

References for further materials

Christian Hospitality: A Handbook for Parishes, Archdiocese of Louisville

Our Sunday Visitor, www.osv.com

They publish many good pamphlets on a variety of subjects.

Liturgical Press, www.litpress.org

They have many good resources for parishes.

Come to the Feast by Michael Kwatera, OSB

The Ministry of Hospitality by James Comiskey

Guide for Ushers and Greeters by Karie Ferrell and Paul Turner

Article by Sr. M. Louise O'Rourke:

<http://sacredspace102.blogspot.com/2011/03/liturgical-hospitality.html>

www.catholichospitality.com

Company's Coming: A Spiritual Process for Creating More Welcoming Parishes by Dr. Richard McCorry

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Christian Hospitality

*"The biggest disease is not leprosy or tuberculosis,
but rather the feeling of being unwanted."*

Blessed Mother Teresa



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www.davenportdiocese.org/stewardship/index.htm

The basic steps to the hospitality process as stated in the website listed below are:

1. Assemble and form a team.
2. Develop a communication plan.
3. Assess current reality.
4. Discern God's vision.
5. Develop a plan for bringing the vision and reality into alignment.
6. Implement the plan, assess the results and continuous improvement.

www.christianhospitality.com – Richard McCorry
Many resources are available here.

Scriptural basis

Story of Emmaus, Luke 24:13-35

Above all, let your love for one another be constant, for love covers a multitude of sins. Be mutually hospitable without complaining. 1 Peter 4:8-9

Love your fellow Christians always. Do not neglect to show hospitality, for by that means some have entertained angels without knowing it. Hebrews 13:1-2

Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. Romans 15:7

I was a stranger and you welcomed me. Matthew 25:35

Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me. Matthew 18:5

Go, therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet. Matthew 22:8-9

Welcome one another then, as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. Romans 15:7

- Are parishioners aware of community needs, such as, homelessness and resources, counseling, food pantries, domestic violence centers? Are parishioners encouraged to be involved?
 - Do neighbors reach out to those who have moved into their area to welcome and assist them?
7. Buildings, ground and accessibility for all people

For more information go to: <http://www.davenportdiocese.org/lit/liturgylibrary/litAccessibilitySurvey053110.pdf>

- Do the buildings have good signage near the street, in the parking lot and in all the buildings and on all floors?
 - Is a ramp or elevator or lift available for those in need?
 - Are locations of restrooms clearly marked so that visitors know where to find them?
 - Are the parking lot, gathering areas, and church space clean and inviting?
 - Do all who use the microphones use them effectively so that all can hear well?
8. Role of greeters
- Are greeters trained and prepared to make their service a vital ministry?
 - Are greeters outside the church, at the church doors, and inside the church welcoming people as they arrive?
 - Do assembly members greet each other in a friendly and genuine way as people gathered in and around their pews?
 - Would a visitor or newcomer feel welcome? Or would a visitor leave your Mass never having been personally greeted, welcomed, and invited to return by at least one other person?

- Suggestions:
 - Train all liturgical ministers – scheduled or not – to look for and meet one new person each week.
 - Place large photos of the staff and parish council at each entrance.
 - Create name tags for staff and council members that show first names in 28-point font. Ask that they wear them at every Sunday liturgy and parish event.
 - Encourage Communion ministers to smile. And keep encouraging until it's natural for them.
4. Hospitality within parish ministries
- Does each parish ministry rotate members and leaders to facilitate maximum participation of all parishioners?
 - Do parish ministries have role descriptions so criteria and expectations are shared and understood? What orientation or training is offered for each ministry?
 - Are people genuinely thanked and affirmed for sharing their gifts of time and talent?
 - How and when is the parish's growth as a welcoming community evaluated?
5. Intercultural hospitality
- Does the parish seek to create a multicultural parish through integration not just assimilation?
 - Does the parish build community that respects and celebrates its diversity while it celebrates its unity?
 - Are all programs, materials and events available and accessible to non-English speaking parishioners? i.e. lector training, catechetical programs, sacramental preparation
6. Reaching out to others beyond the community

As Catholics we are called to take concrete measures to overcome the misunderstanding, ignorance, competition, and fear that stand in the way of genuinely welcoming the stranger in our midst and enjoying the communion that is our destiny as Children of God.

