

Procedures and Guidelines for Hospitality Ministers

UPDATED JULY 14, 2022

Thank you for being a liturgical minister at St. Mary+Our Lady of Peace! The hospitality minister is often the very first contact a person has with our parish. We are grateful for your faithful service and loving commitment to welcoming these worshippers to our home.

ROLE OF THE HOSPITALITY MINISTER

Whether they come for a single Mass while on vacation, visit Summit County frequently as part time residents, or stay for a lifetime, the goal of St. Mary+Our Lady of Peace Parish is to make every person feel welcome as they come to worship. We must warmly greet longtime friends, part time parishioners and especially our visitors, making them feel comfortable and creating a positive experience. Our smile is the smile of Christ to them through us. Ours is the Lord's face and voice for those who enter and depart the holy ground of prayer. We strive to welcome others as we would welcome Christ Himself.

SPIRITUALITY

Hospitality ministers should strive to live the Catholic Faith in spirit and in truth. Regular Mass attendance, daily prayer, regular Confession, and participation in faith formation and the life of the parish are key. To be Christ to others in a compelling and powerful manner, liturgical ministers should heed the Lord's invitation to ongoing conversion and friendship with Him. We cannot give what we do not have, so we rely on the Lord to fill us with his strength.

PROCEDURES

Prior to Mass

Arrive at least 30 minutes prior to Mass to have time to properly prepare and then to greet the congregation as they arrive.

Wear the available 'Hospitality Minister' nametags so that visitors may readily identify you as someone they may approach for help.

If the church building is locked, enter through the administrative hallway door. Combination is _____. Unlock all doors, turn on all lights in the narthex, sanctuary and overflow areas as needed, and turn on the sound system. Be sure to return all keys and the hex wrenches to their proper location.

Observe proper decorum in the sanctuary and the sacristy, keeping conversation to a minimum and as quiet as possible. Respect the silence of the sanctuary, remembering that excess noise is inconsiderate to those in prayer. If the narthex becomes noisy prior to Mass, close one door on each side of the Nave, or both if necessary.

Adjust shades, open windows (summer) and tidy up the entire building as needed to make the building as comfortable as possible for the Mass. If there is snow on the sidewalk, shovel the snow (as much as possible) in front of the church doors and spread ice melt if needed from the main entrance to the sidewalk. Inform the facilities manager of any problems.

Sign the log sheet and locate baskets for the collection and have them ready. Prepare the conference room for bringing the collection to the safe.

If a second collection is needed, you will receive instructions in advance of the Mass; be ready with an additional moneybag and ask the priest or deacon for instructions on when the second collection will occur.

The facilities manager should anticipate the attendance that is expected and have overflow areas set up as needed. You will receive instruction on the operation of AV equipment, etc. Seating and AV equipment should be set up in advance when large crowds are anticipated; **however, be prepared to open overflow areas if attendance is much more than expected.**

As People Arrive

Remember, you are ambassadors for the parish and evangelists for the entire Church. Greet people in a friendly manner, welcome them and be attentive to any possible needs.

Be ready to give directions to rest rooms, the cry room, and available seats. Be especially attentive to the handicapped and elderly, and those with small children, offering assistance as needed.

You might inquire as to whether they are visitors, and if so where from, but avoid lengthy conversations so that you may greet everyone. Keep conversations to the narthex and respect the silence before Mass in the sanctuary.

Choose two or more people (such as a couple or a family) to bring forward the gifts at the offertory. Discuss the particulars of this service in the narthex, again to respect the silence of the sanctuary. Instruct those chosen to bring up the gifts not to start down the aisle until the priest is waiting at the bottom of the steps in front of the altar.

A Mass attendee may ask if low gluten hosts are available. Ask whether they can accept a low gluten host that has been handled by the priest/deacon or if they must have a host that has not been touched with fingers. Typically, those not able to tolerate a host being handled will have their own host and pyx. Make the sacristan, deacon or priest aware of those making the requests and the particulars of the request.

If the seats begin to fill up – **be proactive and assist people in finding seats.** Escort people to empty seats, politely ask those in a pew that has space to make room (it is much easier for you to do this). Direct people to overflow/balcony areas only when the main seating area is reasonably full. If there are people seated in the overflow areas, inform the sacristan as soon as possible of the need for additional extraordinary ministers. The sacristan will need to be aware if there are people in the Social Hall (at OLP) or the Historic Chapel (at StM).

About five minutes prior to the start of Mass, if it appears the main seating area will be full (remember that many people arrive in these last five minutes), ask the reader (or deacon if available) to make an announcement asking those seated to move toward the center aisle. Then direct people still arriving to the outside aisles of the church to minimize the disruption for those already seated.

