

Because of its importance, the role of usher has had a long history in the Catholic Church. Referred to as porters in the Third Century, ushers used to guard the church doors against disruptive intruders. Today, ushers serve the opposite function by being the first to welcome parishioners and visitors to mass. Depending on the parish, they also assist in a variety of other ways.

Please Show Up for Assigned Mass

If you cannot make the assigned Mass it is YOUR responsibility to find a substitute. You all should have a list of all ushers indicating the Mass they normally attend and their phone numbers and email addresses.

If you make an attempt to find a substitute but are unsuccessful please notify your Mass Head Usher or usher coordinator.

If you need to change to a different Mass time please contact the Usher Coordinator Guy Gebbia at gebco@optonline.net or 914-953-3370. at least one month prior to the start of the quarter to accommodate the schedule change.

Prior to Arrival

Ushers are also asked to arrive at least 15 to 20 minutes early.

We must have a head usher and at least four other ushers 15 minutes prior to start of Mass. If not, you should recruit some more ushers. If you are an usher but are not assigned please check in to see if your help is needed.

Ushers are instructed to dress appropriately. Ushers are viewed as persons of authority who can provide assistance and direction to the assembly. Those serving in the usher ministry should be identifiable by distinctive attire. Guidelines are to lean toward the side of formal as opposed to casual. For example, men should wear a suit or sports jacket, and women should wear a pantsuit or a long dress or skirt. Ushers should wear a button down shirt and dress slacks if possible in St. Ann's Society of Ushers ministry. It would be appreciated if ushers who are not scheduled to serve could wear appropriate attire in the event they are needed to serve.

Before Mass

- 1) The Head Usher should go into the Sacristy and get the money bags and put them over the collection baskets and ensure they are used for collections. Also get the plastic sealed bag.
- 2) Ushers should also get bulletins from the box in the Sacristy and put them at all entrances and exits before Mass begins.
- 3) Ushers should hand out bulletins at the rear of the church as the congregation leaves. The side doors should have bulletins on the tables for folks to take one as they enter and leave.
- 4) Ushers should make sure the traffic cones are put out in the street. Four (4) in front of the church and two (2) in the front of the school.
- 5) Ushers greet and welcome mass attendees at the church entrance ways. They serve as representatives of the church, and therefore their demeanor and body language should

reflect its hospitality. They take note of any known doctors or nurses in attendance, should anyone need medical assistance during the mass.

- 6) The ushers also assist attendees as needed with finding a seat, paying particular attention to those with special needs. During crowded services, assisting with seating is especially important.

During Mass

- 1) Ushers should sit at the back of the church if possible and participate fully in the service. When late-comers arrive, ushers help minimize disruptions by asking them to momentarily stand by during the readings and gospel and the priest's homily. If someone is aged or handicapped they are welcome to sit, however try to guide them down the side aisles.
- 2) Ushers are also responsible for getting the baskets from the closet and taking up collections.
- 3) There are normally two collections but check with the priest before they process down the aisle.
- 4) Also check with the Deacon if he has appointed gift bearers and identify them.
- 5) We should have 4 ushers to do both collections while head usher is in rear handling money bags and ensuring gift bearers are chosen.
- 6) When First Collection is complete, the Second collection goes down with gift bearers.
- 7) During the first collection the head usher remains in the rear of the church with money bag and ensures the collections is placed in the proper bag.
- 8) When the second collection is completed the Head Usher puts both bags into the plastic bag and seals it. The head usher then puts the sealed bag **in a basket** and walks down the center aisle, only when the Holy, Holy, Holy song begins, and places the bags in the lock box. They then return with the empty basket to the rear of the church using the side aisle.
- 9) We are now responsible for guiding the assembly to the priest, deacon and Eucharistic Ministers for COMMUNION. Two ushers should walk down the center aisle when the Eucharistic Ministers go towards the alter. When the ushers arrives at the first pew, they should immediately begin to ask the parishioners to form a line to the alter. They assist by guiding the rows up the center aisle and doing so quietly with a gesture and motion. Keep the line moving. There are four people distributing the Eucharistic and the line moves very quickly.

After Mass

- 1) Once the mass is over, four ushers are needed to distribute the weekly bulletins. Ushers should be in the rear of the church and bulletins should be at the side doors.
- 2) Depending on the time of year, we should prop the doors open or stand outside.
- 3) We ushers should take a quick walk through the church and see if any items have been left behind, returning song books to their correct places and do general housekeeping and pick up left behind bulletins and return them to the back of the church. If you find something, you should take it outside in the event someone comes immediately returns and if they do not, then take the item to the sacristy or place it in lock box on the alter.