

**GUIDE FOR HOSTING MINISTERS**





## GUIDE FOR HOSTING MINISTERS

### Introduction:

“The celebration of Mass, as the action of Christ and of the People of God arrayed hierarchically, is the centre of the whole of Christian life for the Church both universal and local, as well as for each of the faithful individually” (*The General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (GIRM 16) . (GIRM 18) sets clearly before us the purpose of liturgy committees - participation in the liturgy by all the baptised.

*...with due regard for the nature and particular circumstances of each liturgical assembly the entire celebration is arranged in such a way that it leads to a conscious, active, and full participation of the faithful both in body and mind... to which the Christian people have a right and duty by reason of their Baptism.*

### The Role of Liturgical Ministers

Liturgy is made up of several elements: gathering, remembering, sharing a meal, going forth. Each of these elements requires the service of individuals, in addition to the full participation of the whole assembly, to help make them happen. Certain members of the community share their gifts by serving in specific ministries. They do so for the sake of the community and to give glory to God.

Each of us is called to contribute to our common prayer. We respond to that call by truly celebrating the mass as part of the assembly. We respond as well by discerning our gifts and offering to serve as a liturgical minister.

*The General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (GIRM#105) notes that “the following also exercise a liturgical function: ...those who take up the collection in the church; those who, in some places, meet the faithful at the church entrance, lead them to appropriate places, and direct processions.” In St. Emile Parish, we collectively call Greeters and Ushers, Offertory Collection Ministers and Gift Bearers as members of the Liturgical Hosting Ministry. As liturgical ministers serving at Mass, proper formation and training is an important dimension to understanding and fulfilling the role that has been entrusted to you.

To be most effective members of the Liturgical Hosting Ministry it is also important to have an understanding of the liturgy, the liturgical environment and the liturgical seasons. A winning smile coupled with a firm knowledge of what is taking place at Mass will help you create and maintain a spirit of welcome, a sense of reverence, and a prayerful atmosphere for all.

These guidelines have been prepared as to assist all ministers perform their roles in a prayerful, reverent and consistent way.



## GUIDE FOR HOSTING MINISTERS

*“Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect hospitality, for through it some have unknowingly entertained angels.” (Hebrews 13:1-2)*

### **Church GREETERS**

To serve as a minister at the celebration of the Eucharist is a privilege to which you have been called. When we gather together as a community of faith, Jesus comes through the door in each and every person who enters the church. Whether we welcome the stranger or friend, we are welcoming Jesus himself into our midst. As a *Greeter*, you are the voice of welcome and the first person to greet your brothers and sisters who have come to be nourished at the table of the Lord. You, too, present the face of Christ as you extend the warmth of Christian fellowship to all who come to worship.

Greeting is not simply saying hello or handing someone a bulletin. It is a mindset and an attitude that draws people in and makes them feel a part even if only a visitor. It is a gift and a blessing and should be carried out with great care.

Greeters have the special ability to make everyone feel welcome and appreciated. They are the front line for welcoming God’s guests. Greeters are also the hosts. They make sure guests and members are seated comfortably and to their liking and needs. They set the spiritual climate of the service by presenting a joyful attitude, and make sure that everything is flowing in a proper order so that everyone is free to worship without interruption.

Here are two key tips for developing and sustaining a Welcoming Ministry

#### **Circle of 10:**

Greet anyone, member or guest, who comes within ten feet of you. Make a special effort to greet the people you don’t already know within your Circle of 10.

#### **Rule of 3:**

Try not to talk to other members for the first three minutes after the service. Talk only to those you don’t know and to people that you know are guests. It takes guests about three minutes to exit the church after worship so it’s important to make sure someone has made contact with them before they leave.



