

St. Theresa Ministry of Hospitality -

Ushers Guidelines

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*Come, you who are blessed by my Father.
Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.
For I was...a stranger and you welcomed me...*

*Then the righteous will answer him and say,
'Lord... when did we see you a stranger and welcome you?*

*And the king will say to them in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one
of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.' Matthew 25:34*

Ministry of Hospitality: Usher Guidelines

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Introduction

Ushers and greeters set the spiritual environment of the Church by presenting a joyful attitude, making others feel welcome and comfortable, providing information regarding the church and each ministry, and make sure that everything is flowing in proper order so that everyone is free to worship without interruption.

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...you welcomed Me

'Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was...a stranger and you welcomed me... Then the righteous will answer him and say, 'Lord... when did we see you a stranger and welcome you... And the king will say to them in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.'

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USHER ACTIVITIES

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Scheduling

Register in the MSP (Ministry Scheduler Pro) application and use it to request assignments or a substitute. Reminder notices and other information about assignments comes through MSP. Please cooperate by using this app. All the liturgical ministries (lectors, Eucharistic ministers of Communion, servers, musicians and sacristans) use it to help us manage scheduling for Masses. It is a big job since fully staffing four weekend Masses means more than 100 slots to fill and communicate with.

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BEFORE MASS

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Usher Attire

A neat and reverential appearance is in keeping with the usher's role as a visible example of welcome and hospitality. Dress as for a job interview. No t-shirts please! Slacks or skirts are acceptable, no shorts please. Closed toed shoes or dress sandals are appropriate, no flip flops.

302

Check in with Usher Captain

Check in at the Ministry Scheduler Kiosk at least 15 minutes before the scheduled Mass. Check with the Usher Captain who may designate you to coordinate Gift-Bearers procession or be catechist contact if there is Children's Liturgy of the Word. If there are special instructions, the captain have the details.

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Pray before Mass

Dedicate your service to God and our parish with a short prayer before your duties begin. Say the Usher's Prayer (extra copies of the prayer card are in the Ushers' and Greeters Guide book in the back of the center section.

305

Put on badge

Wear your Usher badge to be identifiable to our priests, parishioners and guests. Badges are in the plastic box beneath the Holy Family statue against the back wall of the center section.

306

Tidy up before Mass

Check the pews for items that need to be removed prior to your Mass, i.e. bulletins, water bottles etc., straighten the songbooks in the book racks on the back of each pew.

310

Check Bulletin Supply

Maintain a supply of bulletins at each entrance. The bulletin supply is in the vesting sacristy white 3 drawer cabinet in the bottom drawer. If out, check with other doors to balance out.

314

AS PEOPLE ARRIVE

316

Welcome people

Ministers of hospitality should be at each of the entrances of the church. They should avoid congregating in only one area of the church, as well as speaking with their fellow ministers to the exclusion of those who are gathering for the liturgy.

318

Be aware of temperature	Be aware of the temperature inside and outside the church. If appropriate, turn on the fans located in the janitor's room next to the working sacristy. Instructions are posted above the control panel to the left of the sacristy door.	320
	Note about West Wing entry: in warm weather, keep the blinds shut to cut down on heat on stairway.	321

DURING THE MASS

Sit in reserved pews	Take seat in back pews reserved for ushers to better see issues developing and respond.	352
Be alert	Be attentive for issues that may need your response (medical issues, seating assistance, changes in temperature). See Safety section for response to urgent situations.	354
Provide directions	Provide directions to the restrooms, children's mass/liturgy etc. when requested or observing a need.	356
May count participants	Each October and some other times, ushers may count people in pews. as directed by the Usher Captain. Clickers and tally forms are available in the vesting sacristy.	357

GATHERING RITE

Respecting the liturgy	Once Mass begins, parishioners should not walk up the main central aisle to avoid being a distraction to those participating and to the Celebrant.	359
Close doors	Close all church doors as the Celebrant greets the assembly after the entrance procession.	360
Hold latecomers in back	One usher at each entrance will stay available to inform people to wait until after the Opening Prayer.	362
Assist with seating	Before the first reading begins, direct people to seats along the side aisles.	364

