

Parishioner Movement

Development Guide

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO



In conjunction with:

Diocese of Rockford

Diocese of Joliet

Diocese of Peoria

Diocese of Springfield

Diocese of Belleville



Please check with your local Diocese for any changes to this document

These guidelines for parishioner movement in a Church reflect the updated guidance by government officials, healthcare professionals, and Church authorities.

These guidelines are based on current requirements for groups no greater than 10 in the church at any time. This is exclusive of all ministers and an usher or greeter.

Parishes should adapt only as necessary, *however, being careful not to violate social distancing, face covering, and sanitizing practices.*

Parishes or pastors may **NOT** alter number of allowed worshippers, social distancing, face covering, or sanitizing guidelines contained here.

How to Develop Your Plan

Parishioner Movement

General Notes:

- To keep the parishioners, church staff, and volunteers safe during the Covid-19 epidemic, it is critical to plan and practice the most effective way to greet parishioners, ensure safety, and provide them with a joyful experience when they arrive for Mass or sacrament.
- The floor of the church should have tape marks to assist in the movement of the parishioners to and from the entrance of the church and sanctuary and to and from their assigned seats to receive Communion.
- This document is to be used to assist in the parishioner flow within your parish. This is not your plan but a guide to create a specific plan for your church to ensure our reopening of the church conforms with CDC guidelines for social distancing to help mitigate the spread of Covid-19.
- It is recommended to have 5 volunteers assisting during a Mass to ensure that the flow of parishioners is not disrupted, and that they can be seated or directed around the church as quickly and efficiently as possible. This is critical to ensure that the parishioners do not congregate or get logjammed in the vestibule or any other location.

Interior Circulation

- Ushers will direct parishioners at all times, including directing in which pews to sit, where to stand, calling parishioners row-by-row for communion or reconciliation, and dismissing parishioners' row-by-row at the end of mass or rites.
- Aisles should be managed as one-way to the extent possible. A typical traffic pattern would be parishioners approach the front of the church, whether being seated or approaching the altar, using the main center aisle and then return to their pews or exit the church using outside aisles.
- Church seating should be filled from the front to the back and dismissed from the back to the front. This pattern limits standing parishioners walking past seated parishioners.
- Parishioners will form a single line, 6' apart when waiting for communion or in any other instance when approaching the front of the church.
- Doors should be propped open and clearly marked as entrance/exit

Determining the Optimal Movement Pattern

TASK #1

Visualizing the Floor Plan

Step 1: Determine the entrance and exit locations.

Note: Some parishes do not have an optimally located exit location that is different than where parishioners enter the sanctuary.

Step 2: Locate or draw the floor plan for the parish.

Note: You want to locate or create a floor plan to allow you to visualize how the parishioners will be able to move safely within your parish.

Step 3: Begin to visualize how parishioners will enter the church and be directed to their assigned seats.

Step 4: Determine the roles needed to safely move parishioners throughout the parish.

The optimal number of Greeters/Ushers is 5 for a Phase 2 sacraments, rites or Mass. It may be necessary to modify your plan based on the number of Volunteers you have for each Mass.

Step 5: Place markings on the floor to act as a guide for both the volunteers as well as the parishioners.

Roles and Responsibilities

The following roles are required to ensure the health and safety of everyone for a Mass of more than 10 worshippers:

Role	Responsibility
Greeter #1	<p>All attendees are to be greeted outside of the physical church building by a greeter. This greeter's responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcoming attendees back to the church • Ensuring each attendee has a reservation • Asking each attendee the COVID-19 screening questions • Ensuring all attendees are wearing masks or face coverings • Providing masks to attendees who do not already have one • Sending each attendee to a predesignated point where he or she will be further instructed by an Usher
Greeter #2	<p>Stationed outside the church, the second greeter is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with any attendee who does not have a prearranged reservation for the service • Managing any issues that may arise from the attendee's lack of a reservation • Determining if special consideration should be made to allow the attendee to participate in the Mass without a reservation if possible
Usher #1	<p>Ushers are stationed within the church to assist attendees in finding social-distance appropriate seats and for leading a careful, socially distant exit from the sanctuary after the rite has concluded. He or she is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sanitizing all attendees' hands prior to entering the sanctuary • Queuing the attendees to ensure that social distancing is being followed • Escorting each attendee/party to the next appropriate open pew (while following social distancing standards) • Explaining where to sit in the pew to the attendees • Ensuring that social distancing guidelines are being followed throughout the rite • At the end of the rite, coordinating a careful, controlled exit from the sanctuary, following all social distancing standards
Usher #2 and #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Escorting each attendee/party to the next appropriate open pew (while following social distancing standards) • Explaining where to sit in the pew to the attendees • Ensuring that social distancing guidelines are being followed throughout the rite • At the end of the rite, coordinating a careful, controlled exit from the sanctuary, following all social distancing standards
Cleaners	<p>Cleaners are the people who sanitize the sanctuary and surrounding areas following completion of the rite.</p>
Priest/Deacon	<p>The Priest/Deacon is the person who conducts the rite.</p>

