

Proposed Handbook for
St. John Capistran
Roman Catholic Church
Ministers of Hospitality

DRAFT

MISSION STATEMENT

We are the Catholic family of St. John Capistran,
called by God, our Creator, to be a community.

We are a Eucharistic people nourished by Jesus through the Sacraments.

We are empowered by the Holy Spirit to serve all of God's people:

In faith, by spreading the Word of God;

In hope, by passing on the teachings of the Church;

In Love, by sharing our resources and talents.

VISION

Liturgy is a communal event, the action of worshipping assembly. Such action requires that members of the Church be gathered, -- both physically and spiritually. Attention must be paid (hospitality) not only to the persons who gather but also to the common purpose for which the congregation assembles. All baptized who gather for public worship share responsibility for the formation of a unified and prayerful assembly. Special Ministers of Hospitality serve the liturgy by helping to establish a climate of welcome, helpfulness and order among those who gather. They also assist the assembly with practical details so that it can celebrate the rites with ease and grace (*Lay Ministries Handbook, Revised January 2004*).

Formation, Training and Criteria for Readiness

Ministers of Hospitality:

1. Are active adult parishioners of any age or sex who have the skills and time to devote to this role.
2. Are comfortable with people and possess a welcoming spirit and readiness to offer appropriate help.
3. Understand and enjoy the church's liturgical celebrations and the importance of the assembly's conscious and active role in them.
4. Have participated in the training process that includes:
 - a. Reflection on the mystery of Christ's presence and action in the liturgical assembly and the function of that assembly in its basic rituals.
 - b. Gaining familiarity with church facilities and with the basic elements of parish life so as to be able to offer helpful information when called upon.
 - c. Training in standard procedures for preparing the place, welcoming the assembly and assisting in its role, including exemplary participation of the hospitality ministers in the liturgy.
 - d. As appropriate, training in procedures for helping members of the community with special needs and/or emergencies.
 - e. Spirituality of the liturgical ministry (*Lay Ministries Handbook, Revised January 2004*).
 - f. All Ministers of Hospitality will have completed and passed the appropriate background checks and have completed the Protecting Gods Children workshop. Further information can be found by contacting the parish office.

Specific duties for Ministers of Hospitality

All Masses

Prior to Mass:

- Two ushers/greeters should be at the front doors to welcome parishioners
- Arrange for a family to take Gifts to the altar during Mass
- Verify that the Gifts are on the table at the rear of the church
- Clear snow from sidewalks when necessary
- Check that restrooms are functioning, lighted & supplied
- Open the 'crying room' doors and turn on the lights
- Advise individuals as to the location of the restrooms
- Draft substitute ushers/greeters, when necessary, that serve in other capacities for the Parish
- Ascertain if a second collection will be taken during Mass
- Place collection baskets at the rear of the church
- Assist retirement home senior citizens from buses into church
- Help all other senior citizens that need assistance
- When necessary, locate open seating and lead individuals to the seats
- Respond to any medical situations that arise; utilize the wheel chair if appropriate
- Make a headcount of all attendees, including the choir, at Mass each Saturday and Sunday during October
- Try to identify individuals that have medical training in case of emergencies

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- As the Mass is about to begin, close the front outside doors and the rear glass doors
- The ushers that will be assisting during Communion should identify all individuals that wish to have Communion brought back to them due to physical limitations

During Mass:

- Clear all individuals from the rear glass doors at the start of Mass to allow Father, the altar servers and the Lector to proceed down the center aisle unimpeded
- Remind parishioners that they cannot stand in front of the rear glass doors; if they object, inform them that the doors need to be accessible for emergencies
- Take Collections ideally with six ushers, using four long handled baskets for the two center seating sections of the church and two ushers using hand baskets for the two side seating sections
- Two ushers should take the collection(s) directly to the cash counting team or to the safe, empty baskets into appropriate red / blue bags and insert into the safe
- Ideally four ushers should assist in the center and side aisles with the movement of individuals from the pews to the altar for the distribution of Communion
- Ushers should assist at the rear of the church with the distribution of Communion to individuals with physical limitations
- Respond to any medical situations that arise; utilize the wheel chair if appropriate

After Mass

- Open rear glass doors and the front outside doors

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- Distribute weekly bulletins - one usher/greeter by the rear glass doors and one usher/greeter by the front outside doors
- Receive any donations that were not put in the baskets during Mass and then give them to the cash counting team or deposit into the safe
- Assist retirement home senior citizens from church back to buses
- Help all other senior citizens that need assistance
- Respond to any medical situations that arise; utilize the wheel chair if appropriate
- Close the 'crying room' doors and turn off the lights (5 and 11 o'clock masses)
- Close front outside doors and the rear glass doors
- Turn off the sound system, church lights and lock front and rear doors (5 and 11 o'clock masses)

Special Masses

First Holy Communion

Work with the Director of Religious Education to make sure that pews are reserved for the children and parents. At Communion, make sure that the children receiving First Holy Communion are first, followed by the remainder of the participants. Help children line up at the back of the church to receive congratulations from the mass participants.

Baptism

Identify someone from the family to take down the gifts to celebrate the event. After Mass, instruct the family or families to sit in the right center of the Church in front of the Baptismal Font so that Father can begin the Sacrament.

Confirmation

Prior to Mass:

- Work with the Director of Religious Education and Youth Minister to make sure the children and Sponsors are assembled and pews are reserved
- Two ushers/greeters should be at the front doors to welcome parishioners
- Give instruction to the children who are passing out programs, station two inside the church at each of the glass doors
- Clear snow from sidewalks when necessary
- Check that restrooms are functioning, lighted & supplied
- Open the 'crying room' doors and turn on the lights
- Help senior citizens that need assistance
- Make sure there are six altar servers present
- Keep Father informed as to the arrival of the Bishop, hold the front doors for him and welcome him and his party to the Church
- When necessary, locate open seating and lead individuals to the seats
- Respond to any medical situations that arise; utilize the wheel chair if appropriate
- Try to identify individuals that have medical training in case of emergencies
- As the Mass is about to begin, close the front outside doors and the rear glass doors

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During Mass:

- Clear all individuals from the rear glass doors at the start of Mass to allow the Bishop, Father, the altar servers and any other Celebrants to proceed down the center aisle unimpeded
- Remind parishioners that they cannot stand in front of the rear glass doors; if they object, inform them that the doors need to be accessible for emergencies
- Two ushers should assist in the center aisle with the movement of individuals from the pews to the altar for the distribution of Communion
- Assist at the rear of the church with the distribution of Communion to individuals with physical limitations

After Mass

- Open rear glass doors and the front outside doors
- Help senior citizens that need assistance
- Close the 'crying room' doors and turn off the lights
- Close front outside doors and the rear glass doors
- Turn off the sound system, church lights and lock front and rear doors
- Inform Father and the Director of Religious Education that the doors have been locked

References:

Selection and formation of Ministers of Hospitality: Director, Department for Worship, Diocese of Pittsburgh

Usher duties documents submitted by Greg Pasternak and Phil Enck

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