

St Francis of Assisi Usher Ministry

Usher's Prayer:

“Lord, in your love you gather your people this day, help me to serve them in a Christ-like manner, even as Your Son, Jesus, served those who gathered about him. Make me prayerful, patient, helpful and understanding, and may I radiate the joy that faith brings as I serve their needs. Give me Your strength to support my fellow ministers. May all who assemble to celebrate our common faith in the risen savior be glad of heart for being here and for having encountered your son in one another, in our priest, at the tables of the book and the bread, and through the ministry of ushers like me. I ask this in Jesus’ name. Amen.” ~*Gregory F. Smith, O. Carm*

Theology, Spirituality, and Formation:

- You are the face of Christ, and you are receiving each guest as if he or she were Christ
- “*All guests who present themselves are to be welcomed as Christ, for he himself will say: I was a stranger and you welcomed me (Mt 25:35)*” (Rule of Saint Benedict)
- “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them” (Mt 18:20), so Christ is really present in the very liturgical assembly gathered in his name (GIRM 27)
- “We greet Christ in one another long before we receive him in the sacrament of Communion.” (GUG, pg 7)
- “Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me.” (Mt. 10:40)
- Discern Needs: “People are coming to church hungry for the bread of life and the cup of salvation. Nothing will feed them like the Eucharist. But something else happens before they begin to worship: You receive them. You sense their physical and spiritual needs.” (GUG, pg 19)
- “Remember that you come to church first to worship, and then to serve. In your ministry, you help others to worship too.” (GUG, pg 8) If this is the only Mass that you attend this weekend, it is very important you fully participate as much as possible in the Mass. “Your main task during the Liturgy of the Word is to listen. Your attention will give a good example to others . . . observe silence as much as possible and focus your attention on the word of God. In this way you show respect for God and for the people who are hearing the divine word.” (GUG, pg 10)
- “Read over the Sunday scripture readings before you come to church. Those arriving late may want your attention when the Word of God is being proclaimed. If you have spent time with the readings before coming to church, you will be more able to hear them proclaimed.” (GUG, pg 24)
- “The collection is not an intermission; it connects with the other sections of the Liturgy of the Eucharist. This collection has the practical purpose of helping financially support the parish, help those in need, etc. But it also has spiritual significance. In offering their gifts, people are offering themselves. The gifts of bread and wine will be transformed into the body and blood of Christ, and the people who share Communion will be transformed as well. For this reason, the collection of the gifts is a prelude to what people will do during the Eucharistic Prayer. When the ushers gather the collection and arrange for it to be brought forward, they are helping people make their sacrifice and get ready to receive the Body and Blood of Christ. The impact of the offering extends beyond Mass to the work of the Church in the world” (GUG, pgs 11 & 12)
- Concluding Rites: “You are helping people make the transition from worship into service. You send them forth renewed in Christ, looking for ways to bring Christ to the waiting world. The bulletins you give them signify their mission. They are not just leaving the building; they are entering the world. A church could fittingly hang this sign over the exit: ‘Service Entrance.’ You help people take the Gospel with them.” (GUG, pg 13)
- “When you take an active role in parish life, you will be better informed about your church; able to promote activities to fellow parishioners, and you will be a better model for others who come to worship.” (GUG, pg 21)
- “Like all of the other liturgical ministers, part of your ministry is a ministry of example for those people who come to Mass unsure about what to do. Participate fully and consciously in the liturgy. Review how to receive Communion. Be a model of reverent behavior for the assembly.” (GUG, pgs 31 & 32)

Before you leave the house:

- ❑ Dress appropriately – men must wear a shirt, tie, slacks and jacket, no shorts. Women should wear a dress, pantsuit, or blouse and skirt. No halter-tops, jeans, short-skirts, flip-flops, or spaghetti straps
- ❑ Plan on arriving at least 20 minutes before Mass begins
- ❑ If you brought your nametag home, please remember to bring it. You should always leave your nametag in the drawers in the Minster Sacristy. It is also used as part of the Safe Environment Clearance program and if you are not cleared, your badge will be removed. If lost, there is a replacement fee of \$10.00.
- ❑ If you are unable to serve, arrange for a replacement ahead of time. You may request a sub directly through the MSP scheduling system.

