



USHER MINISTRY PROTOCOL

& QUICK REFERENCE · ST. PATRICK CATHOLIC CHURCH, PORTLAND

Ad maiorem Dei gloriam

* THE ROLE OF THE USHER

The General Instruction of the Roman Missal counts among the liturgical ministries "those who, in some places, meet the faithful at the church entrance, lead them to appropriate places, and direct processions" (GIRM 105). That is the usher. You are the first face a visitor sees at St. Patrick's, and a kind, calm, well dressed man at the door says more about this parish than anything printed in the bulletin. Thank you for taking up this holy work.

The usher's service has 3 parts. Hospitality: welcome everyone, help them find a seat, and keep the church reverent. Watchfulness: notice what is happening in and around the church, and tell the head usher. Response: in a medical emergency, a fire, or a disturbance, get people to safety and call 911. Ushers are not security personnel. In keeping with the guidance of the Archdiocese of Portland, parish volunteers do not provide security services; the usher's part in any emergency is to care for people and to summon the professionals whose job it is.

This Protocol covers the Sunday 10:00 am Mass. It follows the Archdiocese of Portland Emergency Procedures Manual and the Archdiocesan Risk Management guidelines, which govern wherever this Protocol is silent.

* BEFORE YOU BEGIN SERVING

- ♦ Ensure you are in good standing with the Church (address any concerns with the pastor). Father is always glad to hear a quick confession before Mass.
- ♦ Be 18 or older, appointed by the pastor, and physically able to perform the duties described here.
- ♦ Complete the Archdiocesan criminal background check through the parish office and sign the Archdiocesan Standards of Conduct. Both renew every 3 years. Any usher who counts money must have the background check.
- ♦ Meet with the Usher Coordinator for training and a walk through of this Protocol, the building, and the equipment.
- ♦ Review the usher schedule and mark your dates on your personal calendar. If you cannot serve, find your own substitute and tell the Coordinator.
- ♦ Dress: a suit or sports coat, dress shirt and tie, dress pants, dress shoes, and full length socks. Be clean shaven or neatly groomed. Wear the "Usher" name badge so that parishioners and first responders can identify you. No badge, vest, or insignia suggesting security.
- ♦ Sign the acknowledgment on the last page and return it to the Coordinator.

NOTE: The Coordinator keeps a record of each usher's training and screening dates and gives the pastor a roster each September. An usher whose background check or Standards of Conduct has lapsed is taken off the schedule

until it is renewed.

* THE SUNDAY SCHEDULE

TIME	ACTION	DETAILS
9:30 am	Arrive; unlock and open	Unlock both main doors of the church and every gate. Both main doors, every exit door, and every gate stay unlocked for the whole of Mass. Complete the Pre Mass Checklist below.
9:30 am	Greet at the doors	Open a door for each arriving parishioner rather than propping, so the church stays quiet for those who wish to pray. Ushers are also the greeters; say good morning to everyone.
9:50 am	Prop the doors	Prop the church and narthex doors (one door in bad weather). Propping the church doors for Mass is the pastor's standing exception to the parish's no propping rule.
10:00 am	Procession	Make room for Father and the servers to process. Close the doors behind them (closed, never locked).
10:20 am	Walk through (1 usher)	Tell the head usher, then walk the block: NW 19th, Savier, Raleigh, the parking lot, the courtyard, and the parish hall. Look and report. Never approach a person or vehicle.
10:40 am	Walk through (1 usher)	Same route. Times are approximate; walk only at a quiet moment in the liturgy, never during the Eucharistic Prayer.
11:00 am	Recessional	After the Prayer to St. Michael, open and prop the narthex and outside doors for the procession.
11:15 am	After Mass	Two ushers stand near Father while he greets people. When he is finished, walk the building once more, make sure the kitchen stove is off if it was used, and close and lock the church and narthex doors.

* PRE MASS CHECKLIST

The head usher completes this checklist every Sunday before 9:50 am, initials each line, and signs at the bottom. The Coordinator keeps the signed sheets. A copy of this page may be printed on its own.

