

# *St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church*

## *Usher Guidelines*

As Jesus said to His disciples in Mark 10:45 “*For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as ransom for many*”.

Ushers are ministers of hospitality who are chosen to reflect the warmth and welcome of **Christ Himself**. Our expectations are the same within the Church as if you are welcoming guests and family into your own home. Ushers help to set the precedence to our church family and guests as they enter into our house of worship. Ushers assist, to their individual capacity, with courage and common sense, emergency situations as well as perform ordinary tasks with dignity and efficiency.

### **Our common tasks as an Usher at St. Francis De Sales are as followed:**

- The Liturgical Ministers Schedule is made far enough in advance that we ask everyone to show up for their assigned ministry. If you cannot make your assigned ministry **it is your responsibility to find your own replacement** and let the Captain know by passing the message through the church email [sfds@vci.net](mailto:sfds@vci.net). The Schedule can be found on the church website: <http://www.stfrancisdesalespaducah.org> > Bulletins > Liturgical Ministry Schedule.
- You cannot redo a first impression, so *make your first impression to our guests and family one to remember*. Be kind and courteous as well as respectful towards our guests and family needs. Greet them with a smile and a friendly “Hello, how are you doing today?” or just something as simple as “Welcome”.
- Ministers of Hospitality should be **dressed in a way that expresses the respect and dignity proper to the ministry** they are serving. No flip flops, shorts, or jeans are permitted.
- **Arrive at the Church 30 minutes before Mass begins**. We realize this may be early, but you cannot greet our guests if your show up after they do. Check in with your Usher Captain and sign-in to check for any special changes to Mass (eg. 2<sup>nd</sup> collection, etc.). There are 2 Ushers assigned to each of the 4 doors - one Usher opens the outer set of doors the other opens the inner set of doors. **The doors to the church should NOT be propped open at any time.**
- The Usher Captain is to make sure the candles on the altar and by the ambo are lit **15 minutes prior** to Mass beginning. Feel free to ask an altar server to do this if they are capable (if the candles are new, they will have to be taller).
- At this time (15 minutes prior to Mass) all replacements need to be found. If an Usher Captain sees that an Usher has not shown up for their assigned Mass, a replacement will be assigned and an Usher shall be counted as absent from the assigned ministry for that week. Be sure you are in contact with your assign Usher Captain if you are going to be late. **Again, it is YOUR responsibility to find your own replacement.**

- Ushers are to assist in seating all of our guests, when needed. When people arrive late they may be hesitant about walking around to find a seat for their family. This causes more of a distraction to those trying to engage in worship. **When you see this, please take initiative to help them find a seat.**

### Order of Mass:

- During Mass, there should be at least 2 Ushers seated in the back of the church to keep watch for special needs or emergency situations.
- If you see someone who needs Communion brought to them but is not sitting in the very front, please inform the Eucharistic Ministers of this special need.
- **Directly after the Homily**, the assigned Usher Captain will go notify the Children's Liturgy Catechist of the time so they can conclude and come back into the Church.
- During the Profession of Faith (Creed), **ALL 8 USHERS** should start to line up for the collection. After the music has begun, you will start down the aisle at the same time and walk all the way to the front pew of your section. Then **all bow at the same time** before beginning to take up collection.
  - **Collection of Offering**
    - All 8 Ushers are to pass the collection baskets, 2 baskets for each section.
    - The baskets should be passed in front of everyone within that section so the other Usher will get the basket and start to pass it down the next pew. If the person does not take the basket, you should politely ask them to pass it to the person next to them. However, if there is only one person in that row, there is no need to have them pass the basket to the opposite Usher - simply offer it to them.
    - **The Collection is the ONLY time an Usher can handle money or offering envelopes.** If someone asks you to place their offering in the collection at any other time please ask them to mail it to the church office. **Do NOT put yourself in a situation where you are alone with someone else's offering, regardless of the circumstance or familiarity.**
- It is the responsibility of all Ushers to see that the gifts of bread, wine, food, and money are brought to the altar by the assigned gift bearer(s) or the Ushers themselves. If no food is in the basket, there is no need to take it to the altar. Line up in the back of the Church and wait until Father stands up and starts walking to receive the gifts. Those bringing the food and money should walk with the bread and wine to the front of the Church. Once at the front, walk up into the Sanctuary and **place the basket(s) BEHIND THE AMBO, AGAINST THE WALL**, out of the way so that no one has the possibility of tripping over them. *During special Masses and seasons when decorations may interfere, you may place them just **inside the doorway of the Chapel, to the left** - again out of the way.*
- **Guiding the Communion Line**
  - Directly after you give the sign of peace, the 4 Ushers assigned to Guide the Communion line are to mimic the movements of the Eucharistic Ministers: **when they line up approach the altar, the Ushers need to be in place in the back of the church.**

