

FIRE ALARM POLICY

SHOULD the fire alarm sound during Mass, safety must be the primary concern. It is also important to give children the consistent message that fire alarms must be taken seriously whether they are in school, or church, or home, or in any public building. We cannot assume that the sextons forgot to turn the alarm off and the incense caused it to sound. The alarms are turned off only in the church and smoke sacristy, so a fire elsewhere in the building could cause the alarm to sound.

When the alarm sounds, the rector, if present, or else the celebrant stops the Mass and calmly asks people to leave the church by the nearest exit. The ushers are responsible for seeing that people leave in an orderly manner and assisting disabled persons as needed.

The sexton is responsible for checking the indicator box located inside the front door and placing a back-up call to the fire department.

Remember that elderly persons may be in the restrooms and the head usher should delegate one person to check them only if there is no threat of immediate danger. Professional rescuers are the only people who should take risks in an emergency.

The head of the Sunday School is responsible for evacuating the classrooms and nursery, understanding that parents will be anxious and come to help their children leave. Keep all of the children together so that they may be accounted for until their parents come to accept them.

Only if there is no threat of immediate danger, and the consecration has started, the celebrant and sacred ministers may complete the canon and remove the consecrated species from altar and tabernacle. The sacristan may assist as needed. Safety is the first concern. No one should remain in a burning building to complete Mass.