

**ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH**

**LIFE TEEN  
MASS  
USHER  
HANDBOOK**



**LIFE TEEN**

Leading Teens Closer to Christ

Revised 8/14/23

## **Ministry Overview**

The Ministry of Ushers is one of the vitally important Liturgical Ministries to our parishioners and guests. It is clearly a ministry to the people who assemble each weekend to worship, pray, and celebrate the Eucharist.

The Usher Ministry is more than a volunteer opportunity; it is a commitment. Members are expected give their best effort and to comply with the guidelines in this handbook.

The execution of this ministry accompanied by warm smiles helps set the spiritual tone for our parishioners and guests at Mass. Your efforts in seating people, taking the collection, and guidance during communion, if done well, will likely go unnoticed, as it should be. Your welcoming spirit and genuine offers to help will be noticed.

Ushers may be the first and last face guests and parishioners see. These people may not remember your name or what you said, but they will certainly remember the way you made them feel. Each encounter should be representative of the Parish's Mission Statement; Love God, Love Others, Make Disciples.

## **Dress Code**

All members are encouraged to wear pants or jeans. If you wear shorts, dresses or skirts they must be longer than your fingertips. Wearing a polo shirt is preferred, but a nice T-shirt is accepted if the imprint is appropriate for Mass. No spaghetti straps. Dress modestly.

## **What time should Ushers arrive at Mass?**

Ushers should arrive at Mass no later than 4:30pm (arriving at Mass allows Lead Ushers to assign spots and makes for a smooth transition into the beginning of Mass). If the Lead Ushers desire to have a meeting before Mass you will be informed the week prior. Having a meeting before Mass requires Ushers to arrive at Mass no later than 4:20pm.

## **Why and how we do what we do**

The primary focus of the Usher Ministry is hospitality.

Why be hospitable?

- a. Because it is an act of love toward others,
- b. Because it is one of the most important ways in which we can accomplish the work Jesus gave us to do --- bring others to know the love we have found in Him,
- c. People will choose other churches if we are not our best when they visit.

How we can be hospitable:

- a. Attitude: inviting & attractive.
- b. Make all guests feel like they belong here.

## **Mass Instructions**

Upon arrival, Ushers should check in and then report to the

Lead Ushers. Lead Ushers should check the sign-in area for special instructions from the Priests or Deacons, including, but not limited to the following:

1. Distribution and/or collection of envelopes for special collections, e.g. Mothers/Father's Day novenas, DSA (Bishop's Appeal), Christmas/Easter flowers, and the like.
2. Distribution of special programs. Ushers may do this in conjunction with Greeter ministers assigned to their Mass.

Lead Ushers should be sure that baskets and bags are in place for the Mass.

### **Greeting - "Hi. Welcome to St. Peter"**

Ushers are a part of the Welcome Team at St. Peter. At least one usher should be positioned at each entrance greeting people and passing out literature or special envelopes as assigned. Please note that bulletins should not be in the racks. Bulletins are not handed out until the end of Mass.

Ushers should make visitors and guests especially welcome, noting available seating, and recognizing special needs (handicapped, small children, etc.)

### **Seating**

One usher should remain at each entrance.

Seating can occur as follows:

Before the Opening Prayer.

After the Opening Prayer, but before the start of the first reading.

After the Gospel, but before the Homily begins.

Seating should not occur at the following times:

During the Responsorial Psalm.

During the readings, the Gospel, and the Homily.

During the Opening Prayer and the Prayer of the Faithful.

During the entire Eucharistic Prayer.

Please note that Mass *begins liturgically* when the Priest proclaims *“We begin (as always) in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit....”*

Ushers should attempt to use the last three or four rows for late arrivals.

### **Keeping a tally of each Mass**

In the cabinet, there are handheld clicker counters. During Mass Ushers have the responsibility of keeping a tally of how many people are at each Mass. It's easier to do this when everyone is seated. (And yes this includes children, Life Teen Band, and Liturgical Ministers)

Lead Ushers or designees will do the counting. The Church is divided in half for the counting. This should be done when the Priest or Deacon is giving their homily. This portion of the Mass is when the parishioners are seated the longest.

Now please keep in mind that this is not an exact science. If you miss someone you don't have to start over.