Positioning of Volunteers

TASK #1

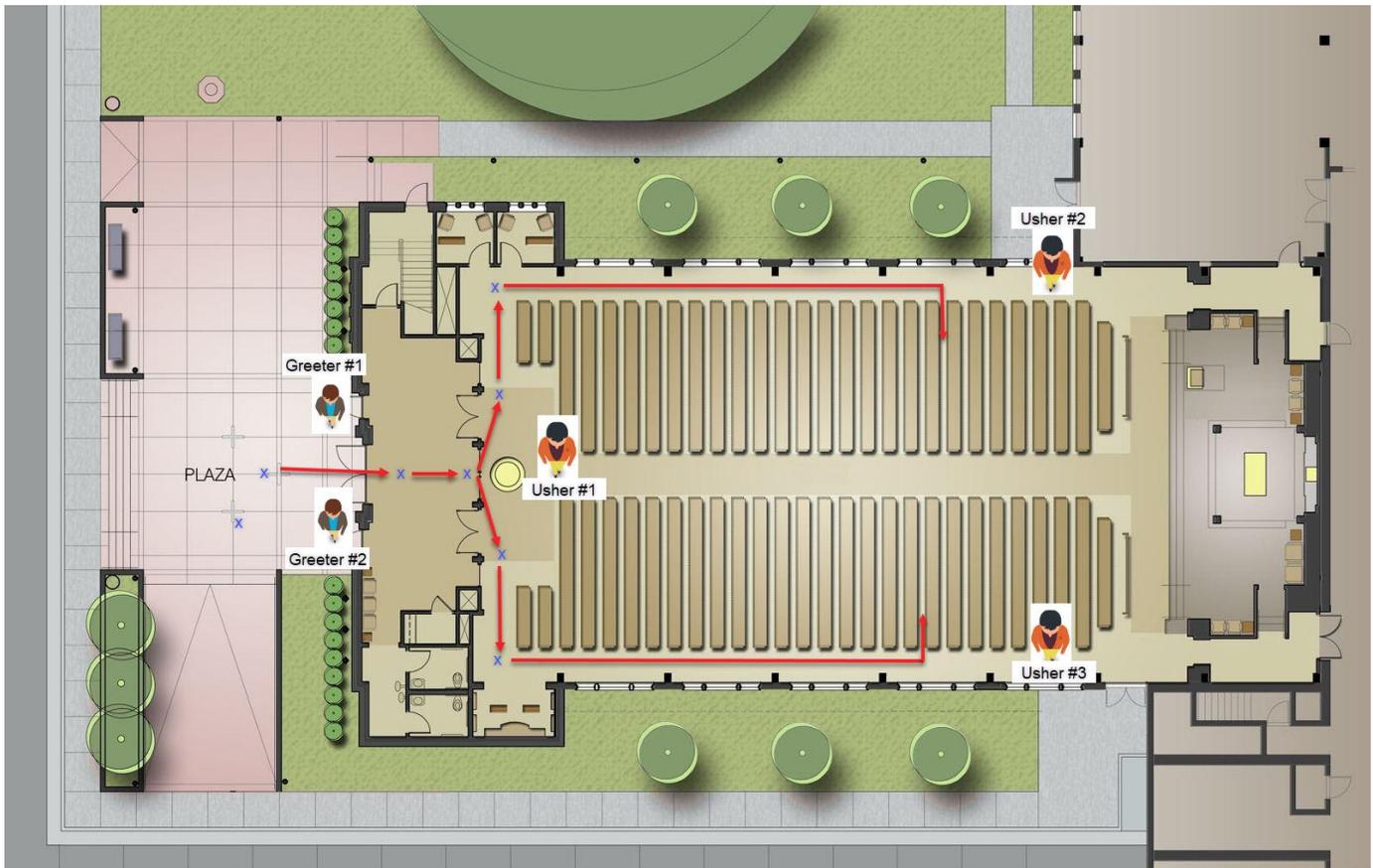
Position of Each Role

Each role plays an important part in the safety of the parishioners. It is only when they work in concert with each other that not only parishioners will feel safe and comfortable but also that we can assure guidelines are appropriately followed.