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When you arrive:

- ❑ Sign in a minimum of 20 minutes before scheduled liturgy
- ❑ Check Church & straighten / clean up as necessary
- ❑ Head Usher will assign sections of responsibility (i.e. North, Center North, Center South or South-see diagram on pg 7)
- ❑ Work with Mass coordinator(s) to:
 - Choose a family to bring up the gifts at the appropriate time
 - Appropriate dress – Select a family that is wearing appropriate attire. They should not be wearing shorts or jeans.
 - Do your best to ensure that different families are chosen each week. It is not appropriate to have the same family bringing up the gifts weekly.
 - Instruct them to proceed to the back of the church at the beginning of the Prayers of the Faithful (these are the petitions answered with “Lord, hear our prayer ...”)
 - Any special duties or changes to procedures required for the Mass (extra collections, handing out envelopes)

Pre-Mass:

- ❑ “Good ushers ... do not draw undue attention to themselves or limit their welcome to those they know.” (GUG, pg 10)
- ❑ Greet all parishioners with “Welcome,” “Good Morning,” “How are you”, “Nice to see you”, or other appropriate greeting.
- ❑ Fr. Rudy has asked that the ushers not block the doors where parishioners enter the nave of the church.
- ❑ Assist in seating of parishioners as required – fill front to back.
- ❑ Seat any handicapped parishioners in the pews that have “carve-outs” for wheel chairs and walkers. Place “reserved” signs on the back of the pew for the handicapped person and their family.
- ❑ Ensure food, drink, or gum is not taken into the Church (only exception is baby bottles)

Procession:

- ❑ Once the music director begins the Call to Worship, the center doors from the nave to the narthex should be closed. The two side doors may remain open until the first reading.
- ❑ Station two ushers at the center aisle to allow the Priest, Deacon and Alter Servers to process at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way down the aisle prior to allowing parishioners down the center aisle to seat themselves. Do not allow parishioners to cut through the procession.

Introductory Rites:

- ❑ Assist in seating of parishioners as required – at least one usher should remain in the back of the Church to direct parishioners to other ushers in Church. Please ask parishioners to slide down one way or another in order to get enough contiguous empty seats.
- ❑ Continue assisting with seating until the end of the Opening Prayer (Collect) – everyone will sit for the start of the Liturgy of the Word.

Liturgy of the Word:

- ❑ **We do not seat parishioners in the body of the Church during the readings (First Reading, Responsorial Psalm, Second Reading, and the Gospel).**
- ❑ Parishioners may seat themselves during the readings.
- ❑ Ushers can assist parishioners in being seated in between the readings, i.e. after the First Reading, and after the Second Reading.
- ❑ It is suggested that two Ushers remain in the entry area to hold late arriving parishioners back, while the other Ushers look for open seats in order to be ready to seat parishioners when the “seating window” comes.
- ❑ Once Gospel begins, we no longer assist with the seating of parishioners and you should proceed to the inside of the doors in the rear of the Church or along the outer walls based on your assigned area of responsibility and participate in the Mass from this point on

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Homily:

- ❑ Mass Headcount – It is crucial that **every person** seated in the pews as well as those standing in the back of the church, along the walls, the choir section and in the narthex be include in the headcount. Please be sure to conduct this count during the Homily. The count should not be held prior to this time because of the number of people that show up late and may not be counted. Please do not estimate. The count is important for not only determining how many hosts are needed for communion, but the count is also used by the diocese to make various decisions that impact our parish.
- ❑ Stay out of the Center aisles when taking the count – be as discrete as possible
- ❑ Enter final count on the sign-in sheet. Once you have the final count, give the count to the sacristan, who will be sitting in the last pew in front of the Gift Table. USHERS DO NOT ADJUST THE HOSTS. The sacristan is the ONLY person who should adjust the hosts.