- **2 Ushers** are assigned to **guide the center aisle**
  - **The other 2 Ushers** are against the **outside walls** to **guide the outside pews.**
- When the Eucharistic Ministers start to walk up to the altar, the 4 Ushers walk to the front pew of their section and you begin to wait until the Minister of the Precious Body is in front of them. At this time you begin to lead the front pew out to allow them to take part in receiving Communion. After each pew has emptied, you step back allowing the next pew out. When you are at the end of your section, you may then get in line to receive Communion or a blessing yourself.
- **At the End of Mass**
  - Ushers are to pass out our weekly bulletins to our family and guests after Mass has been dismissed. So all 8 Ushers, **before the last song**, are to gather a stack of bulletins and **go back to the doors they are assigned**. We offer **each family** a bulletin for them to read over at their own convenience. If someone or their family feels the need to leave before you have opened the doors, politely offer them a bulletin and let them leave. **The doors are not to be opened until after the closing song has started and should NOT be propped open at any time.**
  - Both Ushers should stand holding both of the inside doors open while our guests are leaving, offering each guest and family a bulletin and giving them a salutation such as “Have a great night” or “See you next week”.
  - After the majority has left the church, one of the 2 Ushers are to take all remaining bulletins and pass them to those remaining in the Church, visiting.
  - The other Usher begins to go through their section making sure trash is picked up and thrown away, kneelers are put back up, hymnals are in their place and none are missing, etc. **Always strive to leave it better than you found it.** This way the next Mass’ Ushers do not have anything to clean up before the guests or family arrives for worship.

### Special Notes:

- The food basket must be taken and emptied onto the black cart in the supply Sacristy off the Sanctuary. Replace the basket back behind the last pew by the votive candle niche.
- Place the chain back across the back pew to reserve it for the Ushers at the next Mass.
- The lighting of the candles shall be done by the altar servers. However, when a server is not present, the Usher Captain is responsible for this task. Any youth whom you think can be responsible with this task can be asked to do this. The same youth, or a different one, can also be responsible for putting them out after Mass.
- **The Usher Captain should remain in the back of the Church during the administering of the Eucharist, paying special attention to the Eucharistic Ministers.** If assistance is needed, the Eucharistic Ministers should simply raise their hand to show they need your help.

- The Usher Captain, **before Mass**, should prepare the money bag for the collection to avoid delay during Mass. After Mass, the Captain is to take the money back **WITH an authorized staff member** of the Church and lock it up. **Again, do NOT ever put yourself in a situation where you are alone with the offering.**
- If you should need to call 911 you can use the phone in the parish hall kitchen if a cell phone is not available. You must dial 9-911. Tell them the situation and they need to come to the 6<sup>th</sup> Street and Kentucky parking lot, behind the church, and come in the doors at the top of the ramp.
- There are 4 fire extinguishers located inside the church.
  1. In the supply Sacristy, off the Sanctuary.
  2. At the side entrance where the ramp is located.
  - 3&4. In the front vestibule of the Church at either end.
- The first aid kit is in the vesting Sacristy, next to the confessional. It is in the bottom left drawer.
- The defibrillator should **only be used by those that have been trained** to use this instrument in case of emergency.
- Be sure that your attire reflects the dignity of the ministry you are undertaking. Refrain from wearing anything that would be more likely to distract your fellow worshipers from what they came to do.
- Remember to always be warm and inviting to all that have chosen to come to our House of Worship.

Thank you for volunteering to become a Minister of Hospitality! Your service does not go unrecognized and is always greatly appreciated by all. We receive many notes from visitors regarding our warm and welcoming environment and you are a crucial part of that as the first person they encounter!