

Guide for Ushers



**St. Michael Catholic Church
Bedford, Texas**

An Usher's Prayer

Lord, you make all kinds of people, even people like me. In your love you gather them all into your Church. As you gather your people this day, help me to serve them in a Christ-like manner, even as your Son served those who gathered about him. Make me prayerful and patient, helpful and understanding, and may I radiate the joy that faith brings as I serve their needs. Give me your strength to support my fellow ministers. May all who assemble to celebrate our common faith in the risen Savior be glad of heart for being here and for having encountered your Son in one another, in our priest, at the tables of the Gospel and the Eucharist, and through the ministry of ushers like me.

I ask this through Christ our Lord,

Amen.

Before Mass

1. Please arrive 20-30 minutes before your Mass time begins.
Sign in and wear name badge.

Check to see if there will be a second collection or other special Mass instructions.

3. Check to see if there will be any baptisms or other special liturgical events for which pews need to be reserved.

4. Seat people and look to see where there are available seats.

5. Be aware of handicapped persons who will need communion brought to them .

6. Introduce yourself to the Sacristan for your Mass to make sure you communicate well about those responsibilities that are shared or overlap between the two roles.

During Mass

1. Do not actively seat people once Mass has begun, but you can point people toward available seats.
2. At the 9am, 11am, and 1pm Masses (and others that will have Children's Liturgy of the Word) (CLOW), the children will be dismissed before the first reading. In that case, one usher counts the children as they leave the sanctuary and includes that count on the recording sheet. If a child needs to go to the restroom during Children's Liturgy of the word, the CLOW volunteer will bring the child to the usher who will return the child to their parents. No volunteer is permitted to take a child to the restroom.
3. During the first reading, 'count' the number of people in your section, including infants and children. Record the numbers on the form and give this count to the sacristan. Also one usher will count the people in the narthex.
4. At the Creed, the usher will notify CLOW so they can pray the Creed/Antentions and start wrapping up.
5. Collection – Walk from the back aisle to the front as a group. Each usher will have two baskets per section, and will hand them to the end of the first and third rows. Once all collections are made, take all baskets to the vesting (priest's) sacristy and *at least* two ushers (who are not related) with the doors locked. Dump all the collection baskets into the collections bag. Deposit the collection with the attendance record and signed collection sheet into the safe. The exceptions are at Sunday 9am and 5pm Mass, instead of depositing the money in the safe, it is taken directly to the collection counting team in the conference room next door to Christian Connection.
6. Sign of Peace – During the Lamb of God, exchange a sign of peace (typically a handshake) with those who are around you. After the Lamb of God, walk to the front of your section.
7. Communion procession – Once the priest begins to walk down to his place, the EMHCs will turn to face the congregation. At that time, invite the first row to process to communion.

Note: there are two hearing amplifiers available in the Usher's Room for use while at Mass by anyone who needs them. Extra batteries are also available. Please be sure to retrieve the hearing devices after Mass.

After Mass

1. During the announcements, get a stack of bulletins to pass out. Do not 'actively' pass out bulletins until the final blessing has been given. If people are leaving and you are in the narthex, feel free to offer them a bulletin.
2. Once most of the crowd is dispersed (usually about 10 minutes), return left over bulletins to the usher room and go through your section of the church to collect trash and replace hymnals and pew cards.
3. Items people might miss (such as glasses, keys, etc), go to the Lost and Found in the main church office. Lost and found items should be left on the counter in the sacristy at the Saturday 6pm Mass.

Special Situations

1. Medical Situations – In the metal cabinet in the usher room, there is a box with latex gloves, paper towels, and a hand held vacuum. Please use these only in emergencies.

*In the case of a medical emergency, you may call 911 from a cell phone or from the phone behind the altar in the entrance to the ‘working sacristy’. Be sure to give our address and the nature of the situation.

*If you are familiar with parishioners who serve in the medical community as physicians, nurses, or EMTs, you can discretely seek their assistance.

*There is an AED (automatic external defibrillator) just outside the door to the women’s restroom nearest the nursery. After turning the machine on, it will give recorded instructions for what to do. Directions for using this machine will also be covered in the CPR class offered to ushers periodically.

2. Disturbances – If an individual is behaving belligerently, cautiously approach them and ask them to stop. Encourage other parishioners to move away from the scene. If the individual does not calm down, call the Bedford Police for assistance. 817-952-2127

3. Fire Extinguishers / Emergency Procedures

There are fire extinguishers:

*In the foyer between the Narthex and the parish offices

*Just inside the hallway leading to the restrooms/nursery area

*Under the credence table at the altar and behind the altar on the ambo side, or holy oils side of the altar

With each fire extinguisher are directions for use, as well as a St. Michael Emergency Procedure Manual for many different situations.

Exits:

Please be familiar with all doors and emergency exit routes. In addition to the main church entrance doors, there are doors:

1. Through the vesting sacristy, past the chapel and reconciliation room.
2. Past the usher room (between the usher room and stained glass windows)
3. One double door on each side behind the altar

Holidays/ Special Events

When sign out sheets are placed in the Narthex for Holy Day or special event sign ups, please sign up if you know you will be helping, even though *you* know you will be there, it is helpful to the liturgy department to know that all the positions are covered.

Lighting / AC

There are light controls in the hall between the church and vesting sacristy and on the wall on the left (facing the altar). The left three dimmers are for the sanctuary overhead lights. The square button on the bottom right of the 'set' will turn these on or off.

The thermostat is on the wall in the sanctuary to the left of the vesting sacristy door.

To override the current setting

- *Press the arrow until you get to heat or air (whichever you need)
- *Press the center square button to choose
- *Use the left/right arrows to reach the desired temperature
- *Press the center button to set
- *Press the right arrow and select 'override off/on', and select 'on'

Please turn the override 'off' before you leave.

Attire

As an usher, we wish to dress as to not distract. Some guidelines for usher decorum:

*Please refrain from chewing gum when you usher.

*For the gentleman: Please no shorts, sneakers, flip flops/sandals, t-shirts, or 'saggy' pants. Khaki pants or dressy pants are encouraged, with a collared shirt (golf shirt or button down). Jeans are discouraged.

*For the ladies: Please no shorts, sneakers, flip flops (dressy sandals are okay), or shirts/dresses that expose your shoulders (strapless, spaghetti strap, or halter), or mini skirts with or without leggings. Skirts/dresses should be 'finger tip length' or longer.

*Please do not wear shirts with words or 'characters' when serving as an usher.

Helpful Information

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