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Manage latecomers	When the Liturgy of the Word readings are being proclaimed, movement in the aisles is limited in reverence to Holy Scripture. Ushers will manage seating of latecomers, by tactfully indicating to people who arrive during the readings to wait quietly. Indicate they can seek seats during the Alleluia (between the second reading and Gospel), or after the Missal is placed at the end of the Gospel.	367
Appropriate times for seating	Between readings are the appropriate times for latecomers to seek seats along the side aisles. Ushers may need to help locate spots.	368
Alert Children's Liturgy of the Word (CLW) catechist	As the homily is beginning, the usher designated to alert CLW catechist goes downstairs to let the catechist know. When the congregation rises for the Creed, usher returns to say it is time to come upstairs. The catechist will have the children line up downstairs, and come up quietly. At least one catechist or helper accompanies the group, and directs the children to process down the center aisle to find their families. NOTE: If the Creed ends before the children are ready to go down the aisle, wait until AFTER the intercessions.	370

COLLECTION OF THE GIFTS

Minimum of 6 ushers	Customary to have minimum of six people for collection: 2 for each section of the center and one for each middle aisle of wings. For crowded Masses or second collections, two collectors on each side wing is helpful. Usher Captain will coordinate coverage.	401
Start the Collection	When the Petitions have been read, collectors will come forward, pause, then together bow reverently toward the altar and move to begin collection.	402

Pass the baskets - full crowd	Baskets are started at the front and passed along each row until they reach the end. CENTER SECTION- full crowd: The middle aisle usher passes to the first row, and the side aisle starts at the 2nd, alternating the offering plate/basket by row, each usher aware of how the baskets are progressing. WINGS - full crowd: The usher starts one basket on the right and the other on the left section.	404
Pass the baskets - light crowd	CENTER SECTION - light crowd: Ushers move back down the aisle, offering the basket row by row, but usually hanging on to it, not passing it along.	406
Combine contents of baskets	Money in the collection baskets is secured according to Parish Money Handling Protocol. Two people must be present as the money is placed directly in the bag marked for Mass collection. Sorting and straightening is done only by the counters in the parish office. (A copy of the Protocol is in the drawer under the money bags.)	408
Seal bag	Seal the bag and place it in the safe on the east wall.	410
Return baskets	Baskets are returned to appropriate cabinet/closet.	410.1
Second collection readiness	Confirm with the Cantor whether the second collection is being announced as occurring after the regular collection or after Communion. Although after Communion is preferred, the Usher Captain will coordinate with the celebrant, cantor and usher team to assure that the announcement and collection time match up.	411
PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS		412
Preparing for Presentation	An usher facilitates prep for the procession by assuring the gift bearers are lined up with the ciborium of bread and cruet of wine and the basket. Remind Gift Bearers that bread and wine are presented before the basket.	414
Procession of the gifts begins	The symbolic gifts of bread, wine and the offering are carried to the altar and presented to the celebrant on behalf of the congregation. An usher may need to signal to the servers or Gift Bearers to start the procession up the aisle.	418
Gifts are presented at altar	Gift Bearers proceed to the altar and offer to the celebrant the bread, then wine and last the basket. They bow together then turn and return to seats.	420
If no Gift Bearers, usher/greeters present gifts	If no gift bearers are recruited, three of the usher/greeters will present the bread, wine and basket. When presenting the gifts to the priest, the usher/greeters should bow and return to the rear of the church.	422
Oct 2024 Change in Practice	<i>After COVID, the Presentation of the Gifts procession was not done when there were no servers. In October 2024, the Liturgy Committee clarified that each weekend and weekday Mass is to have a formal Presentation of the Gifts at the Offertory.</i>	423
		450
LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST		
Reverence for the Eucharist	During the Eucharistic Prayer movement is also limited in reverence for the gift of Jesus Body and Blood. This begins as we kneel after the Holy, Holy, Holy and continues until we stand after the Doxology (Through Him and with Him etc.) This applies to members of the congregation returning to their seats and ushers moving in the aisles after the collection.	452
Sitting after Communion	During the Eucharistic Prayer movement is also limited in reverence for the gift of Jesus Body and Blood. This begins as we kneel after the Holy, Holy, Holy and continues until we stand after the Doxology (Through Him and with Him etc.) This applies to members of the congregation returning to their seats and ushers moving in the aisles after the collection.	454
RECESSIONAL		500

