



Making Everybody Welcome

Tips for Becoming a More Welcoming Parish

- Check that Mass times are clearly displayed and accurate.
- Ensure notice boards are up to date and colourful and link in to neighbouring churches, the local community and the wider world.
- Encourage everyone to have an attitude of welcome to visitors and newcomers. The priest/welcomer might say a few words of welcome at the beginning of the Mass.
- At the Sign of Peace, remember to include those who have come to Mass alone.
- Encourage everyone, priests and people, to make eye contact with those with whom they exchange the Sign of Peace.
- Welcome children to Mass by providing toys/books for little ones who become restless. Are parents invited to take their children to the Children's Liturgy of the Word? Do you ever have liturgies/pram services designed for young families?
- Make sure people's basic needs are looked after. Are the toilets clean and well supplied with toilet rolls, clean towels and soap? Have you thought about providing nappies and tissues?
- Invite clergy, welcomers and PPC members to be available to meet people after Mass.
- Ask a group of people to be responsible for inviting new parishioners into coffee with them after Mass. Look out for those who have come to Mass alone.
- Develop Ministry of Welcome teams for all Sunday Masses, Christmas, Easter and for baptisms and funerals. Ensure a good mix of age groups and ethnic origins in your team.
- Develop a Welcome Card for newcomers which is either given out or laid out on the pews and regularly replaced. The card might include some words of welcome, information about parish groups and events with contact details and an invitation for new parishioners to give their details in to the parish office. Who is responsible for following up these new contacts?

- Compile a Welcome Pack for new parishioners which includes Mass times, details and contact information about parish organisations and ministries and an invitation to get involved. How will these packs be given to new parishioners? Would some people be willing to call on new parishioners?
- Prepare a Parish Handbook with details of parish life, contact details etc. There will be people in the parish who have skills in producing this kind of Handbook – they may be glad to have their expertise valued.
- Remember to welcome your priest, especially when he is new and just finding his way around the parish.
- Explore ways in which the church can be open during the week. Could you ensure that one church in your area is open every day and advertise this?
- Think good access for people with disabilities. Is the sound system effective? Do you produce large print versions of the bulletin? Is your loop system tested regularly?
- Look for ways in which parishioners can get to know PPC members e.g. a photo gallery on display or wearing badges. Do PPC members greet people after Mass and try to attend the after-Mass coffee regularly?
- Try to schedule parish events at different times e.g. during the day as well as the evenings.
- Occasionally invite everyone attending Mass to wear a name badge
- Have a regular (every 3/6/12 months) welcome party for new parishioners. Include all age groups.