Communication and practice are critical to ensure a smooth entrance and seating. Have the team practice prior to allowing parishioners into Mass or sacrament.

Recommended positioning of ushers and greeters based on the diagram below

- The Xs represent the tape marks on the floor to assist parishioners in maintaining social distancing and helping them understand where they are to move.
- The arrows represent how the parishioners move throughout the parish, vestibule, and sanctuary.
- Parishes are all different, but it is important to understand where the choke points are within your parish.
- The choke points represent those locations where there is the greatest chance of breaking social distancing rules. In this example, it is the vestibule right outside the sanctuary where all participants must go through one set of doors. Should many parishioners arrive at one time, the vestibule would be at risk of violating social distancing guidelines.



TASK #3

Flow of Attendees

Step 1: Ensure that all volunteers know their part in the safety process.

Step 2: Communicate with parishioners.

Everyone is excited and looking forward to returning to sacrament. You must communicate clearly and kindly as you move them into and out of the parish.

Step 3: Fill the pews from front to back.

To ensure that minimal contact is made with the parishioners during this process, fill the pews starting from the front-most available pew and work your way to the back of the parish.

Step 4: Empty the pews from back to front.

Once the service is completed, it is critical that you communicate the process for exiting the church. The Greeters

should move to the front of the pews and ensure that no one leaves their pew until the usher gives them the okay to do so.

Step 5: Debrief after the service.

Things will not always go smoothly; it is important to not just focus on the mistakes but also on the successes. The successes become the foundation for how you can continue to improve and learn.

Planning for Fewer Volunteers

TASK #1

Reconfiguring the Parishioner Movement

Planning for the Expected and Unexpected

You may never have as many volunteers as you would like for a service. It is critical that several plans are developed and available to accommodate the parishioners while maintaining social distancing standards. Revisit your optimal plan and begin to think about how you would change the parishioner flow with fewer volunteers.

For example, if you plan on having 5 volunteers and at the start of the rite you only have 4 show up – what are you going to do?

Remember: This document is not your plan. Rather, this guideline will help you think about how to create multiple plans and configurations in case you don't have enough volunteers to run your optimal plan.

TASK #2

Creating the Plan

The Roles and responsibilities have been modified to accommodate four volunteers. The Greeter is responsible for all Greeter responsibilities including managing conflict and accommodating parishioners as required. User 2 and 3 roles have been combined into a single Usher role

Roles and Responsibilities

The following roles are required to ensure the health and safety of everyone for a Mass of more than 10 worshippers:

Role	Responsibility
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Usher #1

Ushers are stationed within the sanctuary to assist attendees in finding social-distance appropriate seats and for leading a careful, socially distant exit from the sanctuary after the rite has concluded. He or she is responsible for:

- Sanitizing all attendees' hands prior to entering the sanctuary
- Queuing the attendees to ensure that social distancing is being followed
- Escorting each attendee/party to the next appropriate open pew (while following social distancing standards)
- Explaining where to sit in the pew to the attendees
- Ensuring that social distancing guidelines are being followed throughout the rite
- At the end of the rite, coordinating a careful, controlled exit from the sanctuary, following all social distancing standards

Usher #2

- Escorting each attendee/party to the next appropriate open pew (while following social distancing standards)
- Explaining where to sit in the pew to the attendees
- Ensuring that social distancing guidelines are being followed throughout the rite
- At the end of the rite, coordinating a careful, controlled exit from the sanctuary, following all social distancing standards

Cleaner

Cleaners are the people who sanitize the sanctuary and surrounding areas following completion of the rite.

Priest/Deacon

The Priest/Deacon is the person who conducts the rite.