Take post for dismissal	Ushers go to assigned door after the Post-Communion Prayer.	502
Open doors wide	To show reverence and respect to the Celebrant, the Procession, and the musicians, ushers wait to prop the doors open wide until the the celebrant has passed the first pew .	504
Pass out bulletin	Offer a warm smile and this week's bulletin to people leaving.	506

AFTER MASS

Pick up basket with cash from altar	Make sure the offertory basket is picked up soon after Mass and that the money is put in the money bag marked for the following Mass.	601
Pick up money from donation baskets	When baskets are out by the altar for donations (Food Pantry, Personal Items, etc), pick up the money after Mass and put it in the money bag in the sacristy. Leave the emptied baskets in place until after 4:30 Sunday Mass.	602
Return Ushers Badge	Return your name badge to the container in the back of the church.	603
Straighten up Songbooks	Check that Breaking Bread Songbooks are in the pew book racks and placed horizontally (2 per rack).	604
Check pews	Remove stray items: bulletins, papers, water bottles etc.	606
Found items	Any personal or valuable items should be placed in the vesting sacristy in the drawer with the money bags. Leave a note that includes today's date, name of	608
Close doors	About 10 minutes after Mass, be sure all entrance doors are closed to maintain a pleasant environmental temperature for the next Mass. (Check exterior doors in case they were propped open.)	610

Usher Captain Activities

Check in ushers & assign posts	When ushers check in, confirm which area to cover. Designate one usher to coordinate the Presentation of the Gifts procession. If there is a Children's Liturgy of the Word, designate an usher who will contact the catechist downstairs after the Homily so they can get ready to return after the Profession of Faith.	702
Baskets for donation collections	For weekends with donation appeals (Food Pantry, Personal Care Items, etc.) verify baskets are in place (and emptied) on the two pedestals at the foot of the altar at each Mass.	703
Assure coverage for collection	Need a minimum of 6 people for collecting the offering (4 center section, 1 each wing main aisle). May have to recruit helpers if not enough ushers are signed up for the Mass.	704
Communicate changes	Let ushers know about changes or additions to Mass.	708
Check surroundings	Check or delegate other ushers to check that doors are unlocked, lights are on in entryways and outside if it is dark or will be before the Mass is over. Also that pews and counters are tidy.	710
Invite Gift Bearers	Invite a family or 2-3 people to be gift bearers and take the gifts to the altar during the Presentation of Gifts. Tell them to come to the rear of the church during the Creed after the homily, so that they will be ready to come forward with the gifts at the appropriate time. If there are no gift bearers are recruited, ushers will be gift bearers and begin the procession when the celebrant descend the steps in front of the altar.	712
Coordinate count of people	When Mass count is requested (usually weekend in October) ushers count people in pews at the Mass. As ushers check in, assign areas for count and confirm when counting should be done. Clickers and tally forms are available in the vesting sacristy. Submit count for Mass as directed.	713

Be aware of server
count

With one or no servers, the procession candles need to be at the altar instead of the holder in back under the Infant of Prague statue. If enough servers appear and the candles are already on the altar, they need to be brought back before the Entrance Procession. Be alert and facilitate getting the move made if needed. ⁷¹⁴

Safety Procedures

Medical Attention Response

The health, safety and welfare of all persons are of the utmost concern. The guidelines provided below should be followed in the event of personal injury, illness or an emergency.