## GUIDE FOR HOSTING MINISTERS

### Motto (the 5 T's):

#### *Teachable, Thoughtfulness, Tactfulness, Timeliness, and Teamwork*

1. **Teachable.** Greeters should have the right spirit and heart that easy to serve people and church well. Every minister should be willing to be taught and learn ways to improve. Those who are ever-learning can greatly enhance the service.
2. **Thoughtfulness.** Greeters should be looking for ways to be welcoming and how serve and help others. Opening doors, assisting visitors, being courteous, and looking for ways to help others along with their other duties can bring a positive reflection for the church.
3. **Tactfulness.** Greeters should present themselves in being able to communicate well and have a keen sense of knowing what to say, what to do, and where to direct others as a way to maintain good relations and prevent distractions in the service.
4. **Timeliness.** Greeters should be on time and also timely in bringing assistance to others. An effective minister does not wait to be asked or wait for others to help but is keenly aware of what is going on in the church and allows the flow of the service to continue without distractions.
5. **Teamwork.** Greeters should work as a team, each one working together as a whole

### PREPARATION:

The more you know about the parish, both the physical environment and general parish life, the better equipped you will be to serve as a bridge between those who come to worship and the parish community. As the first face of the community to people who come, you will be asked all sorts of questions. Of course you will not need to be able to answer every possible one. However, it is helpful to know to whom questions can be directed. Below are some things that will help you become informed.

#### **A. SOME IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW...**

- a. **Church layout:** Even the most seasoned parishioners may not know the physical facility as well as they might think. Take or make a tour of the church so that you will know things such as the location accessible seating area, all exits, location of restrooms, hospitality room where collection baskets are kept, church safe, location of first aid kit and automated external defibrillator (AED), location of phone in case of emergency, location of important phone numbers in case of emergency, location of fire extinguishers, where confessionals are, votive candle offerings, cry room, choir loft and any other unique feature about your church.
- c. **Gestures and Postures:** As a minister of the church people will take notice of what you do. Like all ministers, you can help to model what others should be doing by your gestures and actions while serving both before and during Mass. A few important gestures to take note of:
  - Before or after Mass, genuflect to the Blessed Sacrament reserved in the tabernacle.



## GUIDE FOR HOSTING MINISTERS

- During Mass, bow to the altar whenever passing it.
  - Participating fully during Mass: Singing, responding to prayers, listening, bowing your head when receiving Communion, being quiet and respectful inside the church mindful that people are trying to pray, being reverent and respectful by your actions will help people understand that this is a sacred place.
- d. **Learn more about the Mass:** Use your service in this ministry as an opportunity to increase your understanding of what happens at Mass. Not only will this enrich your own spiritual life and participation at Mass but it will better enable you to help answer questions should you get some. (Resource: The General Instruction of the Roman Missal)
- e. **Parish Newcomers:** People new to the parish may ask you about registering in the parish. Know what the parish registration process is, where the parish office is located so you can direct people.
- **Ministry and Parish Organization List:** Often people are looking for ways to get more involved in parish life. It would be helpful for you to have a good understanding of the various parish groups and ministries to help answer questions and perhaps provide some guidance. At least know who to direct them to so that they can have their questions answered.
  - **Parish Events:** Become familiar with the major parish events that might be coming up including date, time, location and what the event is about.
  - **Parish Bulletin:** Read the parish bulletin to become familiar with what is happening in the parish.
  - **Parish Website:** <http://stemileparish.com/>

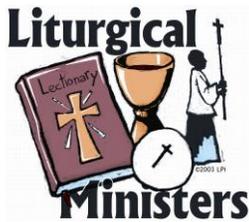
### *Offertory Collection Ministers*

It is not just passing the collection basket but recognizing and valuing the treasure that people are offering to God. It is a mindset and an attitude that draws people in and makes them feel a part even if only a visitor. It is a gift and a blessing and should be carried out with great care.

### *Gift Bearers*

Gift Bearers are representative of the church family who carries the wine and hosts to the priest for consecration.

The community offers bread and wine in the memorial sacrifice of the Mass. Bread and wine are presented as gifts to God, as symbols of the work of human hands. This allows members of the church who are not able to participate in other forms of liturgical ministries a chance to play a role in the liturgy. When volunteers include a family with children, it's a special sight; one that reminds us that parishioners of all ages, are important members of the body of Christ.



## GUIDE FOR HOSTING MINISTERS

As Gift Bearers take a moment to clear your mind while the offertory song is being sung. Remember that you are representing the entire parish as we return to God a small part of the many blessings that He has given to us. The unleavened Bread and Wine that you carry will be consecrated to become the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Treat it with reverence and respect.

Once all of the gifts have been presented to Father, he may say a few words of thanks to the Gift Bearers, then Father, the Deacon and the Altar Servers move to carry the gifts to the altar. The Three Gift Bearers, still standing in a line in front of the altar, bow together toward the altar, turn and return down the aisle to their seats.

