

## AN INVITATION TO PARISH TEENS

Every six to eight weeks our Parish Pastoral Council meets to discuss parish life and brainstorm ways to make parish life better for everyone. One of our ongoing discussions involves reaching out to teenagers to help them become more involved in parish life and feel more connected and appreciated. There are a number of ways we hope to do that in coming months, but here's one that can begin right now.

We'd like to invite teenagers (8<sup>th</sup> grade thru high school or college) to assist our adult weekend Mass Ushers with the offertory collection. With our new system of passing a smaller basket from one person to another, our Ushers sometimes find themselves short-handed. But at a couple of recent Masses, teens were recruited to help out and did a great job. We're not looking to replace our faithful and generous adult Ushers but rather to give them – literally – a hand in this particular part of their ministry. Our adult Ushers will still retain their most important role as Ministers of Hospitality, welcoming people when they arrive and passing out bulletins at the end of Mass. And they will still be in charge of managing the offertory collection at all Masses.

But parish teens could assume a portion of this important ministry at whatever Mass they attend. Rather than being assigned to a particular Mass each weekend as our adult Ushers are, teens would be able to introduce themselves to an Usher when they arrive for any Mass (hopefully at least five minutes before the start of Mass!) and then be assigned to a position for the offertory collection. There are many instances when this would be an enormous help as well as an opportunity for parish teens to feel more valued and connected during our common prayer.

If you're in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, high school or college and would be interested in helping out, please give me a call (708-798-0622, ext. 2) or e-mail me at [rkyfes@poshhomewood.org](mailto:rkyfes@poshhomewood.org). There would be a relatively brief training session you'd be expected to attend so that you could feel comfortable and competent in helping with the offertory collection whenever you come to Mass. This is also a good time to remind everyone that teenagers can also serve as Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers when they reach the age of 16 and, of course, have received the Sacrament of Confirmation. And teens can continue to minister as Altar Servers as long as they like!

I'll look forward to hearing from you soon.

Fr. Bob