

# MINISTRY OF HOSPITALITY -- USHERS & GREETERS

## **GOOD SHEPHERD CATHOLIC COMMUNITY**

Because of the nature of their service, Ushers should bring to their ministry a strong sense of community. They are church-builders . . . A prerequisite for those aspiring to quality service in the role of ushers is the commitment to Christ living in his Church, together with a deep sense of being instruments of the community appointed to assist its growth in the spirit of Jesus. The Church is people gathered in Christ; every Usher, therefore, ought to be a "people person."



## **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

1. Dedication.
2. Review the ministry schedule when it arrives at you home. Check for your assignments and secure substitutes if necessary.
3. Dress neatly: Dress for men will be coat and tie, dress or pantsuit for ladies for both the 9AM & 11AM Masses. At the 5PM & 4PM Masses a sport coat is recommended, ties are optional. Casual dress is not preferred.
4. Arrival time:
  - 5:00 PM Mass:** Arrive by 4:40 PM
  - 9:00 AM Mass:** Arrive by 8:40 AM
  - 11:00 AM Mass:** Arrive by 10:40 AM
  - 4:00 PM Mass:** Arrive by 3:40 PM

## **BEFORE THE MASS BEGINS**

Arrive at least 20 minutes prior to the scheduled Mass time.

Put on your name badge. There is a magnetic board for name badges in the Liturgical Ministers Room.

Survey your assigned area to see that everything is in order.

- Bulletins for distribution after Mass.
- Sign in at the Usher black binder on the Usher table, and check for any special instructions.
- Be sure there are greeters and ushers at all points of entry.
- Please select the family who will be bringing forward the Gifts at the time of the Presentation so that they can be lined up in a ready position before the Ushers take up the Collection.
- If there is a Baptism, please see that the Altar Servers and Processional Cross Bearer are standing at the sides near the pews so that the congregation can see the Baptismal family. If there is also a First Eucharist family, they are to stand behind the Baptismal Family.

## **AS PARISHIONERS ARRIVE**

Keep in mind that each person is a temple of the Lord, and that Christ dwells in each person through the power of the Holy Spirit. Also, you are a representative of the parish in welcoming all who come to our doors. Some people are visiting and this may be a one-time attendance, others are coming to see if this may be the parish where they will register and become part of the community. Please make all welcome. Some people will arrive with food and/or drink. These *must not* be carried into the church. There is a waste basket in the Liturgical Ministers Room, at the Welcome Desk, and in restrooms. Also, remind men to remove their hats in church.

## **SPECIAL NEEDS:**

- There are wheelchairs, walkers, and canes available for use during Mass in the Groom's Room closet or Liturgical Ministers Room closet. Make sure that aisles remain clear. Ask those who are mobility impaired if they want Communion brought to them. If so, try to seat them on the aisle
- There is usually a child care at the 9am, 11am, and 5pm Masses each weekend. Space is limited. Be sure that you can direct people to the child care.
- There are listening devices for those who have hearing problems. These can be checked out from the A/V desk.



## **SEATING THE ASSEMBLY**

There are three main concerns about seating people.

**SEATING PEOPLE TOGETHER** - Mass is an act of communal worship. The liturgical renewal requires that "all the faithful be led to that full, conscious and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy" (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, 14). If people are far flung in the worship space it is difficult to be in community. Please try to seat people as close to the altar area as possible and fill in the center section first, particularly at special liturgies, like Holy Days.

**FINDING SEATS** - When a liturgy is crowded it is often difficult for people to find the remaining seats that are scattered throughout the church. Please walk up and down on the side aisles, asking people to move in from the end of the pew, freeing up seats along the aisles. Then you can assist the seating by motioning people to come forward.

**SEATING LATE COMERS** - This is a difficult issue to be handled with courtesy, both to those coming late and to those who are already participating in the Mass. Please seat people **before** the reader begins the first reading, and then **after** the gospel but before the homily. You can set the tone of quiet attentiveness among those waiting to be seated. At the time of the reading of the Word of God, please be as attentive as possible. When the time comes, assist them in finding a seat quickly and quietly.

Your confident movement to the available seats will help them, where they may be hesitant on their own. **DO NOT SEAT ANYONE or ALLOW PEOPLE TO WALK DOWN AISLES ON EACH SIDE OF AMBO DURING THE SCRIPTURE READINGS.** If someone insists on entering during the liturgy, there is not much you can do, of course. Trying to stop them would create more of a disturbance than their entry. Generally, however, a gentle request in a positive tone will be effective.

**USHER POSITIONING - REMAIN STANDING AT ALL TIMES** Position yourself so you can be easily summoned by someone in your section. You are there for everyone's safety, so be aware!

**NARTHEX** - The Usher assigned to Narthex is to monitor area at all times providing assistance as needed. In addition, they are to provide an extra measure of security to children heading to and from the bathrooms.