ITEM	INITIALS
* OUTSIDE	
☐ Steps, courtyard, parking lot, and sidewalks on NW 19th, Raleigh, and Savier walked; nothing unusual, or reported to the head usher.	

ITEM	INITIALS
☐ Every gate unlocked and open.	
* DOORS AND EXITS	
☐ Both main church doors unlocked.	
☐ Every exit door in the church and parish hall unlocked and unobstructed inside and out.	
☐ Narthex, elevator, choir stairs, restrooms, and parish hall walked.	
* SAFETY EQUIPMENT	
☐ AED in place, wall left of the elevator, status light green.	
☐ First aid kit in place, wall left of the elevator.	
☐ Anti choking devices (adult, child, toddler) in their cabinets.	
☐ Fire extinguisher nearest the narthex present and tagged.	
* MATERIALS AND TEAM	
☐ Materials for distribution collected from the table near the elevator.	
☐ At least 2 ushers present; positions assigned (narthex; corner by the elevator; hall if a third).	
☐ Every usher has a charged phone.	

Date _____ Head usher signature _____

* HOSPITALITY AND SEATING

Greet everyone. Walk visitors and newcomers to a pew rather than pointing. Fill from the front; the front pew has no kneelers. Aim for 6 to 8 people to a long pew and 2 to a short pew. Invite those standing in the back to sit, kindly and once; if they prefer to stand, let them. Late arrivals wait in the narthex during the readings and the homily and are seated at the natural breaks. Families with restless little ones are welcome in the narthex behind the closed interior doors or in the parish hall, always as an offer and never as a correction. Offer an arm on the steps to anyone who wants one, and directions to the hall, the restrooms, and the elevator to anyone who asks.

WHAT TO SAY

- ✦ "Good morning, welcome to St. Patrick's. Let me find you a seat."
- ✦ "Would you like to sit with us up front?"
- ✦ "Is this your first time here? We're glad you came."
- ✦ "The Eucharistic Prayer is about to begin. May I help you find a place to kneel?"
- ✦ "The woman beneath the altar is Saint Flavia Domitilla, a first century Roman martyr. I'd be glad to tell you more after Mass."

- ♦ "Are you all right? Is there anything you need?" "Is there someone I can call for you?"

WHAT YOU MAY ASK, AND WHAT YOU MAY NOT

YOU MAY ASK

- ♦ Whether someone would like help finding a seat, a restroom, or the hall.
- ♦ Whether someone is all right, needs water, or would like to sit down or step outside.
- ♦ Whether there is someone you can call for them.
- ♦ A person's name, so you can use it.
- ♦ A parent whether they would like the narthex or the hall for a restless child.

YOU MAY NOT ASK

- ♦ Whether someone is Catholic, or what they believe, as a condition of coming in. Everyone is welcome at Mass.
- ♦ Anything about a person's immigration status, health, diagnosis, or medication.
- ♦ Anyone to change clothing, cover a tattoo, or remove jewelry. No one is treated differently for how he looks.
- ♦ To see anyone's bag, pockets, or belongings. Ushers never search anyone.
- ♦ Anything about a person's income, housing, or why they are here.

NOTE: Never be alone with a minor, or with a vulnerable adult out of public view. If a child is separated from a parent, stay with the child in the narthex in full view and send another usher to find the parent. These are the Archdiocesan Standards of Conduct, and they bind every usher.

* DURING MASS

- ♦ Positions: one usher in the narthex, one in the corner by the elevator with a view of the nave. A third floats between the church and the parish hall. Never leave the doors uncovered.
- ♦ Doors and gates: both main doors, every exit door, and every gate stay unlocked throughout Mass, as the Archdiocese and the fire code require. Interior doors may be closed for quiet; never locked.
- ♦ The Eucharistic Prayer: the Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith. Movement is limited from the Preface to the Great Amen. Anyone who leaves during it is asked, gently, to wait in the narthex until after the Great Amen.
- ♦ Communion: ushers receive one at a time so the doors are never uncovered. Manage the procession by row so that it stays unhurried and reverent, and never in a way that looks like keeping track of who receives.
- ♦ The collection, if ushers take it up: two ushers carry it together to the sacristy or the safe and never leave it unattended.
- ♦ Phones: every usher carries a charged phone on silent. It is for calling 911, not for photographs. No usher is ever required to photograph or record anyone.