Profession of Faith:

- ❑ Participate normally.

Post-Profession of Faith and Prayers of the Faithful:

- ❑ Presentation of the Gifts:
 - Up to three baskets each North, Center, and South sections
 - Start at back of assigned section and proceed up to front row together as a team to start the collection.
 - The baskets can either be dropped at designated points or all three carried to front.
 - If dropped off:
 - Drop the baskets at the designated pews per the attached illustration. Dropping the baskets will allow the usher to pick up the baskets on the opposite end of the pew.
 - All ushers should bow at the front row before dropping the last basket. After the Center ushers bow, they should cross in front of the altar to the side aisles and monitor the collection from there to avoid getting in the way of the family bringing up the gifts.
 - If all three baskets are carried to front:
 - Proceed to front row, bow, and then drop the first basket. Then to work with your three baskets by dropping a basket at every other row until reaching the back of the church. Center ushers will cross in front of the altar to the side aisles after dropping the first basket and drop baskets at every other row from the side aisle to avoid getting in the way of the family bringing up the gifts.
 - It is important the **Center ushers conduct the collection the same**. Either method is acceptable.
- ❑ Coordinate chosen family to present the Gifts – The gifts to be brought to the altar consist of the flagon and bowl paten. At least two people are needed to bring up the gifts. Children are not allowed to carry the flagon or bowl paten. Make sure the family you have selected has two adults. ***Under no circumstances should a child be allowed to carry the flagon or bowl paten!***
- ❑ The family should be sent up **immediately** as the ushers reach the first pew with the collection baskets. They **do not wait** for the priest to come down. The Church has a very long center aisle and the timing will be crucial that they start walking right away so that the priest does not have to wait.
- ❑ Instruct them to walk to Father, hand him the gifts. If the priest does not give a blessing, the family only bows before returning to their seats. If the priest blesses them, then the family makes the sign of the cross, without bowing and returns to their seats.
- ❑ Whomever finishes the collection first should collect from anyone who might be in the Narthex. If you have five or six ushers, these two ushers should begin collecting from anyone standing in the back of the church or those in the Narthex.
- ❑ Do not enter the sacristy with the collection until at least one other usher can join you.
- ❑ Place collection in marked bank bags and deposit in safe (minimum two ushers should be present as collection is deposited)
- ❑ Ushers should quickly consolidate the collection, deposit in the safe and return to the Church to continue to participate in the Mass. There should be minimal conversation in the sacristy.

Eucharistic Prayer:

- ❑ Proceed to the inside of the rear center section doors and continue to participate in the Mass

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Lord's Prayer:

- ❑ Remain at inside of the rear center section doors and continue to participate. Please do not hold hands during this prayer. (Holding hands for the Our Father is an accretion that has crept into some Catholic churches from the Protestant religions. It signifies communion, however within our faith, true communion comes through reception of the Eucharist as we become one Body of Christ.)

Sign of Peace:

- ❑ Offer Sign of Peace to neighboring usher & parishioners

Communion:

