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# USHER & GREETER INSTRUCTIONS

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Transfiguration Catholic Church



SEPTEMBER 26, 2018

**Purpose of the Usher and Greeter Ministries:** Transfiguration Catholic Church is known for its welcoming, friendly atmosphere and the Ushers and Greeters are an essential part of that continued culture and mission. They are the “first face” of the Church and they set the tone for our newcomers and the visitors to our parish and they should display a Christ-like attitude to all those whom they greet.

**Requirements:** Ushers must be sixteen years of age, registered with the parish and in reasonably good health. They must be able to stand during Mass and walk up and down the aisles to assist people to their seats.

**Summary of Responsibilities:** Ushers are expected to attend training sessions and days of reflection on occasion. Their main responsibilities revolve around ensuring that the Church is clean and arranged properly for Mass, that everyone feels welcome, that collections are securely taken up, and that attendance is recorded.

**1. Dress:** Ushers are expected to dress nicely. No jeans, shorts, flip-flops, or sneakers, and no tank-tops or other clothing of a revealing nature. The preference for men is at least dress slacks with a collared shirt; a jacket is preferable. The preference for women is a dress, pantsuit, or blouse and skirt/slacks.

**2. Prior to Mass:**

- **Check In:**
  - Arrive **at least thirty minutes prior to Mass** and sign in on the ministries schedule at the back of the Gathering Space.
  - Pick up and wear one of the Usher tags found in the sacristy.
- **Door Check:**
  - Verify that all four of the entrance doors have been unlocked. These can be unlocked with the screwdriver found in the sacristy.
  - Ensure that the electronic handicap-access door has been switched on. The switch is on the inside, above the right door.
- **Cleanliness Check:** The Ushers and Greeters ensure that we give a good impression of cleanliness:
  - **Church:** The Ushers will ensure the hymnals should be evenly spaced, facing the same direction, and neat. The kneelers should be in their proper places. Make sure that there is neither trash nor any debris on the carpet in the Sanctuary. Use the sweeper from the utility closet as necessary. Place any Reserved Seating signs out if there is a special occasion (Baptism, First Holy Communion, RCIA rite, etc.).
  - **Gathering Space:** that the Greeters will ensure the floor of the Gathering Space is clean, using the broom and dustpan in the utility closet as necessary.

- *Restrooms:* The Greeters will check to make sure that the restrooms are clean and well stocked (paper towels properly disposed of, trash not overflowing, toilets all flushed, etc.)
- *Entrances:* to the Greeters will make sure that the entrances are clean, using broom to sweep the welcome mats as necessary.
- *Hospitality Seats:*
  - We highly encourage people to sit in the Church and not in the Gathering Space even if they have small children. However, if there are parents who insist on sitting in the Gathering Space, set up chairs for them. Do not let parents go rooting in the closet for chairs themselves.
- *Additional Seating:*
  - As necessary, add more chairs in the Gathering Space. Set up chairs for families on the right side first so that they don't have to peer through the choir.
- *Welcoming Parishioners:*
  - As parishioners arrive, Greeters open the exterior doors and welcome them to Mass. One Greeter should be at the two side doors facing the parking lot and another at the two front doors welcoming people coming in from the parish office side.
  - An Usher should always be opening the central doors to the.
  - Ensure that the door is not kept open the whole time to avoid constant noise entering the Sanctuary from the Gathering Space. Open and close the doors for each person as they approach so that people in Church can effectively prepare for Mass without interruption.
  - As the Sanctuary becomes filled, assist people to find seating in the pews. Escort the people rather than pointing to vacant seats.

### **3. Just before the Start of Mass:**

- *Choose Family to Bring Up Gifts*
  - Select a family to carry up the gifts and explain that they should come to the back of Church as the collection is being taken up. Ushers generally do not bring up the gifts.
- Choose 2 People for 2<sup>nd</sup> Collection
  - Ask 2 people to help with the second collection and instruct them to come to the back of the Church during the Prayers of the Faithful.
- *Ring the Bell:*
  - Three minutes prior to the time for Mass to start, if all is ready for Mass to begin (Altar Servers, priest and deacon are ready), take the bell found on top of the safe and ring it outside a little bit to signal to everyone in the Gathering Space and approaching the Church from outside that Mass is about to begin.
  - Quietly Usher in any stragglers so that they are seated prior to Mass starting.

- *Open the Central Doors:*
  - As the priest and Altar Servers approach for the start of Mass, hold the central doors open for the procession.