* A PERSON CAUSING CONCERN

Most disturbances at St. Patrick's come from people who are ill, intoxicated, or in distress, and most end with a kind word and a seat. Two rules govern everything below: no usher approaches a difficult

person alone, and no usher ever follows a person who leaves the property.

1. **Observe.** Notice behavior: shouting, pacing, approaching the sanctuary, blocking a door, chanting or gesturing in a way that is not the liturgy, or handling sacred objects. Appearance is not behavior.
2. **Tell the head usher.** Two ushers move to where they can see the person. Do not surround him.
3. **Approach with two, and calm the situation.** The head usher approaches from the front at conversational distance, hands visible, with the second usher a few steps back and to the side. Give your name and ask his. Speak slowly, listen more than you talk, and offer help: a seat, water, a walk outside, a word with Father after Mass. Keep an arm's length of space. Do not touch him.
4. **Ask him to leave, if the conduct calls for it.** A person who is disrupting Mass, performing a ritual or incantation, defiling anything sacred, threatening anyone, or whom the pastor has previously barred is asked to leave. The pastor has designated the ushers as his representatives for this purpose, so the head usher says, plainly and once: "Sir, the parish is asking you to leave now." If he does not go, say it once more and add that the police will be called.
5. **Call 911.** On the second refusal, or at once if he threatens anyone or moves toward the sanctuary, call 911 and report a trespass in progress at 1623 NW 19th Avenue. Keep your distance, keep talking calmly, keep people back, and wait for the police. If he walks out, close the door behind him and let him go. For a person in a mental health crisis who is threatening no one, 988 may be the better call.

Anything beyond these steps is not an usher duty. If a person becomes violent, the usher's instruction is the same as for any emergency: protect the people nearest you, get them away from the danger, and call 911. What any citizen may lawfully do to defend another person is a matter of Oregon law and personal conscience, not of this Protocol.

NOTE: Things worth noticing, and only noticing: someone watching the entrances and exits rather than the liturgy, clothing far too heavy for the weather, repeated slow passes through the parking lot, an unattended bag, or a person the pastor has barred. None of these is a reason to stop, question, or remove anyone.

★ EMERGENCIES

These procedures follow the Archdiocese of Portland Emergency Procedures Manual, a copy of which is kept in the sacristy and the parish office. Where this page and the Manual differ, the Manual governs. In every emergency, someone calls 911 first; do not assume another person has.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

The first usher to reach the person stays with him. Point at a specific person and say, "Call 911. Tell them 1623 NW 19th Avenue, the church, and what you see." Send a second person for the AED and first aid kit on the wall left of the elevator, and a third to the door to meet the ambulance. Ask aloud whether a doctor, nurse, or EMT is present. Do what you are trained to do and nothing more: CPR and the AED for someone who is not breathing, the anti choking device when back blows and abdominal thrusts fail, naloxone for a suspected overdose, direct pressure for bleeding, and a fainting person kept lying down. Use the gloves from the kit. Tell Father as soon as you can; if the person is gravely ill he will want to anoint. Oregon's Good Samaritan law (ORS 30.800) and the AED and naloxone statutes (ORS 30.802 and 689.811) protect a person who gives emergency care in good faith.

FIRE

Pull the nearest alarm or shout it. Use an extinguisher only on a fire smaller than a wastebasket and only with a clear exit behind you; otherwise evacuate. Open every exit, send people out the nearest safe door, help the elderly and disabled down the steps, and never use the elevator. Gather in the pay lot across the street; the parish lot stays clear for fire apparatus. Call 911 once you are outside. Check the sacristy hallway, adoration chapel, restrooms, confessional, and courtyard for stragglers only if it is safe. No one re enters until the fire department releases the building.

EARTHQUAKE

Drop, cover, and hold. Call out for people to get under the pews or beneath the choir loft, away from the chandeliers and windows. No one moves until the shaking stops. Then open the doors, watch for the smell of gas or visible damage, and lead everyone to the pay lot. No one re enters until the building has been checked.