- ❑ Proceed to the front of the pews after the EM's go up onto the altar and have started to receive communion themselves.
- ❑ The Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion will sign in to specific spots to serve the parishioners. Two of the ministers will process to the Choir area where they will serve the Choir first. After the Choir is served, one usher will take these two ministers to serve the handicapped while walking *along the flow of traffic*.
- ❑ Start as soon as EM's reach their stations. Start from front and work towards back.
- ❑ As the row you are releasing for communion has started to exit the pew, move to the next pew and prepare them to exit. The priests have asked that we not allow large breaks in the line.
- ❑ Please take note of the EM positions on the attached illustration:
 - The Altar Servers will receive Communion from Father first. They will receive communion on the right side of the center row. The usher on this side will step back to allow them to go first prior to letting out the first pew.
 - Each of the four sections in the Church will have two bowls and two cups. Please make sure the flow of parishioners receiving Communion is directed to both ministers and then to the two Precious Blood ministers.
- ❑ Open side doors to allow any parishioners in the Narthex to receive.
- ❑ If a minister runs out of the Body or the Blood, they will go to the altar for additional Precious Blood or to the Tabernacle for additional Hosts and then return to their spot.
- ❑ Ushers receive last
- ❑ Spills – Assist EM's in preventing parishioners from walking through the spill – Take direction from the EM's since they are trained on the proper method for cleaning up spills. Do not attempt to clean up the spill yourself.
- ❑ Non-consumption of Hosts – If you notice someone with a Host in their hand, you should approach that person and politely, but firmly, ask them to please consume it. If the person doesn't want to, they should be asked to please give it back to you. An EM may also ask you assist with this situation. There should never be an altercation because of this, but it's important that the Body and Blood of our Lord be treated respectfully and not removed from the building except by someone in Homebound/Hospital ministry to be taken to the sick.

Post-Communion:

- ❑ Proceed to inside of the North, Center and South doors. Two at the North and South, the remaining at the West doors to the Narthex.
- ❑ Direct any parishioners who wish to leave before the procession out of the Church is complete.

Throughout Mass:

- ❑ Open doors as parishioners exit / enter Church to use restrooms, remove crying / fussy children.
- ❑ Answer parishioner's questions. Refer parishioners to bulletin, Parish Office, or newcomer / visitor table for questions you are unable to answer.
- ❑ When necessary to speak, do so in a soft / respectful manner
- ❑ Request anyone speaking loudly or carrying on a conversation in the narthex to keep their voices down if disruptive to the Mass
- ❑ Refrain from socializing
- ❑ If you observe a child who appears to be under the age of 10 years old going to the restroom on their own, send them back into the Church and request that they get a parent / guardian to escort them to the restroom. We have cards with the Safe Environment notification and contact information available on top of the tray with the badges.
- ❑ Be ready to assist with any emergencies and follow procedures outlined in the Minister Sacristy.

Recessional:

- ❑ Open center doors when procession is about half way down the center.

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End of Mass:

- ❑ Distribute bulletins only in the narthex. Do not place bulletins or hand out bulletins in any other space inside or outside of the Church.
- ❑ Wish parishioners farewell – “Have a nice day”, “Have a good week”, or other appropriate farewell – be sure as to not block the flow of traffic exiting the building
- ❑ Collect “second / special collection” from podiums & deposit in safe (two ushers minimum). There are zip-loc bags with blank labels on them in the cabinet in the sacristy & a pen attached to the counter top for you to write on the blank label what the collection was for & which Mass it’s from.

After Mass:

- ❑ Check pews and collect trash, excess bulletins, and left behind articles from floor, seats, and seat-backs
- ❑ Deliver any left behind articles to the sacristy to be placed in the lost and found in the office if not claimed by Monday.

Holidays, Special Masses, and Holy Days:

- ❑ Volunteers requested ahead of time
- ❑ Handled the same as weekend Masses
- ❑ Important to be on time & check with Mass Facilitator for any special duties or changes to procedures
- ❑ This is part of your duties – need to be prepared to commit to these extra services – at least two to three per usher per year

General Information:

- ❑ Clean up supplies are kept in the bottom shelf of the cabinet on the right side next to the bulletin board.
- ❑ Health emergency situations – There is a simple First Aid kit in the Sacristy for various emergencies. It contains sugar packets that can be administered to someone who has diabetes and states that they need something to eat or drink for low blood sugar. If you have an emergency, dial 911. If the parishioner is non responsive, begin CPR and have another usher get the AED (Automated External Defibrillator). Familiarize yourself with the location of the AED (In the main church it is located in the hallway near the Minister Sacristy). Follow instructions given by AED until paramedics arrive. There are detailed emergency instructions on the corkboard in the sacristy, along with a sample of the Injury/Incident report. There are blank incident reports in the red binder in the Ministers sacristy, which should be filled in to document the incident. Completed forms should be left in the sign-in book. Any time a form is filled out, Ginny Milich needs to be notified via email or a phone call to the office. Her contact information is in the bulletin.