### **SCHEDULING:**

Having a sufficient number of ministers available to serve at each Mass is an important dimension of creating the prayerful environment for Mass and attending to the spiritual needs of the community gathered.

- **IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER** about scheduling:
  - Deadline for notifying your respective schedulers are due no later than the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of the month before the two month schedule.  
Shirley Gillespie (204-489-0824) [svgill54@gmail.com](mailto:svgill54@gmail.com)
  - It is your responsibility to find a replacement if you cannot make your scheduled time. A list of Liturgical Hosting Ministers, and phone numbers will be provided (again by e-mail or hard copy for those who do not have an e-mail will be made available),
  - Be willing to serve without a “swap” if asked and you are available. It is a ministry and we should be willing to serve when needed and available. You never know when you might be in need of someone to fill in for you in an emergency!
  - Combined Schedule with Liturgical Ministry is posted on the Bulletin board.
  - Weekly Schedule for Liturgical Ministry and Hosts are included in the bulletin two week-end in advance.
- A sign-up sheet for the special masses will be placed at the entrance, as well as an e-mail or phone call will be made for the special days, i.e. Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Christmas...etc.

For each mass the following will be scheduled:

- At least 2 adult greeters (We would like to see a family to be involved as greeters where the children are involved by handing out the bulletins or ushering to the pews, and accompanying adults assist in greeting, welcoming, informing).
- 4 Offertory collection Ministers.
- 2 Gift Bearers- Though you are scheduled as Gift Bearers, please keep in mind that certain mass are offered by individuals or families and they may wish to bring up the Gifts. Please be prepared to step aside if you see enough individuals already ready to bring up the gifts or if individuals come up to you to say that they have offered the mass and would like to bring up the gifts. There are times when there is only one person who offered the mass. As the assigned Gift Bearer, you will then assist in bringing up the gifts.



## GUIDE FOR HOSTING MINISTERS

### SERVING

PRAYER FOR HOSTING MINISTERS-

*Lord, Jesus*

*As people come to church, help me to be kind to them.*

*Help me to give them a welcome that is worthy of your Name.*

*Help me to display kindness in a way that will prepare the way for them  
to encounter your word, body and blood.*

*Help me to set aside my preoccupations and worries and focus on them.*

*Let my ways be pleasing in your sight. .*

*May I walk in kindness today, and  
help everyone who enters the church experience your presence.*

*Amen*

**OR**

*May I have the courage to walk in your ways and serve your people.*

*Prepare my heart to love all who come through the door today.*

*Give me eyes to see their needs and their gifts, and  
grace to respond wisely to each situation.*

*I ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

*Amen.*

### **PROPER ATTIRE**

All that we say and do when we serve as a minister at Mass speaks about our reverence for the sacred action that is to take place during the liturgy. That includes our demeanor and how we dress. The focus at the liturgy is the Eucharist. **Anything that detracts or calls attention to oneself and away from that central point, including one's dress, should be avoided.**

- a. In order to be ready to serve at that time, arrive **30** minutes before you need to be in position, no later than 15 minutes before the scheduled start of Mass
- b. When you arrive, put a check (✓) mark beside your name on the schedule on bulletin board. Greeters wear their name tag.
- c. If the scheduled ministers have not arrived, try to find other ministers to assist.



## GUIDE FOR HOSTING MINISTERS

### A. Before Mass Begins

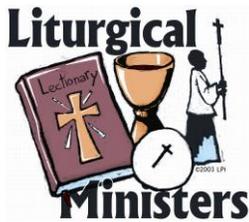
- a. Hang coats and personal belonging in the church office if you like.
- b. Check the entranceways to ensure that they are clear.
- c. Look around the church to tidy things up, collect any items left behind from the prior Mass.
- d. Check to see if there are any special instructions or things happening during this liturgy that may need your attention or assistance during Mass.
- e. Make sure there are enough Bulletin to hand out.
- f. **Offertory Collection Ministers** - Make sure the offertory collection baskets are in place. If there is a second collection, ensure that the correct number of collection baskets are out.
- g. Be attentive to the noise level at the entrance or gathering space as parishioners may be praying in church.

