

Guidelines for Greeters

Introduction: Your prime ministry as a greeter is to welcome and make people comfortable as they enter and leave the church. A model of family is appropriate; people should be greeted warmly and made to feel wanted and appreciated. Seeing to their comfort means not only finding them a seat, but making sure the surroundings and the atmosphere also echo this note of welcome. A warm and friendly attitude and smile are extremely important. You represent the Lord and his church and what you do can have a very positive or negative effect.

Punctuality and arrival: Plan to arrive at the church at least 20 minutes before the liturgy is scheduled to begin.

Dress code: Dress with attention to presenting an image of importance and reverence for the liturgy. Levis, denim, work clothes, shorts, t-shirts and the like are obviously out of place. A jacket and tie are not necessary but can be nice if worn.

Preparation: The following should be checked and accounted for before people begin to arrive. The captain and the sacristan will assist through communication with all the greeters.

- Lights on in the foyer and church, heat or cooling set and operating.
- Doors unlocked (remember the side doors on each wing)
- Offertory gifts (carafe of wine, ciboria with hosts) set out on table at the back of the church
- Collection baskets set out and available for the Offertory. Be sure an empty basket is placed on the piano for the choir wing to use.
- Bulletins and children's bulletins available.
- There may be a special Order of Worship prepared for certain liturgies.
- Other handouts may be on the table also (Exploring the Sunday Readings, Catholic Update, special announcements or flyers, etc.)

Greeting: Greet each person as they enter the church, saying 'Good Morning (Evening)' and hand each family a bulletin. Station yourself reasonably near the front doors, not blocking the entrance but close enough to greet each person as they enter. Try to recognize any visitors or strangers for a special welcome. If they are new to the parish, ask them to fill out the tear off form on the front of the bulletin and place it in the collection basket.

Seating: As the church fills up, keep note of the remaining vacant seats and direct people towards them, starting first in the front. If the number of seats seems to be few or scattered, ask people if they wouldn't mind sliding over from the side aisles towards the center aisle. As more people enter church, usher them down the side aisles and seat people near the front first and then progress towards the rear.

Seating Late Arrivals: Once Mass begins, gently ask late arriving people to wait inside the entrance until after the opening prayer and just before the first reading. Then seat them quietly. If people arrive during the readings, gently ask them to remain standing at the entrance until after the Gospel. Then seat them before the homily begins. Do not seat people during the readings or psalm.

Greeters should then sit down themselves in order to participate in the Mass. People will observe your attentiveness and reverence and will follow your example.

Offertory Collection: The collection starts promptly at the end of the Prayers of the Faithful after the homily and creed. The greeters, carrying baskets, go two to the center aisle and one to each side aisle and process up to the sanctuary and then bow in unison to the altar. A fifth greeter at the 10:00 Mass will also go up the *center* aisle. Then immediately begin to assist in passing the baskets, row by row, from front to rear. The fifth greeter will assist in passing the basket on the right wing first, and then proceed across the sanctuary to the choir wing. The choir wing will have a basket previously placed before Mass on the piano. An offertory hymn or instrumental piece will be played during the collection. Please be sure that every person has had the opportunity to place his/her offering into the collection basket. When the collection has been completed, it is all combined into one basket for the offertory procession.

Offertory Procession: Before Mass begins, a family or two couples (or a couple and a single) should be recruited to bring up the gifts at the Offertory. *Please instruct these people to come and wait at the back of the church as soon as the greeters begin taking up the collection.* When the collection is completed, assist the people recruited to bring up the gifts. Usually one article per person is appropriate. First in the procession are the ciboria with the unconsecrated hosts, then the decanter of wine. The collection basket comes up last. The priest will accept each item from the person carrying it forward and hand it to the deacon or servers. He will pause for a moment to bless the collection while still being held by the person in the procession. After all the offertory gifts have been accepted, the people should bow to the altar (do not genuflect) and return to their seats.

Second collections: Consult with the captain before Mass to determine if there is a second collection. The normal schedule is for a collection for the Education Fund on the first Sunday and a collection for the Maintenance and Improvement Fund on the third Sunday. There may be, from time to time, other special collections prescribed by the diocese or for some other special need.

The second collection will be announced by the Cantor. Proceed to take up the collection in the same manner as the first collection. *When all is completed, combine into one basket and bring it up to the altar where it will be received by the priest or deacon.*

At the end of Mass: As soon as the Mass ends with the final blessing and dismissal, go to the entrance of the church and open both doors, propping them open. Also open the side doors to the church near the sanctuary if weather permits.

After people have left the church, check for the following:

- Check all the pews for bulletins and orders of worship left behind and gather together for use at the next Mass.
- Replace all Hymnals in the pockets on the back of each pew
- One greeter should safeguard the collection(s). The first collection is placed into the appropriately marked collection bag separately from the second collection. The collection bags should be given to the priest to take back to the rectory.
- Check for lost articles, toys, coats, purses, glasses, etc. If a wallet or purse is found, it should be brought to the rectory for safe-keeping and for the person to whom it belongs to be notified that it has been found.
- Remove any other debris or trash and place it in the garbage receptacle in the janitor's closet.
- If this is the last Mass of the day or evening, put away the bulletins and hand-outs and close and lock all doors. Be sure candles have been extinguished and heating or cooling turned off. Check with the organist to be sure that microphones are put away and the sound system has been turned off.

Other notes:

- Check restrooms after Mass to see that they are clean and tidy. Turn off the interior restroom lights. Notify the sacristan or priest if anything needs immediate attention.
- Handicapped persons or persons in walkers or wheelchairs: Offer any assistance necessary. They may be invited to be seated near or in the front pews, or placed conveniently in the main aisle. Notify the priest if anyone needs special attention for the reception of communion.
- Scheduling: The schedule for each month will be available the last weekend of the prior month. Assist any other ministers in finding their schedule (in a box in alphabetic order by family name). The captain for each Mass will be designated on the schedule. If for any reason you cannot serve when scheduled, please secure your own substitute well in advance of the Mass you are scheduled for.
- Lost and found articles: except for a wallet or purse, normally lost and found articles are brought to the sacristy for safe-keeping.
- Visitors and new parishioners: After serving as a greeter for a time, you will begin to recognize most of the 'regulars' who attend a particular Mass. It is very appropriate to greet them by name. If you fail to recognize someone, introduce yourself and ask if they are new or visiting. Give them any special attention they may need. If they are new to the parish, ask them to fill out the bulletin front and place it in the collection basket. You may also wish to introduce them to other parishioners, either before or after Mass.
- Remember to participate as fully as possible in each part of the Mass yourself!