

HOSPITALITY MINISTRY

Guidelines

“Welcome one another, then, as Christ welcomed you, for the glory of God.” (Romans 15:7)

“Do not neglect hospitality, for through it some have unknowingly entertained angels.”
(Hebrews 13:2)

Hospitality ministers (HMs) receive every visitor as we would receive Christ Himself. We serve as both ushers and greeters—welcoming people to worship, being attentive to their individual needs, gathering their gifts during the collection, guiding them to Communion, and sending them on their way to “go in peace” and “glorify the Lord.” HMs work as a team, fully aware that we are there to serve others, but more importantly, to participate in the liturgy ourselves and be built up as a holy temple of the Lord.

Schedule

- The schedule is published every two months. It is emailed when ready and is also available on the St. Vincent de Paul web site, <http://www.svdpparish.org>.
- If you cannot make your scheduled assignment, please arrange for a substitute. Go into the MSP Scheduling Tool and request a sub as early as possible.
- There are four to six ministers on each team. All ministers on a team play an important role in each Mass. The lead minister for a particular Mass is noted on the schedule.
- Please check in with HMs when you arrive at Mass to see if they are in need of a sub.

Before Mass

- HMs should arrive at the Church 20-25 minutes before Mass begins.
- The lead minister checks the Hospitality Room for notes about special collections or Baptisms and informs the rest of the team.
- Ensure that two offering baskets are in the appropriate location of each section.
- Lead HM selects three or four people—this can be a family or individuals.
- The lead assigns a minister to each section. Sections are numbered 1-6, with 1 closest to the reservation chapel and 6 closest to the choir.
- HMs are the initial contact at the Church, and strive to make sure that people feel welcome and comfortable. Our greeting is the true beginning of our celebration, even before any prayers are said at Mass. A smile, a “hello,” a kind word, or a handshake can make a tremendous difference.
- The inside doors should never be propped open before Mass. Rather, HMs open the doors as people come into church from the Narthex. Weather permitting, one HM may prop open main doors from outside, and stand there to greet people as they arrive.
- Two wheelchairs are available for use by people who might need them: one in the Hospitality Room and one in the Holy Family Room (directly across from Hospitality).

- If necessary, HMs take an active role in locating available seats and directing latecomers to those seats. The ideal way to direct someone to a seat is to quietly point out the location of seat from the back of the sections. However, it is also acceptable to lead them from the back of the sections to the row and quietly motion to the people in the row that we are directing people to the open seats. They may or may not move in, but quietly indicate that you are directing people to the inside seats.
- Latecomers are to wait in Narthex until the Gospel Acclamation.
- Eight “Assisted Listening Devices” and a log book are located in the Hospitality Room. An HM logs out a device for anyone needing it. Check out both a listening device and an earpiece (found in plastic bag clipped to inside of log book). The person plugs in the earpiece and turns on listening device. Devices are already set to the proper channel via an internal setting. Assisted Listening Devices need to be turned in immediately after Mass. Turn the device off, place it back in the case, and plug it in so it can be charged. Remember to record that it has been returned.

During Mass

- The liturgy begins *as soon as* the priest crosses the threshold. No seating occurs at this time.
- Once the liturgy begins, HMs position themselves at the rear of their assigned section. This allows for assistance with seating and provides a good view of the whole assembly in case any help is needed or an emergency arises.
- HMs have the responsibility of keeping movement to a minimum. We quietly and respectfully ask latecomers to wait in the Narthex once the priest enters the sanctuary in the processional. Latecomers may be seated during the Gospel Acclamation, when everyone is standing.
- It is important for us, even while serving as ministers, to be attentive and reverent to the liturgy.
- HMs should position themselves so as to be available if needed, but not distracting. It is preferable not to sit with family members during the liturgy.
- If the pyx at the offertory table contains any low-gluten hosts (distinguished by their distinctive white color), the pyx is placed in the large ciborium to be brought up with the offertory gifts. People receiving the low-gluten hosts go to Communion in the priest’s line.
- Each minister takes a head count of his or her assigned section and records that number on the sheet provided in the Hospitality Room. Someone also takes a head count of the Parents Alcove. The lead totals all the sections and records that number on the clipboard provided.
- Immediately after the Prayers of the Faithful, HMs proceed down their respective aisles toward the altar. They bow slightly, doing this in unison, and proceed to take up the collection.
- At the beginning of the communion song, all HMs proceed up the aisles and bow toward the altar in unison. Invite the congregation to proceed after all Eucharistic ministers are in place. If there are any physically disabled or elderly persons who would like to receive communion but cannot join the line, advise the Eucharistic Minister(s) to follow you back to that person. HMs receive Communion last.

- After Communion, the HM assigned to Section 1 holds the door to the reservation chapel so the priest can repose the Blessed Sacrament into the Tabernacle.