EVACUATION

The head usher or the Celebrant decides. The assembly point is the pay lot across the street. Count who you can, report injuries to 911, and do not move a seriously injured person. The hall attendant brings the parish hall group to the assembly point, where families are reunited.

A THREAT OUTSIDE THE CHURCH

If a threat is outside and coming toward the church, the head usher orders the doors closed and locked for the duration of the threat. Move people away from the doors and windows, down behind the pews, out of sight and quiet. Someone calls 911 and stays on the line. Wait for the police to release you. Unlock the doors again as soon as the threat has passed.

A VIOLENT PERSON INSIDE THE CHURCH

The Archdiocesan Manual's instruction is the parish's: get out if you can, hide if you cannot, and do not attempt to disarm anyone. Open the nearest exits and move people out along the walls; those who cannot get out lock themselves in the sacristies, the confessional, or the hall and stay silent. Anyone who can safely do so calls 911 and leaves the line open. When the police arrive, show empty hands, keep them raised, follow every command, and tell the officers who you are and where the person was last seen. The Celebrant, not the ushers, secures the Blessed Sacrament; the servers go with him.

BOMB THREAT, CRIME, AND MEDIA

A telephoned threat is treated as real: write down the exact words and the time, and call 911 from well away from the building. Do not touch an unattended package. A crime in progress is reported to 911; ushers do not confront, chase, or gather evidence. Nobody speaks to the media or posts about an incident. Inquiries go to the pastor, who refers them to the Archdiocese of Portland Office of Communications.

*** EQUIPMENT AND LOCATIONS**

ITEM	LOCATION
AED	Church, wall left of the elevator.

ITEM	LOCATION
First aid kit	Church, wall left of the elevator.
Anti choking devices	Adult, child, and toddler sizes, in the wall cabinets in the church and the parish hall. Until the cabinets are mounted, the adult device is on top of the bar refrigerator in the parish hall.
Naloxone	With the first aid kit.
Fire extinguishers	Church: near the choir loft stairwell; by the Sacred Heart window. Parish hall: over the kitchen sink; right of the oven (Class K); by the door to Xavier St. Rectory: upstairs; conference room; pastor's office; basement at the base of the stairs.
Fire alarm pull stations	At the exits. The alarm is monitored; pulling it summons the fire department.
Assembly point	The pay lot across the street. The parish lot stays clear for emergency vehicles.

★ AFTER AN INCIDENT

An incident is any injury or medical emergency, any call to 911 or 988, any person asked to leave, any threat, any fire, alarm, evacuation, or lockdown, any theft or damage, and any contact with the police. When in doubt, write it up.

- ✦ At the scene: get first aid, call 911 if needed, and keep people safe. Do not discuss fault. Do not promise anything. If someone asks about a claim, say that the Archdiocese's Risk Management Office will contact them.
- ✦ The same day: the head usher writes a plain account (what happened, when, where, who was involved, who saw it, what the ushers did, what the police or EMS did, any injuries), collects witness names and numbers, gives it to the Coordinator, and telephones the pastor.
- ✦ Within 24 hours: the pastor files the Archdiocesan General Liability Incident Report, or the Volunteer Accident Report if an usher was hurt, with the Archdiocese of Portland Risk Management Office. Volunteers acting within their assigned duties are covered by the Archdiocesan volunteer accident program.
- ✦ Within the week: the pastor, the Coordinator, and the head usher talk for 15 minutes about what went well and what this Protocol should say differently.

NOTE: A report contains facts, times, names, and actions. It never contains opinions about fault, guesses about motive, or characterizations of a person's mental state beyond what was seen.

