

Things you can expect from the parish:

- Timely schedules stating when you will be expected to serve.
- Identification either through dress or name tags large enough to be noticed in an emergency
- Opportunities for formation and training for your duties

Ministry of Hospitality

Ushers and Greeters



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Secretariat for Worship and Liturgical Formation
Diocese of Gaylord

Prayer for Ushers and Greeters

Heavenly Father, we thank you for those who have been called to the ministry of welcoming people into the worship of our church. May each minister enter into this time of service with sincere devotion and great joy and a clear appreciation of the importance of the task. May the Holy Spirit guide us in our ministry of hospitality. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

On-going formation in order to carry out these responsibilities is very important. The formation should not only include education to develop skills, but also formation that encourages spiritual growth. Formation should include the following: *(Note: It is the responsibility of the parish to provide avenues for acquiring this training)*

- Understanding the structure and meaning of Mass. This would include an understanding that people should not be seated during the readings, homily, or during times of prayer and why.
- Understanding the importance of symbol and ritual in Catholic Worship.
- Deepening reverence for the presence of Christ within the community.
- Deepening personal prayer, especially praying with the Sunday readings and the prayers of the Mass.
- Scripture study to foster a greater love for God's word.
- Parish gatherings for prayer, reflection and fellowship on a regular basis.

More immediate preparation and directives for ushers and greeters would include:

- Arriving well in advance for the liturgy and to check for any changes or special instructions.
- Making sure that everything needed for Mass is ready and in place. (collection baskets, bulletins, handouts, etc.)
- Dressing in a way that reflects the importance and dignity of this ministry while being able to be easily found if needed in an emergency.
- Notifying someone in authority if you cannot serve or arrange for a substitute.
- Direct the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to those who cannot walk in procession for Communion.

Responsibilities of Ministers of Hospitality may include:

- Becoming familiar with the operation of the physical plant
 - Knowing how to respond to emergency situations (including medical, weather-related, & extraneous disruptions of the Liturgy)
 - Greeting and seating people and distributing worship aids if used. Remember that everyone is to be greeted, especially newcomers. It is also best to seat people from the front to the back of the church. The importance of sitting together as a community enhances worship.
 - Selecting people to carry the gifts of bread and wine to the altar may be expected of you. Because they represent the Church gathered in prayer, these people should be known as active parishioners unless otherwise instructed.
 - Gathering the collection, paying attention to if this may be a time of the year a second collection may be taken up and when that one is the second collection is to take place.
 - Be aware of any other rites being celebrated at Mass that may change the time for the collection or make a difference at other times during Mass.
- Handing out bulletins at the conclusion of a Sunday Mass.
- Singing, praying and attentive listening along with the assembly.
 - Being ready to assist the assembly, especially those with special needs including during the distribution of Holy Communion. Once the Communion line begins, it is best **not** to dismiss people row-by-row for Communion.
 - Carrying out all of their duties with confidence and dignity.

“Through Baptism we put on Christ and become members of his Body. We are initiated into the Christian community and called to a holiness of life in the world befitting disciples of Jesus. But through all three Sacraments of Initiation we are called to something more: to embrace Christ’s mission of salvation.

Baptism initiates all into the one priesthood of Christ, giving each of the baptized, in different ways, a share in his priestly, prophetic, and kingly work. And so every one of the baptized, confirmed in faith through the gifts of God’s Spirit according to his or her calling, is incorporated into the fullness of Christ’s mission to celebrate, proclaim and serve the reign of God.”

(Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord, USCCB, 2005)

Dear Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord,

As Bishop of the Diocese of Gaylord, I take this opportunity to thank you for fulfilling a much needed liturgical role for your faith community. It is a blessing for me to be able to work side-by-side with liturgical ministers who so generously desire to serve the Lord and His people.

I encourage you to continue growing in your formation and your knowledge of the Eucharist. Participate in every opportunity presented to deepen your understanding of the ministry to which you have been called. Search out the avenues that will lead you even closer to the Lord through the Eucharist.

As you collaborate with the Church’s ordained ministers, may you be energized each and every time you gather in community and may you effectively reach out to those who thirst for the living God. Know that you will be in my prayers as you serve the Church and that you can count on my blessings always.

I whole-heartedly believe that the entire Diocese of Gaylord is enriched by your service as a liturgical minister. May Christ, the Bread of Life and the Cup of Eternal Salvation, reward you for your dedicated service.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Most Rev. Bernard A. Hebda
Bishop of Gaylord

Theology of Lay Liturgical Ministry

“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his won, so that you may announce the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” (1 Peter 2:9)

All liturgical ministers are, first and foremost, members of the Body of Christ. Through their baptism they are the “holy people and royal priesthood whose right and privilege it is to participate in the ministry of Christ. How the lay faithful exercise this ministry in the world varies, but the fullest and more fundamental expression of it has always been “conscious, active and fruitful participation in the mystery of the Eucharist”. (General Instruction of the Roman Missal, Introduction #5)

The celebration of the Eucharist is the “action of the whole Church” (GIRM, Introduction #5). The faithful, moreover should not refuse to serve the People of God gladly whenever they are asked to perform some particular ministry or function in the celebration” (GIRM # 97). Some of the faithful are called to serve God’s people in a more particular way through one of the many liturgical ministries that have flourished in the Church since the Second Vatican Council.

This handbook has been prepared to help you grow in a deeper understanding and love the liturgy, your ministry and ultimately the Lord whom we all serve.

Guidelines for Ushers and Greeters

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.

(General Instructions of the Roman Missal #105).

Ministers of hospitality, including ushers and greeters, serve the assembly and assist in prayer. They do this above all by recognizing, welcoming and caring for each member of the assembly as if that person were Christ. They tend to the needs of the people of God and make them feel comfortable as they gather for worship each Sunday.

Much is expected of ushers and greeters. They have chosen to serve God’s people with generosity and greet them with great kindness and joy.

One of the expectations is that these ministers will participate in some form of training and formation because their responsibilities are varied and many according to the guidelines set forth by their parish and/or cluster of parishes.