

Guidelines for Ushers and Greeters

We thank you for undertaking this ministry of service to the community. Too often ushers are considered to be "...those people who take up the collection." That is the most visible aspect of the duties of the usher, but not the most important. The primary role of usher is to provide assistance to the members of the congregation and thereby facilitate the full and active participation of the laity in the Mass

In addition to the ushers, greeters are chosen to serve as representatives of the faith community in welcoming participants, especially visitors, and to encourage their full and active participation in the community of faith and the celebration of the Liturgy. When both roles of usher and greeter are properly performed, the worship experience of all the faithful is enhanced.

The following are our expectations for the ministers who undertake the role of usher and/or greeter in the service of the St. Lambert parish family.

In Advance:

Please take time to familiarize yourself with the building. In some instances you may need to know where the light switches are, or where a broom and/or mop may be found. If help needs to be summoned be aware that the nearest phone is in the rectory. A first aid kit is in the sacristy mounted on the wall near the water cooler.

Arrival:

It is expected that those who serve as usher or greeter will arrive a **MINIMUM OF 15 MINUTES BEFORE MASS**. The opportunity to make the appropriate first impression on worshippers is missed if the people you are there to greet and assist arrive before you do. If you are not there until after Mass begins, you cannot properly do your job.

Additionally, part of the role of the usher is to be sure that everything in church is in order, i.e. doors are unlocked, lights are on, the vestibule is clean, bulletin and envelope racks are properly filled, etc. Ushers must be available to help any person who may need assistance to a seat, directions to the restrooms, or other information.

Dress:

In your role as usher/greeter you are a minister of the church and should approach that job with a degree of reverence and solemnity. Your attire is an outward indication of that reverence. You are going to the Lord's House for dinner - wear what you deem appropriate for such an occasion. While no specific dress code is established, it is assumed that you would want to wear your "Sunday Best".

Before Mass:

The ushers and greeters should position themselves by the various entrances to welcome the congregation as it arrives and to be prepared to offer assistance. This task is not accomplished if all the ushers are gathered together and

engaging in private conversation. We want to encourage you to develop friendships with your fellow ministers and we recognize the importance of camaraderie, however we must keep in mind that the responsibility to minister to the broader congregation must take precedence in the minutes before Mass begins. Prior to Mass the ushers should also select and ask members of the congregation if they would bring up the gifts at the appropriate time.

Solemnity:

In order to allow for people to enter into silent prayer, ushers should make sure the doors between the narthex (vestibule) and the nave of the church are kept closed. The vestibule is the appropriate place for conversation, not the church proper.

During Mass:

Assembly & Processional:

In order to allow for the orderly assembly and unimpeded procession of ministers, the ushers should strive to keep late arrivals from shouldering their way in front of the processional party or cutting through the procession. There will be ample time for people to be seated after the ministers have processed down the center aisle.

Seating:

The right-center rear pew is reserved for ushers. While you do have the task of tending to the needs of the congregation, you are also a participant in the Liturgy. Therefore, though you

would be expected to assist people in finding seats in the minutes immediately after mass begins; you also have a right and responsibility to actively listen to the proclamation of the Word of God. Toward that end, you would be expected to remain in your pew attending to the Liturgy of the Word as it is proclaimed rather than be seating people at that time.

Offertory

The offertory collection is taken up immediately after the celebrant seats himself following the Prayer of the Faithful. The ushers first proceed down either side of the center pews, and then down either side of the outside pews. If there is a second collection, it should be taken up after communion when the celebrant seats himself.

The collection is to be immediately put in the tamper-evident bags provided and sealed. The bag is then to be taken to the safe in the sacristy. At no time should anyone be alone with the collection out of sight of other ushers or the congregation.

Communion:

In a change from previous practice and recognizing that the decision to receive communion is an individual choice, ushers should not go down the aisles from pew to pew directing people to communion. However, the ushers should be attentive to the needs of any disabled members of the congregation and inform the Eucharistic ministers if any persons need the Eucharist brought to them in their pews.

Dismissal:

The last impression may be as lasting as a first impression. That is why it is important that the ushers and greeters are stationed at each of the exits at the conclusion of Mass to hand out bulletins and express a kind word of parting. The ushers may also be needed to provide assistance to those members of the community who need help.

After Mass:

When possible, the ushers and greeters should check to see that the church is returned as much as possible to a state of readiness for the next service. The doors between the vestibule and church should be closed and the outside doors should be closed unless the weather dictates otherwise. Bulletin racks should be restocked as necessary. The pews should be checked for forgotten articles of clothing, books, toys, etc. If time allows, missalettes should be returned to the holders and discarded bulletins and the like removed from the pews.

A FINAL NOTE:

At the Last Supper Jesus himself provided the example of hospitality as service when he washed the feet of the Apostles. When you offer your service as an usher and/or greeter, you are responding to Christ's example. View your ministry as an act of prayer, an attempt to witness to the living Christ. In so doing you will begin to see the face of Christ in the faces of those whom you serve.



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