

**This is how all will know that you are my disciples,
if you have love for one another.” (John 13:35)**

Above all, let your love for one another be intense, because love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaining. As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God’s varied grace. Whoever preaches, let it be with the words of God; whoever serves, let it be with the strength that God supplies, so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 4:8-11)

Beloved, you are faithful in all you do for the brothers, especially for strangers; (3 John 1:5)

**Do not neglect hospitality, for through it some have unknowingly entertained angels.
(Hebrews 13: 2)**

For the LORD, your God, is the God of gods, the Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who has no favorites, accepts no bribes, who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and loves the resident alien, giving them food and clothing. So you too should love the resident alien, for that is what you were in the land of Egypt. (Deuteronomy 10:19)

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.’ (Matthew 25:35-36)

An USHER/GREETER/HOSPITALITY MINISTER is the official host, someone whose presence, conversation and actions speak a welcome to all who come to a liturgical event or visit our Parish. Welcoming can be traced back to the beginning of the Old Testament and hospitality has always been part of our Christian tradition. In Genesis 18 Abraham entertained angels. Job 31 speaks of helping others. Chronicles talks of the role of serving and as doorkeeper in the temple. Elijah was offered hospitality from the widow and her son. Jesus fed 5,000. Ushers bring the welcome of Christ to the moment and reach out to the Christ in the other.

Prayer for Ushers

LORD JESUS, you welcomed all who came into your presence. May I reflect that same spirit through this ministry of hospitality. May your light shine in my heart this day. Remove from me anything that would stand in the way of radiating your presence. As people enter this Church, to worship and praise You, may they hear your voice in my words and see your love in my actions. May my “welcome” reflect our joy at their presence and my “good-by” encourage them to return soon. I thank you for the opportunity to serve you and ask your blessing upon all my efforts. I ask this through our God who is the giver of all gifts. AMEN.

HOMEBOUND MINISTERS bring the Eucharist and prayer to those who are unable to attend Mass, being homebound, in a nursing home or in the hospital. The lay minister becomes the link between the Church and home. The early Christian community began the practice of bringing Communion to those who were unable to gather with the community. Praying with another person can be a very powerful means of sharing our relationship with God and bringing His real presence to the homebound. The homebound minister also provides social conversation according to the needs and desires of the homebound. This provides a congenial atmosphere for such things as swapping stories, catching up on current events or getting to know each other. As always, keep in your prayers all those who are in need of this ministry and serve in this ministry.

For “The gift of life, God’s special gift, is no less beautiful when it is accompanied by illness or weakness, hunger, loneliness or old age. At these times human life gains extra splendor as it requires our special care, concern and reverence. It is indeed in and through the weakest of human vessels that the Lord continues to reveal the power of God’s love.”

Terrence Cardinal Cooke, 1983

Prayer for All Ministers of Hospitality

Heavenly Father, You sent your Son as a model for hospitality and ministry. May I have the courage to walk in his ways and serve your people. Prepare my heart to love all who I have the privilege to encounter and serve today. Give me eyes to see their needs and their gifts, and grace to respond wisely to each situation. I ask this through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

Mutual Love

Let love be sincere; hate what is evil, hold on to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; anticipate one another in showing honor. Do not grow slack in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, endure in affliction, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the holy ones, exercise hospitality. Bless those who persecute [you], bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Have the same regard for one another; do not be haughty but associate with the lowly; do not be wise in your own estimation. Do not repay anyone evil for evil; be concerned for what is noble in the sight of all. If possible, on your part, live at peace with all. Beloved, do not look for revenge but leave room for the wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” Rather, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.” Do not be conquered by evil but conquer evil with good.

(Romans 12:9-21)