

**St. Clare of Assisi Catholic Church**

**Liturgical Ministry Guidelines**

**Ushers**

Fr. Jim Deiters, Pastor  
Stephen Eros, Director of Liturgy and Music

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## **General Information**

Arrive 30 minutes before Mass begins and sign in on the iPad kiosk near the sacristy. Grab one of the magnetized usher badges. Please remember to return this before leaving church that day!

New schedules are made up approximately every three months and are distributed via email. You will receive an email from the parish office explaining how to navigate our ministry scheduling software. Ministers who do not have email will be mailed a schedule.

## **Attire**

Appropriate dress is expected of all liturgical ministers. Jeans, t-shirts, sleeveless dresses or tops, immodest clothing, and the like are not allowed. Men are encouraged to wear a sport coat while serving. Shirts with large logos or messages draw attention to you and away from the sacrament—Cardinals, other sports teams, graphics, and even religious messages (Merry Christmas, Noel, He is Risen, etc.). Please refrain from wearing these shirts while in public ministry.

*We show hospitality to each person who enters our church because we recognize the face of Christ in them.*

*Through our hospitality, we show them Christ's love, as he welcomes all his children to the Sacred Banquet.*

## **Overview of Procedure**

The focus of this ministry is hospitality. For those visiting our parish, you are often the first representatives of St. Clare. Just like being a good host(ess) in your own home, ushers greet all with a warm spirit and a smile. This first impression on all who enter our church is very important. The following items summarize the duties in your ministry.

- Review the weekly Liturgy Notes sheet, located by the sign-in iPad by the sacristy.
- Help people get into church if they require assistance.
- Give hearing devices to those who request them.
- Helping guests (especially visitors) find seating in the church.
- Taking the collection and presenting it at the altar.
- Directing the communion procession.
- Straightening up pews after Mass.
- Participating fully in Mass.

## **Wheelchair Assistance**

We provide wheelchair assistance at every Mass. The first two ushers to arrive are assigned to the outside doors. Wheelchairs and umbrellas are in the Sprinkler Room off of the Gathering Space, if someone arrives needing this kind of assistance. If needed, guide the person or driver to the handicap reserved parking spaces. If you assist a person before Mass with a wheelchair, please be responsible for assisting him or her after Mass.

## **Doors**

Please open the doors only as people get close to them; avoid standing with the doors open. Never hold the handicapped accessible doors open; doing so will break the motor.

Do not let the doors to the church stand open out of respect for those praying in church before Mass.

After Mass, you may hold the doors open as people exit. Please do not use the doorstops for this task.

## **Seating People in Church**

For a typical Sunday Mass, people do not need help finding a seat before Mass begins. On those occasions when we have a large crowd, three or four ushers should stand inside the church by the font helping to assist people find a seat.

## **After Mass Begins**

As soon as the cantor begins the welcome announcement, please bar the doors going into church. After Fr. Jim has started walking down the aisle, you may open the doors for people to come in and take their seats. This is especially important on days when a Baptism or Initiation Rite happens at the beginning of Mass by the font.

Two ushers stay near the baptismal font until after the First Reading to help latecomers find seats, and lead them to those seats via the ambulatory. If people arrive during a reading, please ask them to wait until

the reading is over before walking to their pew. Please be friendly to the latecomers!

## **Baptisms**

The Sacristan is in charge of setting up for baptism. Please ask him or her if your assistance is needed in any way.

During Mass, an usher gets the Oil of Chrism from the top shelf of the ambry, stands in front of the font during the baptism, and hands the oil to the priest at the appropriate time.

## **Collection**

During the Universal Prayer, the ushers take position in the back of the three designated sections of pews in sets of two—the center aisle and two main side aisled. Each pair of ushers should have baskets ready to pass. As the Offertory music begins, the gift bearers walk down the aisle. The center aisle ushers follow them; the side aisle ushers start walking at the same time. All ushers reverence the altar with a profound bow at the same time.

Two ushers are responsible for collecting in the far left and right seating areas. When finished with the collection in their areas, they will assist with the collection in the short section adjacent to their respective areas.

Once the collection is completed the contents are consolidated into three baskets—one for each section. One usher from each section will present the collection at the altar. Make eye contact and start walking

down the aisle at the same time. When you arrive at the tile cross together, reverence the altar with a profound bow, place the baskets on the sanctuary step near the candles and flower arrangements on the right side. After, meet at the tile cross again, reverence the altar, turn, and proceed up the main aisle towards the baptismal font.

## **Communion**

Ushers will proceed down the aisle as the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are receiving the Eucharist from the presider. As they take their positions, release your respective areas to receive communion. As with the process for the collection, the side aisle ushers after tending to the far left and right sides of church will assist with the next section over. Once everyone in their respective areas are on their way to receive the Eucharist, the side aisle ushers will move to the split section closest to them and request that those people move and proceed to follow the last person in line from the adjacent section. Two ushers will move to the split section and advise those people to proceed behind the people from the section directly in front of them.

## **After Mass**

After most people have left the church at the end of Mass, close all doors immediately to keep the Gathering Space noise out of the church.