic Church

*A Salesian Parish*

In a time when the lack of participation in our liturgies is real, being in a church that is full of life and movement is a blessing. As we find in Matthew 19:11, "Let the children come to me," we have the challenge of creating an environment where young people feel welcomed, are accepted and appreciated, and can serve.



Research shows that the three basic needs of young people are a sense of belonging, identity, and purpose. The community of St. Dominic Savio has created an environment where our children and youth satisfy these needs. Now our challenge is to continue engaging our children and youth in strengthening their relationship with God. And as regards us, an older generation, our challenge is to see our young with the same eyes that Jesus sees us.

As we embrace Jesus' call to let the children come to Him, we are reminded of the importance of creating an environment where young people feel valued and can actively engage in their spiritual journey. May we continue to support and empower our youth, viewing them through the same compassionate eyes with which Jesus sees us all.

For a short video click here [https://youtube.com/shorts/BjvA\\_IY-rII?si=bur3B59ZHozSH8\\_X](https://youtube.com/shorts/BjvA_IY-rII?si=bur3B59ZHozSH8_X)