Lead Ushers will add up the numbers from each counter and put that number in the *“Sunday Mass Attendance Report”* book for each Mass. Then hit the reset button and hang the clickers back up in the cabinet so they are there for the next Mass.

Just a side note we need to make sure that these clickers DO NOT beep. This can be accomplished by holding down the tally button for ten seconds. For the models that we have it's the large black button.

## **Offertory**

One of the Lead Ushers should take out the appropriate collection bags for that Mass and distribute sufficient baskets to handle the collection.

Ushers should familiarize themselves with the collection flow and procedures prior to Mass and be aware of any changes occurring. These changes will generally be in the form of a notice near the sign-in sheets.

Ushers may be assigned a position or may take a regular assignment position for collection. The Lead Usher or Adult Leader should take responsibility for managing the collection bag(s) during the emptying process. That usher should also cue the people selected to carry the gifts to the Priest as he leaves the Altar to receive those gifts. Second collections begin once the first collection is completed.

### **Collection procedure specifics:**

After the profession of faith and before the Stewardship Prayer all ushers should be at their designated position.

After the Stewardship prayer, the ushers walk forward to the front of the church.

One or two ushers will go down the middle/center aisle and stop at the first pew, pause until Father has completed the Offertory Prayer; when he says Amen, bow and begin passing the basket. (Your section is only 5 rows)

The usher on the left side of the middle aisle will turn left in front of the first pew, go to the end of the pew and start collecting. The second usher will go right, go to the end of the pew and start collecting. If there is only one center aisle usher, then he/she will do both tasks.

One usher will take two baskets to the far right aisle and stop at the first pew, pause until Father has completed the Offertory Prayer; when he says Amen, bow and begin passing the basket.

One usher takes two baskets to the front of the 'cul-de-sac' on the right side, pause until Father has completed the Offertory Prayer; when he says Amen, bow and begin passing the basket.

One usher takes two baskets to the front of the 'cul-de-sac' on the left side, pause until Father has completed the Offertory Prayer; when he says Amen, bow and begin passing the basket.

One usher takes one basket to the choir side area, pause until Father has completed the Offertory Prayer; when he says Amen, bow and begin passing the basket.

If there is an extra usher, they can collect the offertories from the right side cry room. Otherwise, either the right side 'cul-de-sac' usher or the usher from the right middle aisle can collect the offertories from the cry room.

### **Transfer**

Collection, bagging, and initial security of the offertory is a critical responsibility of the entire usher staff.

All ushers will transfer the contents of their baskets into a secure lock collection bag(s). This process will be conducted around the baptismal font area.

Lead Ushers / Adult Leader are responsible to lock the bags and taking the collection bag(s) to the wall drop and ensuring that they have been properly deposited in the drop. The process is repeated for the second collection if one is scheduled. At no time should the collection bag(s) containing the offertory be left unattended.

## **Holy Communion**

Ushers should take their assigned positions once the EOMHC's have received Holy Communion on the Altar. Ushers should maintain an orderly flow out of the rows into the Communion line. Ushers should receive Holy Communion last.

One (or two) ushers will go down the middle/center aisle and direct parishioners to the Priest and Deacon.

The usher in the right 'cul-de-sac' will direct parishioners to the middle aisle. Upon completion of the right 'cul-de-sac' in all Masses, the usher in the right 'cul-de-sac' is responsible for escorting the parishioners from the 'cry room' to the center aisle, the parishioners from the 'cry room' will be the last parishioners to receive communion, followed by all the ushers.

The usher in the left 'cul-de-sac' will direct parishioners to the middle aisle.

Ushers should discourage parishioners from taking unconsumed Hosts from the Church. Incidents of this nature should be reported to the Youth Minister, Priest or Deacon.

1. **When an usher is informed, prior to Holy Communion, that a disabled person needs Communion brought to him/her, the following process should be followed:**
  - When Communion starts, the usher needs to leave his/her usual post, go near the pews in front of the Choir section (by the bell table), and wait until the EM is finished administering Holy Communion to the band. There may be more than one usher waiting.

Once that EM has finished that location and moved



near the main aisle, it's too late to ask them. You need to ask before they move locations.

- At that time, the usher is to tell the EM that he has a disabled person in the pews in need of Holy Communion, and the usher then takes the EM to the disabled person.
- Note: At times, there could be one or more in need and one or more ushers involved. Ushers should organize between themselves to prevent the EM from backtracking.