**USHER'S DUTIES DURING THE LITURGY** - When you are serving as an usher is it important to keep the talking to each other to a minimum. It is occasionally necessary to talk in order to perform your duties but it is also distracting to the people who have small children in the foyer and are trying to worship, as well as to the reader at the ambo, to the cantor, and to the presider. They all can see you. **Ladies should not have a purse with them when ushering.** If needed, they can leave their purse in the parish office with the receptionist. No usher should be texting during Mass.

**CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD (CLOW)** - CLOW is celebrated at 5pm, 9am, and 11am Masses. CLOW is in the Daily Chapel. You may assist by keeping the procession of children headed in the right direction toward the Daily Chapel.

**PARTICIPATING IN MASS** - Every usher is also a member of the assembly gathered for worship. Even more basic than the duties of ushers as special ministers is the responsibility to join in the act of worship itself as fully as possible. As ushers are models of hospitality for others in the assembly, they should also be models of participation in the common worship of the church. Whenever possible, they should join in the Mass parts that are sung, the hymns, and the prayers of the Mass. The goal is not just to participate but in doing so to be formed in you own spirituality and to benefit from entering into the spirit of the liturgy and share in the sacrifice of Christ.

**ATTENDANCE** - During the first reading, count attendance in the Church and Narthex. Count everyone; adults, kids, lap babies, CLOW as they exit the sanctuary and yourself. Try to be inconspicuous. Report attendance count to Lead Usher.

**THE PROCESSION WITH THE GIFTS** - Currently, the gifts are presented by the families celebrating a sacrament. If there are no sacraments, then please invite 2-4 people to participate. During the Intercessions, invite the sacrament family or whomever is presenting the gifts, to assemble for the procession in front of the monumental doors.

**PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS** - The gathering of the offering of the people is an ancient responsibility of the ushers and can be traced to the Old Testament (2 Kings 22:3-4). It is helpful to remember how the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*

describes the collection: "It is fitting for the faithful's participation to be expressed by their presenting both the bread and wine for the celebration of the Eucharist and other gifts to meet the needs of the church and of the poor" (101). It is an integral part of the liturgy and should be treated with care and dignity.

**COLLECTION** - Immediately following the Intercessions, proceed down your assigned aisle with two baskets. When approaching the altar you *need not* genuflect at the top of the aisle. This is because the Blessed Sacrament is not on the altar or in the church at this time. A bow from the waist IN UNISON is sufficient to show reverence for the altar of our Lord. Working from the front to rear, pass the collection baskets two rows at a time.

**Presentation of the Gifts:** Once sections 1 & 8 have been partially collected, consolidate collection into main collection basket provided by Lead Usher.

- Please line up the Gift Bearers in a ready position using the following order before taking up the collection:
  1. Two Baskets first (Food and Collection always first)
  2. Good Shepherd Icon and Tray with Communion for the Sick (next)
  3. Wine (Always second from the last)
  4. Bread (Always the last)
- Please begin the Procession of the Gift Bearers just as soon as there is a token amount of envelopes in the Collection Basket for Presentation.
- Please present the Gifts to Father one at a time in the above order and please step aside to allow those processing behind to approach Father with their Gift.
- Please stand to the side until Father has received all of the Gifts.
- After Father has receive the last of the Gifts (Bread), all Gift Bearers bow reverently together toward the Altar and then once Father bows to all the Gift Bearers, they are to return to their seats.

The remaining collection should be taken to the collection room consolidated and placed into an empty canvas collection bag. Place canvas bag into drop box. Store collection baskets in usher's cabinet in Liturgical Ministry room following the 5PM and 4PM Masses only.

**FOOD TOTES** - Ask Lead Usher if they need help consolidating the Food Totes. Consolidated food totes in should be brought into the Liturgical Ministry room and stacked following the collection. Empty totes should be placed on the tables for the following Masses. All totes and tables should be put away following the 4PM Mass only.

### **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

During the Eucharistic prayer, there are no special duties for the ushers or greeters. The most important service you can give at this time is your complete attention and prayerful participation. Since ushers are usually on the outer aisle and near the Narthex doors of the church, they are closest to those members of the assembly who are participating the least. Your own constant example, week after week, may help some of them to recognize the importance of their own participation.

Section 2 Usher should assist the Eucharistic Minister with holding the door to the Eucharistic Chapel open as they pick up the Ciborium and return it after Communion.

**COMMUNION** - After the Sign of Peace proceed down and take your positions in front of the Eucharistic Ministers at the front. Distribute hand sanitizer to the Eucharistic Ministers. The Eucharistic Ministers and the Ushers will stand and remain at the front end of each aisle, with the Usher in the middle, whether or not there is a First Communion at that Mass. The Usher will signal the Eucharistic Ministers when to proceed forward to receive communion. **If there is a First Communion, the Usher's will not give this signal until the child(ren) and family(families) of the 1st Communicant(s) have returned to their seats.** The Ushers are then in position to invite the assembly to enter the communion procession. If you have someone in your section that needs Communion brought to them, notify the Eucharistic Minister in your section once you have received the sacrament and direct them to that parishioner.