Welcoming the Stranger Among Us, Unity in Diversity, Statement of the USCCB

Definitions and descriptions

One of the hallmarks of a total stewardship parish is its hospitality.

People are searching for a Church with radical hospitality, passionate worship, intentional faith development, extravagant generosity, risk-taking mission and service. Let's give it to them!

Hospitality is the relationship between a guest and a host, reception and entertainment of guests, visitors and strangers.

Hospitality is defined as “giving to generous and cordial reception of guests” and “offering a pleasant or sustaining environment.” Hospitality is as much about ambience as it is activity.

Characteristics of hospitality:

- **Personal presence** – being with people and being attentive to them
- **An inner attitude** calls for deep changes, making hospitality a way of life
- **Making space** means making room for others in our lives both physically and attitudinally.
- **Paying attention** calls us to listen with our minds and our bodies, our heads and our hearts.

Hospitality permeates all areas of parish life. It is apparent in the way we answer the telephone, the way we treat new parishioners, the way we respond to requests and the way we respond to people of every ethnic background and life situation.

The call to welcome comes with baptism and extends to the entire community. Jesus welcomes all people to the fullness of life. People are coming to church hungry for the bread of life and the cup of salvation. Nothing will feed them like the Eucharist. But something else happens before they begin to worship: **You receive them. You sense their physical and spiritual needs.**

When we greet people at church, we are greeting each one as a child of God. (This is not like Wal-Mart!) A good way to cultivate a hospitable heart is to be welcoming to everyone – saint and sinner, whether at work, at home or at church. We greet friends with a smile on our face. Let's greet a child of God with a smile on our face.

Parish hospitality checklist

1. Parish hospitality

- Is there a hospitality committee?
- Do parishioners feel it is part of their baptismal call to welcome everyone?
- Are parishioners encouraged to display a personal presence to others, greet, smile, move over in the pew, and listen with heart and head?
- Is hospitality part of every committee and commission?
- Is there direct and rapid follow up when information is sought?
- Coffee, donuts and healthy alternatives after Mass is a **very small part** of total hospitality.

2. Registration/orientation of new parishioners

- Does the parish have clear and realistic criteria for welcoming new parishioners?
- Who is responsible for meeting new parishioners and explaining and orienting them to all aspects of parish life? Do you visit them at their home to extend a welcome?
- Is the registration process focused on the new parishioner? Are they given a chance to express their needs?
- Are new parishioners linked up with someone of similar age and background?
- Are parish informational packets presented to new parishioners?

- How does the parish website facilitate information sharing?
- How is the pastor involved in meeting the new parishioners?

3. Hospitality in liturgy and sacraments

For more information go to: <http://www.davenportdiocese.org/lit/liturgylibrary/litAssessmentToolforParishLiturgicalLife.pdf>

- Are sacramental preparation requirements communicated to families early enough and in a gracious, people-sensitive manner?
- Is the Sunday liturgy an engaging and welcoming celebration where people can greet one another before and after?
- Is the congregation mindful of visitors who are present? Are they reminded to welcome the stranger or non-parishioner?
- Are people with special needs given flexible options if they cannot meet program expectations before or after?
- Remember that today some young couples come to church for Christmas, Easter and the sacraments. We want them to become part of the faith community.
 - For couples being married, are they connected or paired up with other similar couples?
 - For parents having their first child baptized, are they connected or paired up with other couples or families so they will feel they belong?
- Weddings and funerals are great opportunities to evangelize and bring people back to church.
 - These events are times high emotions. Are people ministered to with sensitivity and kindness?