### B. As the Assembly is Gathering

- a. Greet people in a friendly manner and welcome everyone. Smile. Make it a point to learn some new parishioner names each time you serve. Introduce yourself to newcomers.
- b. Be attentive to your duties and avoid engaging in conversations that take your attention away from your ministry. Keep in mind that you are there to make all who come feel welcome.
- c. Be ready to offer assistance to people who may appear to need it. (Elderly, adults with children, persons with disabilities—make sure you give them room to refuse help.)
- d. In the event that there is not enough Bulletin to distribute (often the case at 11 am mass), politely offer the following options: 1) check back at the end of the mass (there are often Bulletin left at pews at the end of mass); or 2) check the St. Emile Website. Please do not leave your post even when you do not have Bulletin to hand out any more. You are still needed to greet and welcome everyone who arrives for mass.
- e. When the procession for Mass is ready to begin, kindly ask people who are just arriving to use a side aisle or to step aside and wait until the procession has passed.
- f. Greeters are asked to remain at the entrance at least 10 minutes after the beginning of Mass to welcome latecomers. Politely invite them to be seated by indicating or leading them to available spaces. (\*\*Please consider sitting near the entrance of the church so that you can easily assist latecomers as you participate during the mass). If latecomers arrive during one of the readings, you may need to ask them to wait until the reading is completed before they find a seat. This will allow the assembly to focus on hearing the Word of God.

### C. During Mass

- a. **Participate:** Though you may be asked to remain at the entrance to welcome late comers or to guide them to empty seats, remember that first and foremost you are there to participate as a member of the assembly yourself. Be attentive to the Mass. As a minister you also model the full participation that is expected of all present by singing the hymns, responding to all the prayers, listening to the readings, etc.
- b. **Taking the Collection:** Before Prayer of the Faithful, those assigned to take up the collection should proceed to the back of the church, take basket for collection and be ready to proceed all at the same time, to the front of the Sanctuary or to the first pew in each section of the church, After Prayer of the Faithful. Remember to bow to the altar before turning around to begin



## GUIDE FOR HOSTING MINISTERS

passing the baskets.

As Offertory Collection Ministers, this is another opportunity where your demeanor is important as people are offering their treasure to God. Smiling is allowed and can maintain the warm and welcoming atmosphere during the liturgy.

### *Offertory Collection Procedures*

1. Have enough Offertory Collection Ministers for each isle of the church.
2. *Before* Prayer of the Faithful, those assigned to take up the collection should proceed to the back of the church, take basket for collection and be ready to proceed all at the same time, to the front of the Sanctuary
3. *After* Prayer of the Faithful, all Minister will proceed together, walking in unison from the back of the building to the front of the Sanctuary or to the first pew in each section of the church.
4. Bow to the altar before turning around to face congregation and begin passing the offertory collection basket down their respective row.
5. Each Minister will hand their offertory collection basket to the 2 Ministers designated to bring the Offertory Collection with the Gift Bearers.
6. The 2 offertory collection Ministers will walk behind the Gift Bearers.
7. Each Minister will bow their head in reverence when prayer is given for the offering, once the Celebrant acknowledgements of the Gifts, the offertory ministers will both go to the Sacristy.
8. Two ministers of Collection should enter the room at the same time, and be present while the collection is placed in the bag and then in the safe. You should never do this alone. Always close the door in the Sacristy. The collection is transferred into the money envelopes. The envelopes are signed, sealed, and deposited into the safe. NOTE: When sealing the envelope, make sure that you do not cover the envelope number which is needed for bookkeeping and banking. Make sure to push the plastic envelope all the way into the safe.
9. If there is a second collection, it is generally announced before the end of the mass. Four ministers will proceed as per usual collection and 2 ministers will follow the same procedure as in #7.

- c. **The Presentation of the Gifts:** Be attentive to what is happening in the sanctuary. As Gift Bearer, should make your way to the back of the church *After* Prayer of the Faithful. *People designated to bring up the gifts are in the back of the church and in position during the collection.* Please be prepared to step aside if you see enough individuals already ready to bring up the gifts or if individuals come up to you to say that they have offered the mass and would like to bring up the gifts. Hand them the gifts to be carried. There are times when there is only one person who offered the mass. As the assigned Gift Bearer, you will then assist in bringing up the gifts.



## GUIDE FOR HOSTING MINISTERS

Wait until you see the Presider moving to the center aisle in front of the altar and then signal the gift bearers to move. In some parishes or perhaps for special occasions or celebrations the Altar servers with cross and candles will go to the back of the church to lead the offertory procession. Be aware for yourself or for others so that you can direct the gift bearers accordingly.