### **THE CONCLUDING RITES**

Place the bulletins where those leaving early can pick them up but don't stand and offer them personally. We don't want to encourage others to leave early.

Occasionally there is a special item Envelope for an outreach project that has been placed in the pews in advance. Ushers may have to offer additional envelopes. If so, they will be on the Usher's table.

**BULLETINS** - Following communion move to Narthex. Begin to hand out bulletins **ONLY AFTER** the priest exits. This is done to encourage people not to leave before mass ends. When handing the bulletin to those leaving Mass, say a word of farewell to them and perhaps invite them back next week. Try to be familiar with the contents of the bulletin in case a question is asked about additional information. Become familiar with parish office hours, facilities layout, and be able to direct people to hospitality when appropriate.

**AFTER MASS - Close exit doors:** Leave a small quantity of bulletins on informational tables in Narthex. Return any remaining bulletins to the Liturgical Ministers Room.

**Pews/Chairs:** Return "Reserved" covers to Liturgical Ministers cabinet. Place hymnals in the holders in the back of the pews and place on chairs.

### **DEALING WITH DISRUPTIONS**

Please be assertive with children who are leaving the assembly during the Mass. All children ideally should be with a parent, held by the hand, and walking. Running on the slate floor could be a trip hazard. Please stop the child at your section and ask them to wait for their parent to catch up to them, at which time the parent should take them by the hand.

If there is a significant disruption by someone who is intoxicated, mentally ill, or has emotional problems try to escort them out of the church with a minimum of disruption or get the security officer.

## RESPONDING TO EMERGENCIES

### FIRE

Be familiar with where the fire extinguishers are and the phones.

### NATURAL DISASTERS

In the event of a tornado, please ensure that people are away from all doors and windows.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES - Be ready to assist as needed. A yellow First Aid Kit is available in the Liturgical Ministers Room. Don't hesitate to call 911, if you think it is necessary. There is an **AED** (Automatic External Defibrillator) located behind the information Desk. Get the security officer if an ambulance is needed or call 911.

### SPECIAL LITURGICAL RITUALS

At times there are special rituals that require the ushers to participate outside their usual duties. One time is at Easter Vigil when there is candle lighting during the Mass. Another is Palm Sunday, when we have a procession with palms. Ushers should direct people to the gathering for the procession, usually the Good Shepherd Statue or the Narthex. Watch the Usher Bulletin Board for details.

The duties and responsibilities that you have accepted as Ushers are of great importance, and necessary to your parish. Therefore, please be prepared. Reread this publication from time to time to refresh your understanding of these responsibilities. To encourage a prayerful atmosphere by way of example during Mass, talk only when necessary, and softly. Extend your assistance and courtesy to your fellow parishioners at all times so that each member of the congregation can experience the feeling of belonging, a sense that "It is good for us to be here."



# The Ministry of Hospitality

By Austin Fleming

Yours is the first of Christ's faces  
to greet God's people  
as they assemble for prayer.

Your greeting of welcome  
is the first wish that "The Lord be with you!"

Yours is the word  
that welcomes the stranger to be at home,  
or in the silence  
that makes of our assembly a foreign land.

Yours is the task of discretion:  
knowing how to welcome, and,  
when and where to seat the latecomer.

Yours may be the last word  
that ushers the community  
to its week of work in the Lord's vineyard.

Yours is the Lord's face and voice  
for those who enter and depart  
the holy ground of prayer.

Come to your work and your post  
from your personal prayer;  
be as ready as the Lord to meet his people.

Let your welcome and your smile  
be for all who enter;  
remember that you will have time  
to see your close friends later in the week.

Seek out the lost and the confused;  
do not wait for them to come to you.

When appropriate,  
lend a hand and an arm to the disabled,  
remembering your own infirmities.

Greet each person as the Lord,  
for that is precisely whom you meet.

When taking up the collection, remember  
that it is for the work of God's people,  
especially among the poor;  
remember, too,  
that many who make an offering  
are themselves the poor.

Remember that you stand at the temple gates:  
some will come rejoicing,  
and others in fear;  
some will come healed,  
and others to seek that healing.

Be sensitive,  
and welcome all as best you can.

Some will rush by and ignore you:  
let go of your disappointment  
and pray for the Lord's gently touch  
on their heavy or hurried hearts.

Some may fall ill while at prayer:  
see to their needs  
as you have them see to yours.

Be slow to judge those who leave early:  
be glad that they have shared in our prayer  
and recall that only the Lord  
knows the reasons of the heart.

When your brothers and sisters  
thank and praise you for your work,  
take delight  
in the welcome they have found,  
and rejoice in the work  
the Lord has accomplished through you.

Be faithful in the work you do,  
for through it the Lord saves his people.