



HEAD USHER JOB DESCRIPTION

Welcome to St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Church
North Avenue and Lathrop, River Forest, IL 60305
(708) 366-7090

SACRED SPACES:

Please bear in mind many people (especially children) are not oriented to appropriate church behavior. Weddings and funerals are often the only time many are in a church.

Ushers are responsible that there are:

- NO loud noises --- shouting, beepers need to be on silent mode, cellular phone usage belongs out of church. Phones should be turned off.
- NO running or playing (child care is the usher's responsibility if their adult care givers do not understand church behavior).
- NO playing with the PA system, piano, etc.
- NO smoking, NO food, NO drink before, during, or after the ceremony.
- Men wearing hats in a Catholic Church is considered offensive.
- Gum in church is inappropriate.

THE SANCTUARY IS OFF LIMITS (even to professional photographers)

I. BEFORE THE WEDDING CEREMONY

- Boutonniere and corsages are pinned over the heart. Pins go on the back side.
- Be at Church when it is scheduled for photos. Stop the photographer twenty minutes before the wedding. Begin seating at this time.
- Know where the phones and restrooms are located.
- Arrange furniture for the wedding and return it to its original positions when the ceremony is over.
- Invite people to be seated. They visit in the gathering space until an usher gets them going.
- If you are escorting a group of people, offer your arm to the eldest woman with the others following behind
- Hand programs to the guests as they enter the pew.
- You will offer your arm on the side closest to the pew. Know how many pews are to be reserved for family and friends and seat the remaining guests behind that point. Know the number of people so they can be seated in the special areas and not scattered around the church.

- Men and women of the wedding party are encouraged to assist ushering guests at, the "rush", five minutes before the ceremony begins. Aisles become one-way to expedite people flow.
- Pictures can be taken from the pews only during the Processional/Recessional.
- Pick up the Brides and Grooms dressing rooms so you can leave when the ceremony is over. Includes other areas - vestibule, pews, etc.
- DURING THE PRELUDE: Escort grandparents of the bride and groom to designated pews.
- There is to be NO rice, confetti, birdseed, balloons, etc. present before, during or after the ceremony. Should any be used, regardless, it is the responsibility of the Ushers to clean it up. The wedding facilitator will show you where the cleaning supplies are located. (Insurance safety warrants this.)
- Back doors are closed during procession. to create a dark and constant backdrop for photos. Late comers are directed to alternative entrances during the procession.

II. DURING THE WEDDING CEREMONY

- It is wise not to plan any "extra activity" (car decorating, etc.) before or during the ceremony.
- Late arriving guests should be asked to seat themselves via the side aisles. (They should not be seated during the processional.)
- The doors inside, and out in back, should be closed at the time of the procession, otherwise, pictures become silhouettes.
- Ushers not needed at communion because Catholics already know what to do. The wedding party and family lead this coming forth.
- Ushers need to ask anyone moving about with photos, during the service, to cease doing so. The wedding sacrament is not a "Kodak moment".
- Anyone sick, out-of-line, etc. is the usher's care. Diplomacy and virtue are encouraged in these rare matters.
- As the wedding party exits, two ushers return to the front of the church and face the entrance with their backs toward the altar. The church is emptied from front to rear simply by ushering; allowing sides alternately to exit. Escorting is not done at this time.

III. AFTER THE WEDDING CEREMONY

- It is recommended that the guest book be added after the ceremony to avoid delaying the ceremony. Establish where it will be before so there won't be any confusion after. Be sure the person in charge takes the book to the reception.
- The ushers are still on duty after the wedding rite to maintain church decorum. Often this is the time of disrespect for the space in the photo session time frame. Note, here norms of church behavior.
- Check the pew benches for any left behind purses, cameras, etc. Pick up any discarded tissues, film boxes, flower boxes, programs and other debris. Also check to see if there are any flower droppings, which need to be picked up.
- Clean up any violations on rice, confetti, etc.
- Return all furniture to the spaces it was in PRIOR to the rehearsal_
- Lights, windows, doors, etc. should all be communicated in details with a member of the parish staff.
- Check the restrooms, bride's room, etc. to make sure nothing is left behind.
- Be the last to leave the church.

Enjoy the reception! You have earned it!!!