Head Ushers:

- ❑ The Head Usher attends a particular Mass regularly and has the following responsibilities:
 - Arrive early – 25 to 30 minutes before Mass
 - Assign each usher a section of responsibility (i.e. North side, center left, center right, south side, floater/Narthex, floater/handicapped)
 - Recruit from congregation if short on the minimum number of ushers required
 - Check Church and work with other ushers to straighten / clean up as necessary
 - Make sure ushers are identifying the handicapped that need communion brought to their pew.
 - Work with the Mass coordinator to:
 - Make sure the sacristan has the Mass count. Ushers should never adjust the hosts themselves!
 - Choose a family to bring up the Gifts
 - Special duties/changes to procedures required for Mass and relaying to other ushers
 - Coordinate the closing of the main doors when the Call to Worship is being read
 - Ensure Mass Headcount is written on the appropriate space on the sign-in sheet
 - Coordinate the chosen family for the delivery of the offertory gifts
 - Coordinate getting ushers in position for offertory collection & proceeding up aisles in unison
 - Ensure collection money is deposited in the safe
 - Ensure ushers proceed back to their stations and proceed in unison to the front of their assigned s after the EM’s go up onto the altar for communion
 - Ensure ushers proceed to their stations after communion & open front doors after the procession at the end of Mass
 - Ensure that incident forms are filled out if they occur.
 - Coordinate the distribution of bulletins and the end of Mass
 - Coordinate the picking up & straightening of the Church after Mass

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Remember:

- ❑ You are the first person and the last person that visitors and members alike meet
- ❑ Part of your ministry is hospitality, greeting, and welcoming
- ❑ Read the usher prayer card prior to Mass
- ❑ Familiarize yourself with The Order Of Mass
- ❑ Set an example for the assembly by knowing and accurately performing the prescribed Posture & Gestures during Mass
- ❑ Consider reading the Mass readings BEFORE Mass – they are available on-line here → <http://www.usccb.org/nab/>
- ❑ You are in charge of the Assembly; if there are problems they will come and see you. If they have questions, they will ask you first. Because of your ministry during Mass, you are seen and easily recognized as an “Official” person, someone who is there to take care of the Assembly and make sure all is well with them.
- ❑ Be aware that the Priest is trying to prepare himself for Mass. Direct any problems or questions to the Mass Facilitator(s).

References:

- ❑ *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*: <http://www.usccb.org/liturgy/current/GIRM.pdf>
- ❑ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Bishops’ Committee on the Liturgy site:
 - The Worshiping Assembly at Mass: <http://www.usccb.org/liturgy/girm/bul1.shtml>
 - Ministries and Roles at Mass: <http://www.usccb.org/liturgy/girm/bul2.shtml>
 - Postures and Gestures at Mass: <http://www.usccb.org/liturgy/girm/bul3.shtml>
 - Hearing the Word of God at Mass: <http://www.usccb.org/liturgy/girm/bul4.shtml>
 - The Reception of Holy Communion at Mass: <http://www.usccb.org/liturgy/girm/bul5.shtml>
 - The Eucharistic Prayer: <http://www.usccb.org/liturgy/girm/bul6.shtml>
 - Questions & Answers: <http://www.usccb.org/liturgy/q&a/index.shtml>
- ❑ Catechism of the Catholic Church: <http://www.usccb.org/catechism/text/>
- ❑ The New American Bible: <http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/>
- ❑ Guide for Ushers and Greeters – Liturgy Training Publications (GUG)

Schedule, Distribution Lists, etc.:

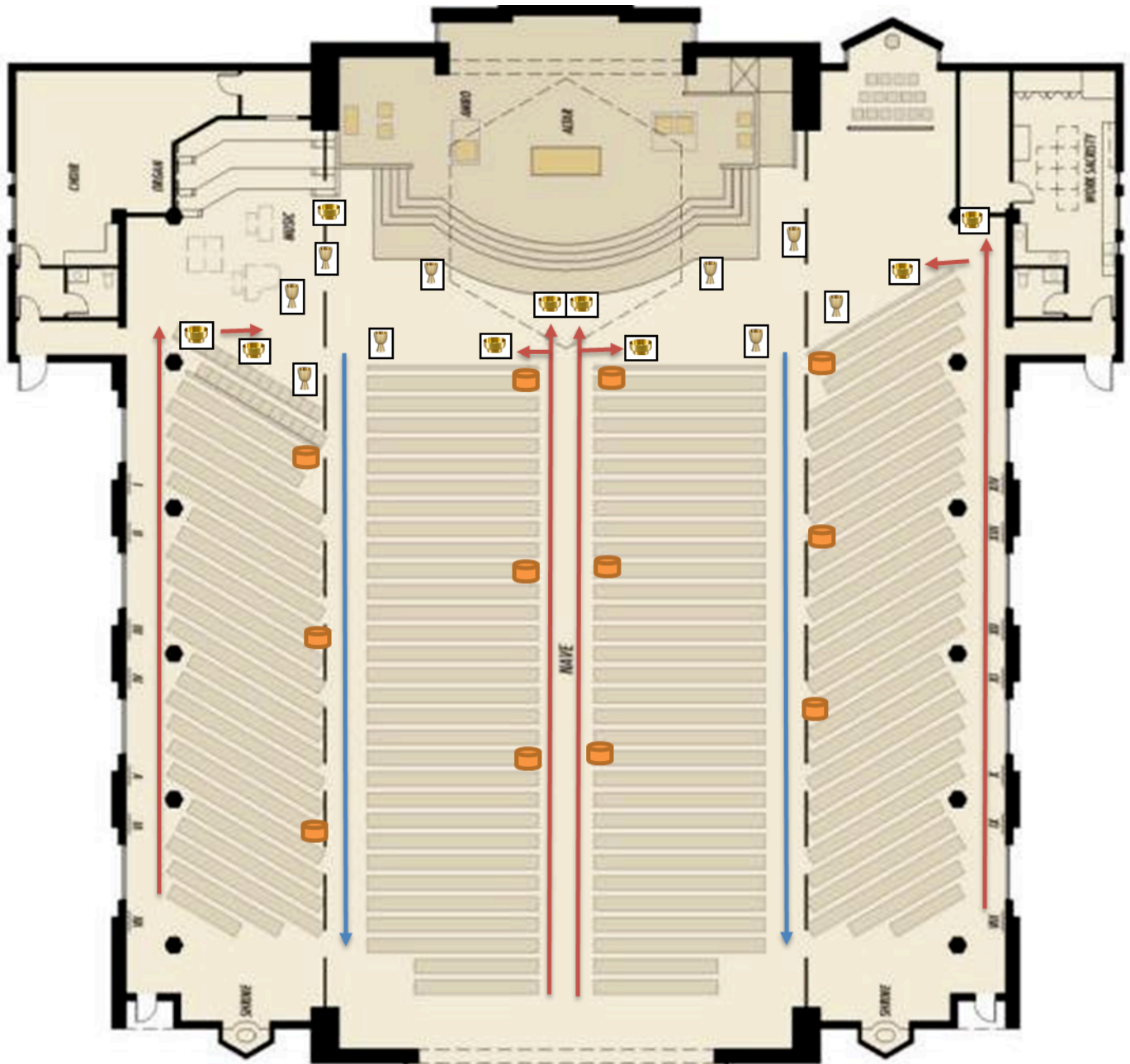
- ❑ The Liturgical Schedule is done on a quarterly basis. You will receive an e-mail from St. Francis of Assisi Frisco MSP Coordinator liliangallagher@clients.ministerschedulerpro.com when we are getting ready for the new schedule requesting your unavailability dates for the upcoming quarter – no response = you will be contacted for your availability
- ❑ You are responsible for requesting a substitute through the ministry scheduler pro software if you cannot serve when scheduled
- ❑ In case you misplace your schedule, it is also available through the MSP App or the MSP web page (https://secure.rotundasoftware.com/l/web-terminal/login/StFoA_Frisco)
- ❑ If your e-mail address changes, please update it in the scheduling software