During Mass

If people continue to arrive, and up until the readings begin, direct them to outside aisles in order minimize disruption for those already seated.

Once the readings begin, close the doors to the church. Politely ask those still arriving to wait at the back of the church to be seated until the end of each reading, then direct them to the outside aisles.

During the Prayers of the Faithful, have those who are bringing forth the gifts gather at the back of the sanctuary. Instruct them not to proceed forward with the gifts until the priest is waiting at the bottom of the steps in front of the altar. The gifts should not be brought forward until the priest (and deacon or server) are ready.

At many Masses an announcement will be made regarding the collection, especially if a second collection is to be made. Please wait for this announcement before beginning the collection.

Gather the baskets and walk up the center aisle, bow to the altar, then proceed to the side aisles to take the collection. Pass the baskets row by row, then place the entire collection into one large basket.

As soon as the collection is completed, two ministers take the collection to the conference room at OLP, or the closest at StM, put the money into a security bag, then into the safe.

- On the log sheet, next to the correct bag number. The ministers will write in the Mass time, which collection, and PRINT then Sign their names. If an attendance count is taken, enter the number on the log sheet.
- If the ministers are related or married, please arrange prior to Mass for a third person to supervise the drop and sign off on the sheet.
- If the collection is too big to fit in the safe, puncture the bag and squeeze out the air, or use two bags.
- Ministers should follow the procedures given them in their training to help insure the security of the collection and their own personal safety.

At the beginning of communion, two ministers proceed up the center aisle and direct the congregation row by row to the communion line.

- Have those in the first row wait until the extraordinary minister with the cup (if any) that is proceeding to the far side of the altar has passed.
- Be prepared to direct those in overflow areas and cry rooms to communion. Coordinate with the sacristan whether an EMHC is coming to those areas (for large crowds) or if the people in the overflow will need to come to main seating area to receive communion (typically only if a few are seated in overflow).
- Help the priest, deacon and extraordinary ministers to identify and bring communion to the elderly or handicapped.

At the End of Mass

After the Final Blessing, open the doors to the church.

With a stack of bulletins in hand, greet those leaving the church, thank them for attending Mass and offer a bulletin.

After the people have left the sanctuary, close the church doors. Scan the pews for items left behind and place in Lost & Found. Tidy up the pews, straightening up missalettes and songbooks, picking up bulletins and other items left in the pews.

The sacristan is responsible for extinguishing candles and leaving the sanctuary in good order; however, the hospitality ministers may assist in these duties. Be sure to use the snuffer on the candles; do not 'blow out' the candles. When all the people have left the church, ensure all lights are off, close all windows, and lock the doors. Remember to leave nametags and all keys in their proper place.

Appreciation for Your Service

Do not underestimate the congregation's appreciation of the minister who shows reverence for the Eucharist and respect for the Celebrant by serving at the Mass.

Thank you for a job well done.

SCHEDULING

Preferences and Contact Information

- Keep your contact information up to date in Ministry Pro using the “Profile” tab.
- Use the “Profile” tab to indicate your preferred Mass time(s) and any dates you are **unavailable**. **Do not** list the dates unavailable in the “Notes” section.
- Two weeks prior to the release of a new schedule, you will receive an email reminding you to update your Profile, including any **unavailable** dates. Schedules will be generated for two months at a time. You will be scheduled based on your indicated availability and your preferred Mass times and locations.
- Once the schedule is posted, you will receive an email informing you of your scheduled ministry times.
- Indicating your availability is an important step toward reducing the number of unfilled assignments. By keeping your Profile up to date, you help to avoid scheduling issues. Your cooperation in ensuring the proper fulfillment of the liturgical ministries is critical and much appreciated.

Reminders

- Volunteers receive an e-mail reminder **five days** in advance of their scheduled Mass.
- Volunteers receive an e-mail that lists “available positions this week” on **Wednesday**. You will receive this email if there are openings at your preferred Mass time(s) and if you have not listed the date(s) as unavailable. Volunteers also can check the full schedule to sign up for any openings.

Requests for Substitutes

- Requests for substitutes should be made as far in advance of the Mass as possible.
- If your **request for a substitute is not answered**: You are responsible for filling your assigned role. Keep track of when you request a substitute and make sure someone accepts your request. If no one accepts your request or if it is a last-minute need, make an attempt to contact other volunteers using the information in the “Roster” tab on Ministry Pro.
- If the request is left unfilled, it is left up to others at that Mass to fill your assignment. This adds added pressure to the already busy moments prior to Mass. Please assist the priest, the deacons and the other volunteers by making every effort to fill your assignment.

Help with Ministry Pro

There is a Ministry Pro tutorial video available through the “Help” tab. If after watching the video, you still have questions, contact Denise Cook at dcook1205@gmail.com.