Serious Injury or Illness

- 1 Clear the area around the stricken person.
- 2 Call 911 immediately and be prepared to answer pertinent questions about the situation.
- 3 Let the dispatcher know which entrance to direct the responders to: #1 Funeral Entrance on Merle Hay Rd #2 Car Port Entrance - on University under canopy #3 Parish Kitchen Entrance north of #2
- 4 Remain calm and assist in maintaining order.
- 5 Administer first aid as may be needed until paramedics arrive.
- 6 Note any jewelry with medic alert information.
- 7 Report incident.

Minor Injury or Illness

1. Treat with simple first aid measures using a first aid kit which can be found in the vesting sacristy.

Wheelchairs

Two wheelchairs are available in the funeral entrance vestibule south wall. One wheelchair is in the center closet at the back of the south section of the east wing.

First Aid Kit /clean up

A first aid kit, band-aids, absorbent towels, powder for vomit, and gloves are in each sacristy and at the rear of the center, east and west sections. A red and white cross marks the cabinet door. Red biohazard bags for clean up of potential blood borne pathogens are in the kits, too.

Smoke or Fire Response

Fire Alarm

Red pull down fire alarms are located near each entrance.

A fire extinguisher is enclosed in a silver-framed cabinet mounted in the wall near each exit.

Fire Extinguishers

Main entrance upper on west wall near bathroom

Funeral entrance - east wall by vesting sacristy

Circle Drive entrance - north wall in vestibule

North Parking Lot entrance - behind the interior door on west wall by window

West wing entrance by bathroom

Parish Hall entrance - just inside vestibule from carport entrance

Fire Discovered

If you discover a small fire, take the following steps:

- 1 Promptly discharge the fire extinguisher toward the base of the flames. (Do not place your safety at risk.)
- 2 Immediately call 911 for assistance if necessary. (An extremely small fire would not disrupt the service.) In most cases, evacuations are the best solution. Again, safety comes first, and it is always best to be safe.

Severe Weather or other Evacuation Response

In St. Theresa Church, we don't have clear signs or instructions during tornadoes etc. We continue to work on this project. Ushers should maintain order to the best of their ability in the event of any kind of evacuation. In this case, the ushers should start with the last pew or row and proceed to usher people out to a nearby exit. With the front exit on the north side, an usher will escort people from the front rows while others are going out the back rows. It is good for all ushers to check the remaining rooms to make sure everyone has evacuated. Once outside, the ushers can determine with others whether anyone is missing.

It should also be emphasized that the evacuation groups should congregate away from the church building in case of a fire or other dangers. It is good for the ushers to have a plan to take people to a place of safety prior to any kind of emergency.

Disruptive behavior that disrespects the house of God requires discernment on the part of the ushers and greeters present. In some cases, the pastor may deal with issues but for the most part, it will be the responsibility of the ushers to carry out the procedures.

Disturbances

1. Determine whether a person needs to be taken out of the church.
2. Consider how you wish to do this. Most of the time, it can be handled through a gentle but firm statement to come with the usher. If the disturbance is overbearing and causing further trouble, it may take a couple of ushers, one on each side, to gently encourage the person to another place. If they still refuse to be removed, then call for further assistance.
3. Determine a safe place to deal with this person and firmly state this type of behavior is not wanted or accepted in our church. Please distinguish between the person and the behavior. Most churches welcome everyone but not the disruptive behaviors.
4. Determine whether the person will stop or will have to be asked to leave the building. If the behavior causes a threat or danger, you may have to call the police department for help to remove this person.
5. If an individual is distraught due to grief, please ask them to step out and gently escort them out of the church. Ask the grieving person, "How can we help?" or "We have someone who will pray with you, please come with me." Please do this in a loving and tactful manner. Have another usher to engage a member to come pray with them.