#### **4. During Mass:**

- *Seat Late Arrivals:*
  - As people come in late, use a team effort with one Usher at the doors to signal how many seats and let the Usher in the Sanctuary scan for open seats and seat the people.
  - Try to be as non-intrusive as possible, seating them in between readings and using the side aisles rather than the central aisle. Do not seat people during the readings, including the Gospel. However, if during the readings people proceed to a seat on their own do not stop them.
  - Ushers also should hear and be attentive to the Word of the Lord.
- *Reverent Participation:*
  - Make sure that you are reverent and prayerful throughout the Mass. You should set an example of piety for everyone. Do not wander around without purpose nor talk among yourselves during the Mass.
- *Attendance Count:*
  - During the homily, slip up both sides and count all in attendance. Try to be as non-intrusive as possible to not distract people from the message being proclaimed. This includes the priest and Altar Servers. Record the count in the book in the sacristy for the appropriate date and time of the Mass.
- *Take Up the TWO Collections:*
  - After the “Prayers of the Faithful,” The two Greeters follow the Ushers up the center aisle to the front, bow and start passing the baskets for the First-Offertory Collection. Two other “helpers” start on the outside in the back. The first Usher back to the Gathering Space passes the basket there.
  - For 10:30 am Mass:
    - 1st collection: After the “Prayer of the Faithful,” the Ushers and Greeters each carry a collection basket up the center aisle to the front, bow and start passing the baskets. The Ushers will remain in the center aisle and will pass their baskets beginning with the second row. The Greeters will walk across the front row on their respective sides, collecting from parishioners as they walk to the side aisle. Greeters will then present their basket to the third row to be passed, while accepting the basket from the second row and presenting it to the fourth row, etc. Ushers will receive the baskets on the center aisle and do likewise. All will continue in this manner, working their way to the back of the church.
    - If there are people sitting in the Gathering Space, present a collection basket to them also.
    - 2nd collection: The two people chosen for the 2nd collection should walk to the front of the Church, bow, and begin their collection when the

Ushers and Greeters have collected from 6 or 7 rows. Collection will continue with parishioners passing the baskets until the 2nd Collectors have reached the last row. People in the Gathering Space should be offered a basket to make a contribution too.

- For all other Masses:
  - After the First Collection take up the Second Collection - for other Parish, Diocesan, National & International purposes. Use the same method for the second as for the First Collection.
- In the Gathering Space, on the table just outside the glass wall, the two collections are placed into two separate plastic bags and sealed and then placed into the large basket. Take your time and seal the bags. Check ahead of time how to do this, if you are new to the special bags.
- The selected family comes to the back and then follows the Altar Server carrying the cross and carries the gifts to the priest.
- *Communion Line:*
  - At communion, two Ushers follow the choir up to assist with communion.
  - Notify celebrants of people needing the Eucharist brought to them.
- *Assisting people during Mass:*
  - Assist people who become ill during Mass. A wheelchair is in the Gathering Space utility room if necessary. If emergency assistance is needed call 911 via a cell phone.
  - Trained & Certified Ushers can use CPR and the AED machine if necessary until first responders arrives.

#### **5. As Mass is Concluding:**

- *Open the Central Doors:*
  - When Father has given the final blessing, prop open the central doors for the recessional procession.
- *Gathering Space Chairs:*
  - Try to encourage those sitting in the Gathering Space to leave their chairs until the choir begins the closing song. Then the chairs can be picked up quietly.
- *Retrieve Both Collections:*
  - As soon as Father has genuflected and begun to walk down the aisle, one of the Ushers should retrieve the two collections in their basket from underneath the small credence table behind the altar.
  - Both bags must be kept intact and unopened, and placed immediately into the safe. The Sacristan or one of the head Ushers should have the combination. The bags should never be left in the sacristy unsecured.
- *Distribute Bulletins:*
  - Ushers retrieve the bulletins from the sacristy after communion and will be ready to distribute them.
  - Thank everyone for coming, have a good day, etc.

- At the end of the 10:30 Mass, put any spare bulletins in the holder in the vestibule.
- *Check Church:*
  - Straighten up the Sanctuary as described above. Especially make sure that no one has left purses, cell phones, or other valuables. If these are found, please ensure that they are locked in the sacristy and that a note is left. Assuming that their rightful owners have already left and cannot be found immediately.
  - Make sure all of the bigger candles are extinguished, the four around the altar, the large Paschal candle if used, and the two next to Mary's statue. ***The small votive candles in front of Mary's statue should be left burning.***
- Make sure that all of the lights are turned off, and that the outside doors up front near the altar are all locked.

#### **6. Scheduling our Ushers and Greeters for our Masses:**

- A call for notice of your unavailability to serve as an Usher or Greeter will go out a week or so before the end of each month. It is the responsibility of each Usher to respond in time to indicate their own unavailability.
- Ushers and Greeters are responsible for finding their own replacements if they are not going to be able to fulfill their published schedule. Please update the schedule posted on the bulletin board in the Gathering Space, or have your replacement update it, if you make arrangements for another Usher or Greeter to take your place.
- The parish office will reach out for Ushers and Greeters for weddings, funerals, etc., when needed.