2. **When an usher is informed, after the choir EM has proceeded to the center aisle, that a disabled person needs Communion brought to him/her, the following process should be followed:**

- The usher is to tell the disabled person that he/she will have to wait till the Mass ends, and the usher will bring a Deacon to him/her with Holy Communion.
- If the disabled person agrees to this, then after Mass the usher should find the Deacon, explain the situation, and take him to the disabled person to receive.
- If the disabled person does not wait, then that is their choice to not receive.

**THE REASON IS SIMPLY THE MASS CANNOT BE HELD UP DUE TO AN EM BEING CALLED TO THE BACK OF THE CHURCH FOR A SECOND TIME. JUST POLITELY TELL THE DISABLED PERSON TO LET AN USHER KNOW THEIR SITUATION BEFORE MASS, AND THE USHER WILL GLADLY HAVE THE EM BRING THEM HOLY COMMUNION AT THE SCHEDULED TIME.**

### **End of Mass duties when no Greeters include:**

Ushers should remain at their station until after the Priest, Deacon and Altar Servers have gotten to the back of the Church. If there are no Greeters, then the entrance station Ushers need to assist with passing out bulletins or other information as directed.

Wishing those leaving a good day.

### **Special Situations**

Report clean-up requirements such as water/liquid spills, vomiting, restroom situations, etc. to the Youth Minister or Adult Leader.

Emergencies such as a serious unexpected illness or a fall should be reported to the Youth Minister or adult leader who will call 911.

Handicapped/wheelchair requirements require individual judgment and sensitivity, especially during entry and exit seating. Making sure the disabled are accommodated without disruption to the Mass.

Attempt to divert crying children to the cry room.

Cell phones are to be turned off during Mass. Attempt to identify violators, especially repeat offenders, and speak to them privately asking that they turn off their phones while in Mass for the courtesy of others and in respect to God and the Eucharist.

Talking and disruptive behavior is not to be tolerated during Mass. Please quietly ask such parties to cease and desist. If the disruptive behavior continues, use prudent judgment in terms of inviting the party to leave.

## **Scheduling of Ushers**

Our objective is to have twelve ushers at each Mass. Eight ushers to pass offertory baskets along with monitoring stations, three are permanently stationed at the entrances and the 2 Lead Ushers.

To sign up we use the following link.

<https://signup.com/go/BTezFqbggnup.com>

If you are scheduled, and for some reason cannot serve on your scheduled day, please text the Youth Minister.

## **Responsibility of the Entrance Ushers**

The School side & Music side entrances have permanent Ushers. Along with the Lead Ushers they are issued earpieces. These are to be used to communicate with the Youth Minister who is stationed at the front door with special situations.

## **Responsibility of the Lead Ushers**

We have Lead Ushers for the Life Teen Mass. Their responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

Check that the wall safe deposit vault is open. If it is locked please ask either the Youth Minister or Deacon to unlock it.

Lead Ushers should arrive at 4:30pm.

Check the sign-in area for any special instructions and be prepared to instruct your team of any changes.

Ensure that the collection baskets and bags are in place.

Gather the walkie talkies for those Ushers issued one. Make certain there is a sound check once everyone is

connected. After Mass put the walkie talkies back in the chargers.

Hold ushers accountable for participation and Attendance, mentor, encourage, and train ushers assigned to your Mass.

Directing ushers to their locations for offertory and Holy Communion.

Assign a sub to assist with the tally when the other Lead Usher is absent.

### **Security**

The Youth Minister or Lead Usher will lock the side entrance doors at the Gloria and the front doors at the homily. If at any time an Usher sees or hears anything out of the ordinary, they are to inform the Youth Minister ASAP.

### **Special Masses & Event**

The Life Teen Mass Ushers serve at the weekly 5:00pm Mass on Sundays, the 11:00am Mass on Easter and the 6:30pm Mass on Christmas Eve. There may be other occasions where they may be asked to serve.

### **In Summary**

The Usher Ministry is one of the most visible Liturgical Ministries. It has a prominent role in the flow of the Mass and in the assistance provided to the congregation, the Priests and the Deacons. We encourage you to prayerfully approach your Ministry each Sunday.

The Youth Minister shall serve as the overall Team Leader for the Life Teen Mass. If there are any questions or issues, they should be reported ASAP.