After Mass

- The HM (must be 21 or older) assigned to Section 6 stands discreetly near the front row of that section; as soon as the Priest has reached the Baptismal Font—and before the congregation has begun to depart—that HM and a second adult, non-family member HM pick up the offering basket from its spot at the base of the Altar and proceed to the working sacristy (next to the reservation chapel). The two HMs place the collection into the lock bag, zip and lock it, and deposit it in the metal drop box in the Sacristy. A youth may accompany a parent, but may not be involved in transferring the collection to the lock bag. (Refer to “Collection Bag Process” document for specific instructions.)
- The inside doors may be propped open with door jams after the Priest, Deacon and altar servers have exited the sanctuary.
- After Mass, HMs hand out bulletins in the Narthex. This is a good time to offer wishes for a good day, and to let everyone know we were glad to have them worship with us.
- After each Mass, HMs tidy up assigned sections and quietly return kneelers to their appropriate position.
- If there is a Baptism or other special event scheduled during the liturgy, be aware of the seats that have been reserved for those family members or participants (front rows of section 3 and near the Baptismal fonts).
- When inviting people to bring the gifts forward, take a minute to explain what is expected of them. Ask them to come to the credence table during the collection. When Father steps down to the front of the altar, they should begin walking toward him—wine and hosts together, collection basket behind. Father accepts all gifts, then bows slightly; individuals bow slightly as well and return to their seats.
- Above all, be courteous and kind. If someone chooses not to follow your instructions, don’t try to stop them or argue with them.

Special Collections

- Special collections and “Black Bag” (St. Vincent de Paul Society) collections take place after the congregation has received Communion. The priest will usually announce the purpose of the special collection, which is the cue for HMs to come forward, once again in unison, bow slightly, and proceed to take up the collection. Special collection and “Black Bag” lock bags are located in a lower cabinet in the Hospitality Room.
- Special collection dates are posted in a shadow box on the wall just to the right upon entering the Hospitality Room.
- Two adult, non-family HMs—those determined by lead before Mass—take collection to Hospitality Room, place donations in correct bank bag, lock bag correctly, and place in metal drop box in Sacristy. (Refer to “Collection Bag Process” document for specific instructions.)

Medical Emergency

- In the case of a medical emergency with someone attending Mass, the following hospitality duties should be followed. If you are alerted or notice that someone needs attention because of health reasons in your assigned section; motion/alert other hospitality ministers if possible, that someone needs help so they can come and assist if needed. The closest minister or even two ministers should approach the area and offer any help to the family or people from the congregation who are assisting the person. We are fortunate to have many medical personnel in our parish and usually others will come to the aid. In the case when there are no apparent medical personnel around; it is okay to approach Father who will ask if anyone is in attendance that is trained to assist with the situation. As an HM, you are to quietly assist any way you can. You may be asked to call an ambulance; the address of the church is listed in the Hospitality Room. Other hospitality ministers who are not directly assisting can get the wheelchair from the hospitality room be ready to bring it if it's determined that the person can be safely moved to the Narthex for further treatment. This decision should come from a trained medical person and is not absolutely necessary, so don't insist on moving the person unless it is a safe decision. Also, there is a portable emergency defibrillator available throughout the church. It should be offered and used only by someone who is familiar with the device. Try and remember that it is available. Finally, if you are an HM not assigned to the Mass, please fill in for the hospitality ministers who may be unavailable because of the emergency.
- An AED Defibrillator is located on the wall just outside the Hospitality Room; it should be used only by specially trained medical personnel.

Duties Unique to Certain Masses

- 9:30 a.m. Sunday
 - Place "reserved" signs on ends of first two pews, section 4, for RCIA participants.
 - Hold doors in music corner open for dismissal of CLOW (Children's Liturgy of the Word) dismissal to Chapel.
 - Hold main doors open for homebound ministers to process out.
- 5:00 p.m. Sunday
 - Have worship aids available for people to pick up as they enter church. Remember to return cart to Hospitality Room after Mass.

Dress/Appearance

- Please be mindful of your attire; do not wear sneakers, shorts, or distracting clothing (team logos, short skirts, etc.) while serving as a hospitality minister. We set the tone and example for those who celebrate with us. Wear your name tag "high and visible."
- Even if you are not scheduled to serve the Mass that you are attending, please come dressed to serve. There are many times a sub is needed and you may be asked to serve when you arrive.

Janitorial Closet

- If necessary, janitorial closet (located between the men's and women's restrooms) may be opened for paper towels, toilet tissue, broom, or mop. Keys to open paper towel and tissue dispensers hang at the top of the bulletin board in the Hospitality Room. Sometimes it is helpful to grab extra paper towels or tissue for the restrooms. And on rainy days, a mop comes in handy to quickly wipe up water from the floor so that it is dry when people leave Mass.