



HOSPITALITY MINISTRY GUIDELINES

as of: 8-20-07

St. Monica Parish has long been known as *"The House Where All Are Welcome."* This church is blessed to have a vibrant parish community with so many active ministries and volunteers who do so much to foster a sense of Hospitality in all that we do. And yet, there is always an opportunity to do more.

The mission statement of our Hospitality Ministry is *"to reach out in dedicated service with a welcoming spirit of inclusion to all of our brothers and sisters in Christ."*

To actuate this mission, Hospitality Greeters at all weekend liturgies extend a genuine and warm welcome to all who visit the community. All newcomers and visitors are asked to stand and be recognized at the beginning of each mass. A "Welcome Table" is located outside the church door in the patio after each liturgy so that anyone who wishes to register or learn more about St. Monica Parish and the various ministries and outreach programs the parish supports may do so. Efforts are made to encourage existing parishioners to learn more about these opportunities as well. The Welcome Home Program opens the door to those who may have drifted away from the church.

Hospitality is important because it's the first thing that either happens or doesn't happen when people walk up to and through our church doors. First impressions are lasting impressions, so we need to "do it right" the first time. We must conduct ourselves in such a manner that we make our visitors feel that they, too, are part of the Mystical Body of Christ, and make them feel welcome and an integral part of our communal worship. Hospitality Ministers must be Witnesses to the Kingdom: by our words, our actions, and the manner in which we conduct our lives.

And when you come right down to the essence of what being a disciple of Jesus Christ is all about, you come to the inevitable conclusion that WE ARE ALL Ministers of Hospitality, every day of our lives, wherever we go.

With the foregoing in mind, and in an effort to assist you in the performance of your Hospitality Ministry responsibilities, the following guidelines are presented:

1. Please arrive ½ hour early (45 minutes for the Sunday 5:30 liturgy). If you can't make your scheduled assignment, you are responsible for finding a substitute or for exchanging with someone who is scheduled on another Sunday that you are not already assigned. Dress in a manner that is tasteful, dignified, and respectful of the ministerial role you are fulfilling.

2. Hospitality Ministers should check in with their Team Leader to get their assignments. This process can take place in the patio or in the church vestibule if quietude is maintained so as not to disturb those who are praying. The sacristy should never be used as a place to “hang out.”
3. Wear your Hospitality Ministry nametag.
4. Team Leaders should check with Music Ministry to see if there are any worship aides/song sheets to be handed out. The Team Leader should also check with sacristan to see how the planned mass flow might impact the duties of Hospitality Ministers (ideally, these planned flows would be e-mailed out to the scheduled team ahead of time).
5. Optimally, before mass begins, at least two Hospitality Ministers would serve at the church’s patio door and at least two at the front door. These Hospitality Ministers would hand out the worship aides and greet people as they arrive. Use whatever greeting you feel comfortable with, such as “Welcome to St. Monica’s,” or “Good morning,” or some variation.
6. Don’t forget to SMILE! It is certainly part of a genuine welcome.
7. Before mass begins, the Team Leader chooses two or three or more people as necessary to bring up the gifts. The Hospitality Team Leader asks these people to bring up the gifts before mass and walks them through the sequence so they are comfortable with doing so at the appropriate time.
 - a. When the intercessions are completed, they will bring up the bread and wine to the presider (bread on right, wine on the left).
 - b. They will walk up side-by-side, walk up the altar steps, and walk around the altar to the same side of the altar that the presider is standing on (bread to the right of the altar, wine to the left), and place the gifts on the altar in front of the presider.
 - c. They will bow slightly with the presider to reverence the altar, and each will walk down the steps and up the side aisles back to their seats.

8. Before the gathering song and the opening procession, the cantor or their designee will welcome all visitors and newcomers to our parish community. They will be asked to stand and be recognized.

9. Once the scriptural readings have begun, politely ask latecomers to wait in the vestibule until the reading has been completed before entering the church to find a seat. The best time to seat latecomers is during the responsorial psalm (after the first reading) or during the alleluia (after the second reading but before the gospel).

10. The collection takes place immediately after the gifts have been brought up and placed on the altar. The steps are as follows (the procedure for the Sunday 5:30 liturgy is at variance with that presented below, and will be left to the 5:30 Team Leader to review with you at the appropriate time):
 - a. Hospitality Ministers will process up the center aisle after the intercessions to begin the collection (they begin their procession up the center aisle as the gift-bearers begin their procession to the altar).
 - b. They process up the center aisle two-by-two, arrive at the front of the church, and line up in a row to bow.
 - c. The two on the outside then walk to the side aisles to receive the baskets that the Hospitality Ministers in the center aisle are passing over row by row (typically, 4 baskets will be passed to the first 4 pews, one basket per pew; the receiving Hospitality Minister on the side aisle will then pass the baskets back to the Hospitality Minister in the center aisle via the next 4 pews, one basket per pew, and so on).
 - d. If six Hospitality Ministers are present, the extra two could do the collection for the pews along the side of the church, one Hospitality Minister on each side.
 - e. The collection proceeds row-by-row until the last row at the back of the church has had a basket passed, and the collection in its entirety is emptied into one of the garbage bags in the far right cupboard at the back of the church in the vestibule.
 - f. If the choir loft is occupied, a basket should be passed there as well.
 - g. The collection is carried to the drop chute.

11. Communion flow.

- a. After the sign-of-peace, one Hospitality Minister on each side of the church asks the parishioners in the first pew of the short pews along the side of the church to please follow him or her forward for communion. They lead the parishioners to the back of the church, around the last pew, and up the center aisle to communion (the Hospitality Ministers can then “direct traffic” to the various Eucharistic Ministers at the front of the church).
- b. A second Hospitality Minister follows behind this procession and moves parishioners out of the pews to follow those on their way to communion. This process continues to the back of the church. This second Hospitality Minister then begins moving overflow parishioners in the vestibule and choir loft down the center aisle for communion. Finally, the center pew parishioners process forward row-by-row from the back of the church to the front.

12. After mass.

- a. Hospitality Ministers should stand at patio doors and front doors of the church to hand out bulletins as parishioners leave.
- b. Those assigned to the Welcome Table to answer questions and help people find flyers and register should go to the table after communion.
- c. When you have finished your assigned duties, please return to the inside of the church to help other Hospitality Ministers in the cleanup process. Pick up paper and put song books (Breaking Bread) back into their proper location, SPINE SIDE UP! Make the church look as nice as possible for those who will be attending the next liturgy.

13. Finally, and perhaps MOST importantly, take your ministry with you back to your family, your friends, your workplaces, and your communities. Our stewardship and discipleship as Hospitality Ministers and followers of Jesus Christ are emblems of love and light that must become integral to the very fabric of who we are as human beings.

