

St. Matthew Catholic Church

## Guidelines for Ushers

### To Find Out When Your Are Scheduled:

- Check the Ministry Schedule to find out when you are scheduled. You can either pick up a copy of the schedule for the entire 3-month period (Jan-Mar, Apr-June, Jul-Sept, Oct-Dec) when you come to church (the schedules can be found in the cabinet next to the Information Center in the vestibule of church in the drawer labeled “MINISTRY SCHEDULES”), or you can go online to the parish website ([www.saintmatthews.org](http://www.saintmatthews.org)) where you will find a link that will take you to the schedule, which you can print at home if you so desire. If we have your email address (send your email address to Bob Broxterman at [rjbrox@saintmatthews.org](mailto:rjbrox@saintmatthews.org)), we will also email you an individualized copy of your schedule, giving you just the dates and times when you are scheduled. Also, on a weekly basis, a volunteer from the parish will call to remind you that you are scheduled on the upcoming weekend.
- If for some reason you are not able to minister at a particular time when you are scheduled, it is your responsibility to find a replacement. Check with other ministers on the schedule and see if perhaps they would be willing to take your place or trade times with you. Phone numbers can be found in the parish directory.

### Before Mass:

- Arrive at least 20 minutes prior to the start of Mass.
- Check-off your name from the sign in sheet at the Information Center.
- Put on an Usher badge, found in the basket at the Information Center or in the closet to the north side of the main doors into church.
- Check in with the head usher for any special instructions, if needed.
- Check for notes at the Information Center. If there are any baptisms make sure enough pews have been reserved in the appropriate sections.
- Unlock all church doors (5:00 pm Mass and 8:00 am Mass; doors should already be unlocked for 10:30 am Mass). This includes the north and south doors of the Gathering Space and the east doors (by the preschool playground) that lead out to the east parking lot. In the Gathering Space, there is an automatic door on the north and the south. Be sure to turn “on” the opening device, using the toggle switch located on the inside door frame. The hex key for locking and unlocking the doors can be found hanging in the janitor’s closet located in the Gathering Spcae (between the restrooms). ***All exterior doors are to remain unlocked during Mass; do not lock them until after Mass concludes and the congregation has exited.***
- Make sure all four (4) wooden doors are propped open. These should remain propped open during Mass.
- Make sure the glass doors going into church are kept closed, except as Fr. and the entrance procession enter the church.
- Make sure an usher is positioned at each missalette/songbook distribution station to hand out hymnals. Encourage everyone to take a book, even if they are hesitant.
- Greet everyone, as this is an important part of your ministry. Ushers are *ministers of hospitality*, as are the greeters. No community can be too welcoming.
- If Mass is crowded and people are standing, please assist them in finding a seat, even after Mass has begun.

### During Mass:

- Once the celebrant and the entrance procession have entered the worship space, make sure the interior doors are closed and the main wooden doors between the church and the gathering space remain open.
- Once the congregation has been seated to listen to the readings, do not seat anyone as this can cause quite a distraction and people’s attention should be on listening to the Word of God. Up until that time however, it is permissible to seat people.
- Seat yourselves in the reserved chairs in the back, at the end of each aisle. If these seats are needed for the congregation, it may be necessary for you to sacrifice your chair so as to allow someone else to have a seat.

- After the General Intercessions have concluded and the congregation is seated, begin passing the collection baskets. Distribute them starting at the front and working to the back. Help move the baskets between pews. Don't forget to take the basket to the Cry Room and to pass it among the people seated in the chairs around the back of church. When the baskets reach the back of church, consolidate the collection into one large basket.
- If the gift bearers are not present, or if they need additional help, bring the gifts forward and present them to the celebrant. The basket with the collection is placed inside the children's collection basket, and both baskets are placed on the short railing next to the Book Shrine.
- When it's time for communion, after the Ministers of Holy Communion go up into the sanctuary to receive communion, wait for the head-usher's signal and all the ushers proceed down the aisles at the same time.
- Ushers receive communion last.
- If anyone needs the Eucharist brought to them, tell the Minister of Holy Communion when you approach them for communion, and then accompany them to where the person is seated.

### **After Communion:**

- Once the congregation stands for the closing prayers after Communion, open the inside doors.
- Pick up bulletins for distribution and make sure all the exits have someone positioned to distribute bulletins to the people as they exit the church.
- Do not open doors until the congregation stands for the closing prayer.

### **After Mass:**

- Stand at all of the church exits and distribute bulletins as people are leaving.
- If people are still in church conversing after Mass, please go around and offer them bulletins as well.
- Leave a stack of bulletins on the radiator in the front vestibule in case someone did not get one and wishes to pick one up before they leave. However, when the ushers for the next Mass arrive, they are to put those bulletins back in the closet so that people aren't able to pick one up before Mass.
- Two ushers who are not related (*no married couples, relatives, etc.*) take the collection to the room behind the sanctuary and working together, place the collection in one of the locked bags and then drop the bag in the locked overhead cabinet that has the deposit slot in it. Those two ushers must then sign the log sheet that is hanging next to the collection cabinet, verifying that they were the ones to bring the collection back after Mass and that they were the ones who put it in the bag(s) and deposited them in the cabinet. **SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING THE CHILDREN'S COLLECTION:** We want to keep the children's collection separate from the rest of the collection, so before you place the collection in the locked bag, first put all of the children's collection in one of the zip lock bags (provided) and then ***place the zip lock bag in the locked bag along with the rest of the collection.***
- For special Collections (holidays, etc.) the same rules apply for having two unrelated ushers take the collection back behind the altar and bagging it up, but there are **tamper proof security bags** (located in the same drawer as the locking bags) to use instead of using the regular locking bags. Use one of these bags for the special collection. On the outside of the bag write the date and Mass time, and after you have placed all of the collection in the bag, seal it and deposit it in the locked cabinet. If the collection will not fit in one bag, use two if necessary (but try to get it all in one bag if possible). Sign the log sheet just as you do for the regular collection.
- Go through the church and pick up any trash or hymnals that have been left in the pews.
- After the 10:30 am Mass, make sure that bulletins are placed in the outside bin that hangs next to the front-south door, and a stack of bulletins is placed on the radiator just outside the Usher's closet.
- Once everyone has left the church, turn off lights (main body of church, bathrooms, cry room, hallways, etc.). **Don't rush people or make them feel like they're being kicked out by turning out the lights while they're still in church.** Church is a welcoming place, and people should feel comfortable enough to stick around afterwards.
- Following the 5:00 pm and 10:30 am Masses, lock all exterior doors plus the wood main entry doors going out into the Gathering Space when the majority of people have left the building. Make sure to turn "off" the automatic door openers by using the toggle switches located on the inside door frames. (*if the doors are locked but the opener is left in the "on" position, if someone tries to use the opener it will burn up the motor*)
  - Make sure keys are returned to the janitor's closet.