

# Usher Guidelines

The Usher Ministry, like each of the ministries that serve our celebration of the Mass, is a very important part of the liturgy. The usher may be the first person connected with the liturgy that a parishioner sees when coming to Mass and the last seen when the parishioner leaves Mass. You help form the atmosphere surrounding the service and the attitude people have about St. Andrew's Church. You are the person most likely to be asked for emergency help.

- **Behavior**

*Try to be at your best!* Even when things are not going so good for you, your normal friendly attitude can come forth for an hour or so.

- **Attire**

*Ushers set an example of acceptable attire.* Ushers should dress as if they were meeting an important person or attending an important meeting. Male ushers should wear a jacket or suit and a collared shirt and dress pants. Female ushers should wear dresses, skirts, or some other appropriate attire. Beach attire, gym clothes, short skirts/shorts, bare midriffs, spaghetti straps, halter-tops, tank-tops, spandex or other "revealing" attire, which may be distracting and/or detract from attention to the Mass is unacceptable and is never to be worn while ushering a Mass.

- **Conduct**

*Arrive 15 to 20 minutes before Mass is scheduled to start.* This helps the Head usher, and you, assure smooth functioning and assignment of responsibilities.

Be Considerate. **No extraneous talking** in the worship space. Sound carries from the back of the church to the front of the church building just like a bullhorn is being used.

Be sure that everything you do contributes to the reverent atmosphere that should prevail during the Liturgy. Participate in the hymns and prayers recited by the congregation.

Greet all the people as they come in. This can be done in the gathering space and at the entrance to the church. This is not to be done in the worship space because it is disturbing to people already seated and praying or meditating.

- **Conventions:**

When facing the altar, the right-most section, closest to the choir, is section number 1. The next is section 2, then section 3. The left-most section, while facing the altar, is section 4. The usher position on the right side of section 1 is Usher position 1; Usher position 2 is on the left side of section 1. Similarly, usher positions 3, 5 and 7 are on the right side of sections 2, 3 and 4 and Usher positions 4, 6 and 8 are on the left side of sections 2, 3 and 4, respectively.

- **Collection(s)**

Move/Guide the collection basket back and forth among the pews, starting at the front pews and ending at the rearmost pew.

Ushers 1 & 2 do section 1; ushers 3 & 4 do section 2; ushers 5 & 6 do section 3; ushers 7 & 8 do section 4; ushers 9 & 10 do the "cry room" and the "addition". When a second collection is taken up, ushers repeat this procedure after the Offertory Procession has been started.

- **Communion**

Usher activities depend on the number of Extra-ordinary Minister positions;

Four or Less: All the Ministers will be in front, and, the Odd numbered ushers guide the communicants, starting from the front pew, working backward to the rearmost pew. The Even numbered ushers should guide Minister(s) to serve communion to any non-ambulatory persons. Also, they should ready the bulletins for distribution.

Five positions: Four positions in front and one Minister position at the back between section 1 & 2, facing the rear of the church. The odd numbered ushers (1, 3, 5 & 7) guide communicants to the front, starting at the front pew and working backward. Usher 2 should route communicants from the "cry-room" to the Minister(s) in the back, then guide communicants out from the right side of the two rearmost pews in section one, using the rear aisle. These communicants will then move back into their pew from the left side of section one. Similarly, usher 4 should guide communicants from the last two pews in section two, out from the left side of the pew, using the rear aisle area in front of the doors, to the Minister(s) in the back. Those who receive will then move back into their pews via the right side. Thusly, two lines of communicants will be served.

Six positions: Four positions in front, and two positions at the back; One between sections 1 & 2 and the other between section 3 & 4, facing the rear of the church. The odd numbered ushers ( 1, 3, 5 & 7) guide communicants to the front starting from the front pew, working backward. Ushers 2 and 4 should route communicants as described for five positions (above) Usher 6 guides communicants from the addition behind section 3 to the Ministers positioned between sections 3 & 4. Then, usher 6 guides communicants from the last two pews in section 3 out from the right side, using the rear aisle, to the ministers between sections 3 & 4. These communicants will move back to their pew via the left side of section 3.

**\*IMPORTANT NOTE\*** When five or six Extra-ordinary Minister positions are used, ushers should route communicants such that the Ministers in the back finish prior to those in front. This way, the celebrant can readily determine when communion service has been completed.

- **Security of Collection(s)**

Head Usher and/or his/her designates will assure security of all collection(s).

- **Distribution of Bulletins (and other written material)**

Head Usher will assign ushers to hand-out the bulletins (and other material) after Mass.

- **Pew Clean-up**

All ushers not assigned to security of the collection(s) or to the distribution of bulletins are to assure cleanliness and neatness of the pew area, including the missals/songbooks at each pew.