### C. After Mass

- a. Walk through the church and put the kneelers up. Put hymnals back in their place. Collect any bulletins left in the pews. Pick up any items that people may have left behind such as hats, gloves, phones, umbrellas, etc. Know where your parish lost and found is and take the items there.
- b. Return your name tag.
- c. If the next group of Greeters, Offertory Collection Ministers for the next Mass are arriving, pass along any information that might be helpful to them as necessary.

### DEALING WITH SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Although it may not happen very often, one of the important functions for **greeters** is to know what to do if an emergency situation should arise.

Become familiar with the policy and procedures in your parish. Knowing what to do when something unexpected happens can help keep order as well as allow for emergency personnel to respond quickly. Below are some suggested plans to assist you depending on the emergency.

NOTE- In order to make sure that procedures are carried out in orderly manner, those assigned as Greeters will always take the lead and assigned Offertory Collection Ministers will assist accordingly. The Greeters will direct other's as needed.

#### A. *Emergency Procedures*

In the event of an emergency, the safety of the church members is **every Liturgical Hosting Minister's first responsibility**. Most emergencies are for medical attention or some kind of disturbance with an individual. In these cases, please follow the instructions listed below. Assigned Greeters will take the lead and assisted by Collection Ministers. (Note: most medical emergencies can be managed with minimal disruption to the mass)

1. Clear the area to allow assistance.
2. Check for breathing and heartbeat.
3. Always assign one person to call 911 (ask them to report back to you).

Emergency Procedures (continued):

4. Send someone to get the AED.
5. Station one person to help emergency personnel to the person who needs help. Make sure the isles are clear for emergency personnel
6. Keep either a hosting minister or experienced medical person from the church, next to the afflicted person at all times.
7. Assign one person to remain close to the family members and friends.
8. Monitor and make sure the area is not crowded by on-lookers.

### ***B. Evacuation Procedures***

Greeters should maintain order to the best of their ability in the event of any kind of evacuation.

- 2 Greeters should start with the last pew or row in the sanctuary and procedure to guide people out to a nearby exit.
- If the church has front exits, one of the assigned Collection Ministers will escort people from the front rows while others are going out the back rows.
- The other assigned Collection Minister will help others in the building at the same time, checking the bathrooms, chapel, classrooms, etc. to ensure an evacuation is conducted in a safe and timely manner.

It should be also emphasized that the evacuation groups should congregate away from the church building in case of a fire or other dangers. It is good for the ushers to have a plan to take people to a place of safety prior to any kind of emergency.

In cases of **fire**, it is always best to call 911 when in doubt. The longer the delay, there is a greater risk to the building and others. On a very small fire that can be put out with an extinguisher, put out the fire, and monitor it. Determine whether it was an extremely small fire to not disrupt the service but in most cases evacuations are the best solution. Again, safety comes first and it is always best to be safe.

In putting out a small fire, ***do not place your safety or the safety of others at risk!*** If the fire grows too large or aggressive to control by an extinguisher, time and safety are compromised. Exit the building immediately.



## GUIDE FOR HOSTING MINISTERS

### *C. Disturbances*

Children with an adult- offer the adult assistance and option of using the crying room.

Disturbances by mentally ill, distraught persons, or people who wish to disturb the service other than respecting the house of God, require discernment on the part of the Greeters and other Liturgical Hosting Ministers present. In some cases, the pastor may deal with issues but for the most part, it will be the responsibility of the head usher and other ushers to carry out the procedures.

1. Determine whether a person needs to be removed.
2. Determine how you wish to do this. Most of the times, it can be handled through a gentle but yet firm request or direction. If the disturbance is overbearing and causing trouble, it may take a couple of Ministers to gently encourage the person to another place.
3. Determine a safe place to deal with this person. Please distinguish between the person and the behavior.
4. Determine whether the person will stop or will have to be asked to leave the building. If they refuse, you may have to call the police department for help to remove this person.
5. If an individual is distraught show empathy and compassion and gently escort them out of the sanctuary. Ask, "How can we help?" The office is a good option to bring them to.

Use wisdom, love, and tactfulness in the delicate matters.

*Thank you, for choosing to share your gifts with your parish community of St. Emile.*

