

The Eucharist is the vital centre of all that the Church is and does.

At its heart is the real presence of the crucified, risen and glorified Lord, who continues his saving work among us. The Second Vatican Council reminded us: ‘the most holy Eucharist holds within itself the whole spiritual treasure of the Church, namely Christ himself, our Passover and our living bread’. (cf. *One Bread One Body* 3)

All who exercise a liturgical ministry need a proper preparation for their responsibilities. They are to have the competence to perform the particular ministry with which they have been entrusted. (cf. *Celebrating the Mass* 29)



This leaflet is one of a series of leaflets prepared for liturgical ministers to help them refresh their understanding of their role at Mass. The series draws on the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* and *Celebrating the Mass*, a document of the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales.

It is one of the collection of resources produced by the Liturgy Office to assist the work of liturgical renewal in England and Wales.

What the Church says about...

Our Gathering

The liturgical assembly, “where two or three come together in Christ’s name, and where he is found in their midst (cf. Mt 18:20), is the ‘first image that the Church gives of herself’”. Indeed the assembly itself is also the first instance of Christ’s presence in the liturgy

Celebrating the Mass (CTM) 139

Hospitality

Saint Paul instructed the assembled community to “welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, to the glory of God” (Romans 15:7). It will often be appropriate for those commonly referred to as ushers to exercise this ministry of welcome by greeting people at the church door, making sure they are provided with all necessary books, music, and other items for the celebration, such as candles or palms, and helping them find their places.

- Especially in larger assemblies, special arrangements are likely to be necessary so that visitors and those unfamiliar with the community and its worship may be put at ease and drawn into the celebration.
- Ushers also help when, at any time during the celebration, members of the assembly become ill or otherwise need assistance.

- Ushers may assist with the collection and with processions.

CTM 48

Even before the celebration itself, calm and opportunities for silent prayer and reflection have their proper place in the church, in the sacristy and in adjacent areas so that those gathering for the assembly of the Church may recollect themselves and begin to prepare for prayer together. Providing opportunities for such calm and quiet is one of the many ways in which a community is able to show hospitality to those gathering for worship.

CTM 92

The celebration of the Eucharist must give expression to the common life of the gathered community. The idea of strangers gathering for Eucharist, and remaining strangers thereafter, does not sit easily with the Gospel message.

God draws people together from every race and background, and each individual brings with them an amazing richness of personal experience—something which needs to be shared and expressed. While this can rarely take place in the Liturgy itself other opportunities should exist within the life of the local Church community. .

CTM 14, 15

Preparation

In preparing yourself for service as a Minister of Welcome

- Look at the readings and prayers of the Mass and use them for your prayer.
- Reflect on how they speak of the love of God for all, and the quality of life that they call us to make our own
- Spend time in prayer, praying for yourself, and the other parish ministers—that the service you will offer will truly help people to experience Christ's welcome as they come to the church for Mass.
- Ask for the grace to be attentive to the needs of others, not only as they come to the church, but throughout the time of celebration.
- Ensure that you will be at church in good time to carry out any necessary preparations prior to others arriving.

*Whoever welcomes you welcomes me,
and whoever welcomes me
welcomes the one who sent me.*

MATTHEW 10: 40



Open our eyes to the needs of all;
inspire us with words and deeds
to comfort those who labour
and are burdened;
keep our service of others
faithful to the example
and command of Christ.

Let your Church be a living witness
to truth and freedom, to justice and peace,
that all people may be lifted up
by the hope of a world made new.

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER FOR MASSES
FOR VARIOUS NEEDS AND OCCASIONS

**Liturgy
Office**
ENGLAND
& WALES

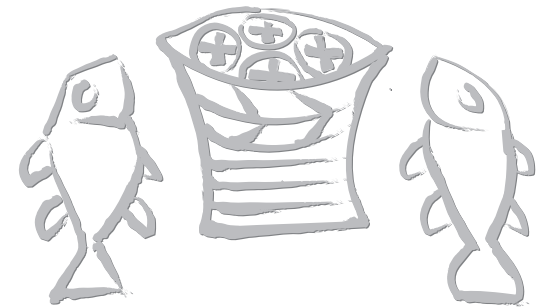
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The ministry of Hospitality at Mass



*Welcome one another
just as Christ has welcomed you,
to the glory of God.*

ROMANS 15:7