Questions:

- ❑ Contact Usher Coordinator Brian Moen
 - Phone: 214-882-1881
 - e-mail: bmoen1@tx.rr.com

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Church diagram:



-  Cup
 -  Bowl
 -  Basket
- Flow to Communion
- ← Flow from Communion

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Additional Information:

History:

The ministry of ushers is the oldest lay ministry in the Catholic Church. The ushers of today have descended from a long line of people of God who have gone before them. During the time of Christ, the doorkeepers of the temple numbered in the hundreds and were the forerunners of today's ushers.

The more immediate predecessor of today's usher can be found in the clerical order of porter, instituted in the 3rd Century A.D. During those times, it was the duty of the porters or ushers to guard the door of the church against any intruders who might disturb the service. The porter duties were so important that they came to be included in the rite of ordination, where they were specified as: "to ring the bells, open the church and sacristy, to open the book for the preacher." In 1972 Pope Paul VI abolished the order of porter and this important task was given over to the laity.

While today's ushers don't ring bells or open the church, their primary duties and responsibilities include greeting and welcoming parishioners as they enter the church, help them to find seats, taking up the collection and wishing everyone a good day at the conclusion of the Eucharistic Celebration.

General:

Every liturgical ministry is established to assist the worshipping community in participating at each parish celebration. Ushers serve in a variety of ways, including collection of the weekly offering, assistance with the Communion procession, greeting parishioners and offering them assistance in finding a seat close to the altar, readying the Gifts, and selecting someone to present the Gifts at the altar. It is the responsibility of all Ministers of Hospitality to make sure that the church is presentable. Since the roles and responsibilities of the Usher is vital to the smooth flow of the liturgy, only trained Ushers are scheduled on a rotating basis by the Office of Liturgy.

Ushers are the first church members someone sees upon entering the doors of the church. Ushering at St. Francis of Assisi provides an excellent opportunity to help visitors; special guests and regular members have a warm feeling for having attended our church.

The primary function of ushering at St. Francis is to assist the clergy, serve the needs of the congregation and make the Mass flow as smoothly as possible. Ushers assist in taking up the offering, and during the Eucharist among various other duties. Generally speaking, the ushers' role is to help the Mass run like clockwork. Currently the Usher Ministry will follow the enclosed process of ushering. Training sessions are provided periodically at this time. Ushering is open to men and women of the church, preferably those ages 16 and over whom are knowledgeable with the Liturgy and who have been Safe Environment Trained & Cleared.

Mission:

Our mission as usher at St. Francis of Assisi is that of hospitality. Our service is making parishioners and guests feel welcome and comfortable as we gather for our Eucharistic celebration. Our ushers are able to see the presence of Christ in each person as they arrive.

Qualities / Duties of an Usher:

This ministry is open to all parishioners; men and women; senior citizen, parent and teenager, who are active, practicing Catholics in good standing with the Church. Ushers are friendly people who welcome all ages and nationalities. Their faith enables them to see Christ's presence in individuals and in the gathered community of believers. Ushers are honest and dependable. They can handle emergency situations with courage and composure. They carry a dignity about themselves even when performing menial tasks. Those duties include:

Duties:

- Greeting parishioners as they enter for worship
- Selecting a family in conjunction with the Mass Coordinator to make the Offertory Presentation
- Assisting in the seating of parishioners and guests
- Coordinating the Offertory Collection
- Providing the weekly bulletin to members of the congregation
- Cleaning up the church after Mass, collecting excess bulletins and papers left behind
- Handling emergency situations with courage and composure