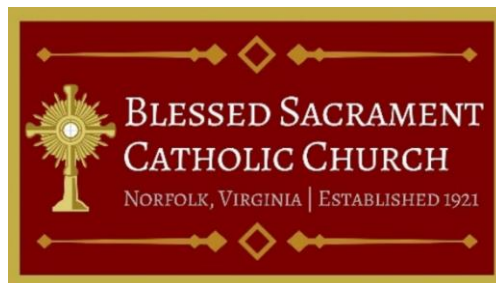


# Porter Manual



Revised September 2023

## **The Role of the Porter**

The order of “porter” is an ancient minor order conferred as the office of caring for the dignity of the house of God and of maintaining order therein. During the early persecutions it was necessary to indicate to the faithful the time and place of divine service, and to keep the doors of the place of meeting locked against intruders. This was the duty of the “porters” and “messengers of God.” The duties of this office are pointed out by the bishop to be: “To strike the cymbal and ring the bell, to open the church and the sanctuary, and the book of him who preaches.” These duties are symbolic for the still higher duty “of closing to the devil and opening to God, by their word and example, the invisible house of God, namely, the hearts of the faithful.”

In the Church today, the role of porter no longer exists in its ancient capacity; however, the newer roles of greeters and ushers have morphed into similar roles with different purposes. The greeters and ushers are the first representatives of the Church that parishioners encounter when they attend Mass. It is imperative, therefore, that they maintain a welcoming attitude, be knowledgeable of their responsibilities, and execute their duties.

## **Patron Saint of Porters**

Saint Julian the Hospitaller (Feast Day – 12 February) – Noble layman; friend and counselor to the king, he was married to a wealthy widow. A stag he was hunting predicted he would kill his own parents. Julian moved far away to avoid his parents, but they found him and came to make a surprise visit. His wife gave them her and Julian’s bed; Julian killed them, thinking they were his wife and another man.

As penance, he and his wife traveled to Rome, Italy as pilgrims seeking absolution. On his way home, to continue his penance, Julian built a hospice beside a river, cared for the poor and sick, and rowed travelers across the river for free.

Once, after having helped many, many travelers, Julian gave his own bed to a pilgrim leper who had nearly frozen to death. When they had him safely settled, the man suddenly revealed himself to be an angel. The visitor announced that Christ had accepted Julian’s penance; the angel then disappeared.



## Procedures for the Mass

### Before Mass

- ⦿ Dress appropriately to serve as a liturgical minister at the Sacrifice of the Mass. Modesty is key.
  - ✘ Men – Business Casual or higher is preferred, however a buttoned shirt/polo with trousers is fine. No shorts, no t-shirts, and please refrain from wearing jeans. If you wear sandals, please wear closed toed or wear socks.
  - ✘ Women – Business Casual or higher is preferred, however a blouse and pants/skirt is fine. No shorts, no t-shirts, no dresses/skirts above the knee(s), and please refrain from wearing jeans. Open toed footwear is acceptable for women.
  - ✘ Thought – displaying/wearing a color that coincides with the Liturgical calendar is a nice touch.
- ⦿ Check in with Ministry Scheduler Pro in the narthex at least 35 minutes before Mass.

### Greeters

- ⦿ Arrive at BSCC early enough to commence your duties 35 minutes prior Mass. The Greeter will position near the main church entrance.
- ⦿ Be sure to check-in in the Narthex, deliver any pyx for Eucharist to the sick and homebound, go to the restroom, drop of items to the kitchen, prior to positioning at 35 minutes before the Mass.
- ⦿ Conduct an accurate count of Mass attendees.
  - ✘ Guidelines for this are: count all people who enter [can enter] the church under their own power. Babies/infants in strollers should not be counted, however elderly in transport chairs should be counted, even if they are assisted by someone.
  - ✘ Be sure to position yourself to count all people arriving through the main entrance and from the rear church entrance.
  - ✘ Be careful not to ‘double count’ individuals going to the restroom.
  - ✘ Use the record sheet to record for each Mass.
- ⦿ Be sure to greet all people arriving in a cheerful and welcoming manner.
- ⦿ Be ready to direct people to the bathrooms, social hall/kitchen [for food drop off], the pantry, and the church proper.
  - ✘ If there is a special event (baptism, first communion) or they are visitors, they will look to the Greeter to direct them.
- ⦿ Post-Mass and prior to the processional departing, position yourself near the main entrance and pass out church bulletins. Bid a fond farewell to those departing the church and encourage the Mass attendees to partake in any post-Mass event in the social hall.