Positioning of Volunteers

TASK #1

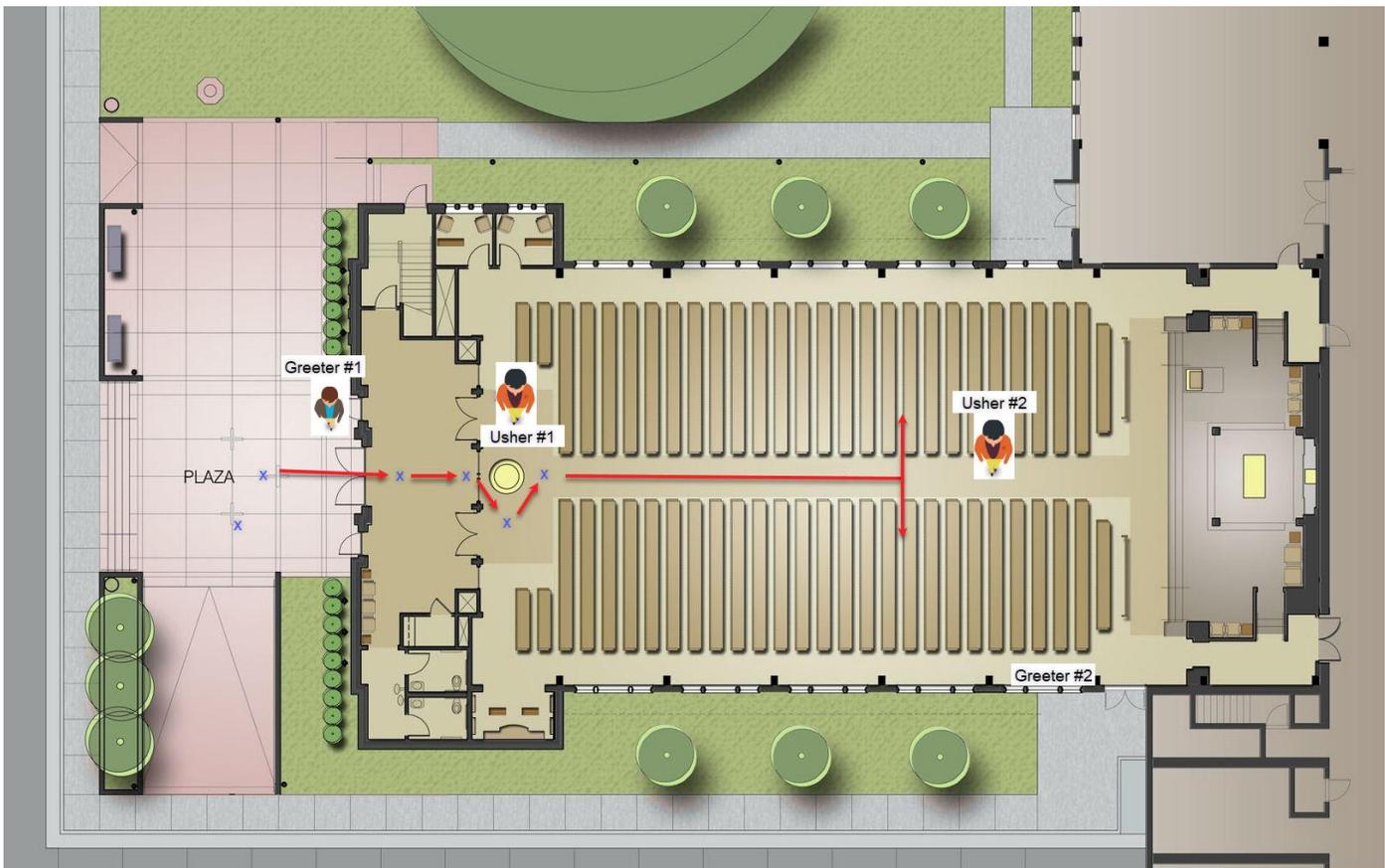
Position of each Role

Each role plays an important part in the safety of the parishioners. It is only when they work in concert with each other that the parishioners will feel safe and comfortable.

Communication and practice are critical to ensure a smooth entrance and seating. Have the team practice prior to allowing parishioners into Mass or sacrament.

Recommended Role Positioning:

- The Xs represent the tape marks on the floor to assist parishioners in maintaining social distancing and helping them understand where they are to move.
- The arrows represent how the parishioners move throughout the parish, vestibule, and sanctuary.
- Parishes are all different, but it is important to understand where the choke points are within your parish.
- The choke points represent those locations where there is the greatest chance of breaking social distancing rules. In this example, it is the vestibule right outside the sanctuary.



TASK #3

Flow of Attendees

Step 1: Ensure that all volunteers know their part in the safety process.

Step 2: Communicate with parishioners.

Everyone is excited and looking forward to returning to Mass and sacrament. You must communicate clearly and kindly as you move them into and out of the parish.

Step 4: Empty the pews from back to front.

Once the service is completed, it is critical that you communicate the process for exiting the church. The Greeters should move to the front of the pews and ensure that no one leaves their pew until the usher gives them the okay to do so. In this configuration you would want to fill both pews on the left and right prior to moving to the next available pew.

Step 4: Empty the pews from back to front.

Once the service is completed, it is critical that you communicate the process for exiting the church. The Greeters should move to the front of the pews and ensure that no one leaves their pew until the usher gives them the okay to do so.

Step 5: Debrief after the service.

Things will not always go smoothly; it is important to not just focus on the mistakes but also on the successes. The successes become the foundation for how you can continue to improve and learn.