* ARCHDIOCESAN POLICIES THAT GOVERN THIS MINISTRY

POLICY	WHAT IT REQUIRES OF THE USHER MINISTRY
Safe Environment: background checks and Standards of Conduct	Every usher is screened through the Archdiocese's provider and signs the Standards of Conduct, which cover minors and vulnerable adults; both renew every 3 years. New volunteers attend the Archdiocese's in person training as directed by the parish.
Emergency Procedures Manual	The parish's emergency plan. Its pages on medical emergencies, fire, earthquake, evacuation, lockdown, and violent intruders are the basis of the Emergencies section above and govern wherever this Protocol is silent.
Risk Management: incident and claim reporting	Every incident is reported promptly to the Risk Management Office. No one makes any statement about liability or any commitment to pay.
Risk Management: security	Volunteers do not provide security services. The parish's security is its doors, its lighting, its alarm, its walk throughs, and the police.
Fire prevention and exits	Every exit door is unlocked and unobstructed while the building is occupied. Lighted candles are never passed from person to person.
AED	The AED is inspected regularly, enough volunteers are trained, it is stored where it can be reached quickly, and 911 is always called.
Volunteer accident coverage	A volunteer injured while acting within assigned duties is covered by the Archdiocesan Insurance Fund's excess accident program; the parish files the report.

The Manual and the Risk Management guidelines are published by the Archdiocese of Portland Office of Property and Risk Management (archdpdx.org/property-and-risk-management).

* CONTACTS

Emergency	911
Mental health crisis line	988
Portland Police, non emergency	503-823-3333
Rectory office	(503) 222-4086 · office@stpatriickpdx.org
Archdiocese of Portland, Risk Management	riskmanagement@archdpdx.org
Pastor, Usher Coordinator, head ushers, hall attendant	On the contact sheet in the sacristy, kept current by the Coordinator.

★ ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have read the St. Patrick Usher Ministry Protocol, walked the building with the Usher Coordinator, and know where the AED, the first aid kit, the anti choking devices, the fire extinguishers, and the exits are. I understand that ushers welcome, seat, watch, report, and call 911; that we never approach a difficult person alone, never follow anyone off the property, never search anyone, and never speak to the media; and that my screening and Standards of Conduct must stay current for me to serve.

Usher _____ Date _____

Usher Coordinator _____ Date _____

Approved by the Pastor, St. Patrick Catholic Church, Portland, Oregon. Reviewed each September.



USHER QUICK REFERENCE

ST. PATRICK CATHOLIC CHURCH, PORTLAND · 1623 NW 19TH AVENUE

Our job: welcome, seat, watch, report, call. Two ushers, never one, with a difficult person. Never alone with a child. Both main doors, every exit, and every gate unlocked for Mass. No one is treated differently for how he looks.

After anything: write it down the same day, tell the Coordinator and Father. No statements about fault to anyone. Nobody speaks to the media.

NOTE: 911 for emergencies · 988 for a mental health crisis · Portland Police non emergency 503-823-3333 · Rectory (503) 222-4086.

A PERSON CAUSING CONCERN

1. Observe the behavior.
2. Tell the head usher; two ushers move where they can see.
3. Head usher approaches from the front, second usher to the side. Calm voice, offer help, no touching.
4. If Mass is disrupted, a ritual performed, anything sacred defiled, or anyone threatened: "The parish is asking you to leave now," twice.
5. Second refusal, a threat, or a move toward the sanctuary: call 911, trespass in progress. Keep distance. Never follow anyone who leaves.

MEDICAL

- ♦ Stay with the person.
- ♦ Point at someone: "Call 911. 1623 NW 19th, the church."
- ♦ Send for the AED and first aid kit, wall left of the elevator.
- ♦ Ask for a doctor or nurse. Do what you are trained to do.
- ♦ Tell Father.

FIRE

- ♦ Alarm. Exits open. Out the nearest safe door. No elevator.
- ♦ Assemble in the pay lot across the street. 911 from outside.
- ♦ Extinguisher only for a small fire with an exit behind you.

EARTHQUAKE

- ♦ Drop, cover, hold. Under the pews or the loft, away from chandeliers.
- ♦ When the shaking stops, out to the pay lot.

THREAT OUTSIDE

- ♦ Head usher orders the doors locked. People away from doors and windows, down behind the pews, quiet.
- ♦ 911. Wait for the police. Unlock when it has passed.

VIOLENT PERSON INSIDE

- ♦ Get out if you can, hide if you cannot. Never try to disarm anyone.
- ♦ 911, line open. Police arrive: empty hands up, do what they say.