## Ushers

- ⦿ Arrive at BSCC early enough to commence your duties 35 minutes prior Mass.
- ⦿ Be sure to check-in in the Narthex, deliver any pyx for Eucharist to the sick and homebound, go to the restroom, drop of items to the kitchen, prior to positioning at 35 minutes before the Mass.
- ⦿ Greet people arriving at the main entrance in a cheerful and welcoming manner.
  - ⊗ Hold the door open for all people using the main entrance.
  - ⊗ Weather dependent, the main doors can be fixed open at 15 minutes before Mass.
  - ⊗ The main doors should be returned to “closed” position at the beginning of the Entrance Hymn.
  - ⊗ An Usher should remain at the Main entrance, holding the door for late arrivals until 5 minutes after Mass commences.
- ⦿ The center doors at the back of the church proper should be closed 15 minutes prior to Mass starting.
  - ⊗ An usher should remain in the narthex so that they can open the center door for people, but the usher’s main task is to:
    - ⦿ Hold the door for the processional.
    - ⦿ Ensure people arriving after the processional enters the sacristan use the side doors for entrance.
- ⦿ At least two Ushers should remain in the Narthex to assist people arriving late to Mass to find seating in the church proper.
  - ⊗ Ushers should hold people from entering the church proper until there is a ‘transition’ in the liturgy, so as to minimize any disruptions.
  - ⊗ Direct people to the bathrooms, nursery, etc.
- ⦿ Conduct the collection of tithing.
  - ⊗ Check the three drop boxes for tithing. Condense all tithing into the money bag in the offertory basket.
  - ⊗ Open the center doors at the beginning of the general intercessions.
  - ⊗ Position with collection baskets (pole baskets) prior to the priest concluding the petitions.
    - ⦿ Two ushers on center aisle, left and right.
    - ⦿ One usher on confessional side aisle.
    - ⦿ One Usher on Italian crucifix aisle, one Usher in the St. Cecilia section
    - or --
    - One Usher in St. Cecilia section who will also collect on the Italian crucifix aisle.
  - ⊗ Walk down assigned aisle as the Cantor begins the offertory hymn, bow to the Alter, and begin collecting.
    - ⦿ Don’t rush people, be wary of those ‘struggling’ to find a tithing.
    - ⦿ Be wary of where your basket is positioned, especially in the center aisle.
  - ⊗ Deposit all tithing into the offertory basket in the Narthex.

- ⦿ Brief the gift bearers on their delivery.
  - ✘ The gift bearers will be escorted by the Crucifer.
  - ✘ The gift bearers will all line up in front of the priest.
  - ✘ The gift bearers will present the (1) Wine to the priest, (2) unconsecrated host to the priest, (3) offertory basket to the altar server.
  - ✘ The gift bearers will bow in unison, and then return to their seats.
- ⦿ Upon the gift bearers processing down the center aisle, remove the gift table and place in the Narthex, then close the center doors.
- ⦿ Act as guide for Eucharist
  - ✘ Open center doors when Eucharist is delivered to the Altar Servers.
  - ✘ Position at rear of the congregation.
    - ⦿ Two ushers on center aisle, left and right.
    - ⦿ One Usher in St. Cecilia section.
  - ✘ Walk down assigned aisle when Eucharist is delivered to the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion and bow to the altar.
  - ✘ Allow individuals to exit pews to receive Holy Communion.
    - ⦿ Check to make sure kneeler is up for easy exit from pew.
    - ⦿ Ensure people at far end of pew are aware their pew is processing up.
    - ⦿ Hold pew behind until all have exited, allow one pew spacing before next pew exits. (NOTE – spacing must be closer the farther forward in the church you are).
    - ⦿ Ensure persons in the Narthex are invited to join the Communion line.
    - ⦿ Usher in the St. Cecilia section should check the nursery for individuals who want to receive Holy Communion when complete.
    - ⦿ Ushers in center aisle should balance the two center lines by directing people to move to the shorter line.
    - ⦿ Ushers should be the last to receive Holy Communion (NOTE – Be prepared to instruct people if asked on how to receive Eucharist, or how to receive a blessing if they are unable to receive)
  - ✘ Close the center doors to the church proper.
- ⦿ After the “Prayer after Communion,” open the center door of the church proper when the priest moves to the Altar.
  - ✘ Altar Servers will be positioned for the recessional near the center aisle.
- ⦿ An usher should open the main entrance doors and assist the Greeter in distributing bulletins.
- ⦿ An usher MUST retrieve the Offertory Basket and secure the tithings.
  - ✘ Retrieve the offertory basket from the left side of the Altar.
  - ✘ Remove deposit bag from basket, return basket to drop box table.
  - ✘ After [most] people exit the church, check all three drop boxes for additional tithings.

- ✘ Two ushers should take the deposit bag to main office.
  - ⚡ Ensure all tithing is in deposit bag.
  - ⚡ Remove excess air from deposit bag, seal the bag.
  - ⚡ Both ushers should initial the bag on the top tear strip and on the bag body.
  - ⚡ Both ushers should witness the deposit bag inserted into the safe-door drop slot.
  - ⚡ Secure the office.
- ⚡ Return usher badge to side table outside of main office.
- ⚡ All ushers should 'check-out' with Usher (1).
  - ✘ Ushers may be asked to assist the Sacristan in post-Mass duties.

### **Lead Usher Responsibilities**

Usher (1) is the lead usher; they have additional responsibilities over the Greeter/Usher Team. Along with all general Usher responsibilities, Usher (1) will need to ensure the following tasks are accomplished:

- ⚡ Ensure the appropriate Mass deposit bag is in the drop box in the Narthex.
- ⚡ Check with Sacristan about any special events at Mass (baptism, second collection, blessings, etc...).
- ✘ Brief Greeter/Usher Team on schedule modifications.
- ⚡ Ensure Gift Bearers are identified by 5 minutes before Mass.
  - ✘ Need three minimum, prefer a family (more family members can accompany the bearers).
  - ✘ Two bears can be used if an usher bears the offertory basket.
  - ✘ Bearers should be instructed to proceed to the Narthex when the Ushers commence the collection.
  - ✘ Usher needs to brief the gift bearers.
- ⚡ Ensure Center Aisle doors and Main Entrance doors are opened/closed at appropriate time(s).
- ⚡ Ensure tithing is properly secured after Mass.
- ⚡ Ensure the Main Entrance doors are closed when the priest returns inside the church after the end of the liturgy.
- ⚡ Ensure all Greeter/Usher duties are addressed, recruit people from the Mass if extra ushers are required for specific tasks.
- ⚡ Return the offertory table back to its position at the baptismal font.

