

St. Benedict Catholic Church Usher Responsibilities

When people come to church, they experience not only the service, but the people associated with St. Benedict's Catholic Church. We want the experience to be warm and welcoming - Ushers are a part of that experience. Often the first person a visitor or newcomer meets is an Usher. Greet everyone in a cheerful and respectful manner. Help anyone with questions, needing assistance, or in emergencies that should arise.

1) Responsibilities

- a) Dress should be neat, modest, and appropriate signifying the honor of the ministry you perform and expresses the dignity of our celebration. No shorts, halter tops, or dirty clothing should be worn.
- b) Arrive at least 20 minutes before the start of Mass
- c) Ensure you are easily identifiable (e.g. by name tag)
- d) Identify a family or group of individuals (3 people minimum) that would be willing to bring the gifts forward at the Offertory. (Try to involve the entire church family) – Don't ask the same family every week.
 - i) Tell the family to come to the back of the side isle as soon as the collection starts
 - ii) If by chance no one appears, it is your responsibility to get someone or the ushers bring up the gifts

2) Assist Greeters

- a) Assist the Congregation in finding a seat
- b) Escort latecomers to any available (open) space(s). Open bleachers or find extra chairs if needed
- c) If the readings have begun, ask latecomers to wait at the back of the Worship Space until after all the readings are read and then assist them to find seats. Try to do this with as much speed and little distraction as you can manage, all the time treating them with reverence and respect. Same goes if they enter during the Gospel Reading.

3) Locations for Ushers during Mass

- a) One Usher at the main entrance
- b) One Usher at the far end entrance
 - i) If members of the congregation need to exit the Worship Space (bathroom, drink of water, crying child), have them exit from / return through the nearest entrance

4) Head Count: The two Ushers will count the members of the congregation, including Choir and Altar Servers, in their sections during the Homily. Write the number in attendance on a piece of paper and place it in the basket with the collection. Let the Sacristan know the number if it appears there are an inadequate number of hosts available for Communion.

5) Collection

- a) During the Prayers of the Faithful, position yourselves in the back of the Worship Space, ready to distribute the collection baskets. Each Usher should have the appropriate number of baskets in hand and be prepared to proceed down the side aisles.

- b) Immediately after the Prayer for St. Benedict Parish, proceed down the aisles together, as a team, and reverently bow your heads in unison
 - c) Give one basket to the first person in each front pew. Take basket from parishioners and pass it to the next row
 - d) Remain at the outer edges of rows and continue this process of circulating the collection baskets until completed
 - e) Make sure you get everyone, often folks on the sides are missed
 - f) Watch for the family taking up gifts is getting up / ready
 - g) After the collection is completed, the Usher should quickly consolidate the money into the larger basket for the Presentation of the Gifts. Note: The need for timely formation of the procession of the presentation of the gifts so we don't delay the Mass.
 - h) Assist in forming the procession for the presentation of the gifts at the back of the Worship Space
- 6) Communion
- a) When the Celebrant turns to the first EM of Holy Communion and presents the wine to him/her, the Ushers should proceed down the side aisles, bow heads in unison toward the altar, and position yourselves next to the edge of the first pew
 - b) Parishioners in the front pews should be invited to communion as soon as it is obvious that the Priest and EM's are about to come around the altar to distribute Communion. DO NOT Wait for the EM's to get into position.
 - c) There will be times that one or another parishioner will need to receive the Eucharist before anyone else. This is necessary for those suffering from celiac disease - they are given a "non-gluten" consecrated host that has not been in contact with wheat hosts containing gluten. These parishioner are instructed to present themselves first so that we minimize the possibility of gluten cross contamination.
 - d) Be conscious of those with a physical disability or who cannot join the Communion procession. Bring their location to the attention of an EM. After receiving Communion, proceed to the location of the individual needing assistance to assist the EM in locating the individual.
 - e) Be prepared to have congregation adjust to different Communion routes
 - f) The Usher should be the last in line to receive Communion. On the left side of the Worship Space, the Usher needs to wait until the choir has received Communion.
- 7) Second Collection :
- a) If there is a second collection, it will take place after Communion during the announcements. The collection is handled the same way the regular collection is handled. Don't forget to go down together and bow towards the Altar.
- 8) After Mass
- a) Move chair racks to pick-up positions
 - b) Assist congregation in putting up the chairs
- 9) Prepare for the unexpected
- a) Be available to the Celebrant / Deacon prior to Mass
 - b) Watch for signals from the Celebrant / Deacon during Mass

- c) Watch the congregation during the Mass. Be prepared for emergencies: Know the position of the fire extinguisher; locations of fire exits; a telephone to contact 911 in a medical emergency, etc.
 - d) Know the location of the First Aid kit
 - e) Know the location of the Janitor if any type of clean-up is needed
- 10) If you will not be at Mass, find someone else to fill in for you and let the Lead Usher know to replace you.