**Diocese of Kansas City- St. Joseph**

**Guidelines for Visiting Musicians/Organists**

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| **Before the Service date** |
|  | Request a copy of the order of worship. (Music list/menu) |
|  | Presider(s) for the service?  |
|  | Music coordinator contact information? (Person requesting your services)  |
|  | Names and contact information of additional instrumentalists for this service?  |
|  | Is there a phone number to be called if the church is not open?  |
|  | Are there elements not included the order of Service?  |
|  | What information is needed for payment?  |
|  | Are there any other parish customs? (Example: during Lent, no preludes/postludes)  |
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| **Building** |
|  | What times is the building available for practice? |
|  | How do I get into the building for practice and the Service?  |
|  | Is there any information needed for parking?  |
|  | What time will the church be open on the day of the Service?  |
|  | What is the rehearsal time and location with the cantor/choir?  |
|  | Can the organist see the altar, cantor, choir director, etc., from the instrument?  |
|  | Are any instruments miked?  |
|  | What information is needed about the audio/soundsystem? (location, levels, etc.)  |
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| **Hymns and Service Music** |
|  | Which hymnal(s) is/are used?  |
|  | Are copies of the hymns and service in a separate binder?  |
|  | Are the hymns announced?  |
|  | How many stanzas are sung?  |
|  | Are interludes before the final verse expected?  |
|  | What introductions are familiar to the congregation?  |
|  | What Mass parts, Psalm, Gospel acclamation will be sung for the service?  |
|  | Are there any places during the service where improvisation is needed?  |
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| **Instrument(s)** |
|  | Which instruments will be played for the service?  |
|  | Are the instruments locked? Where are the Organ-piano keys kept?  |
|  | Are memory level(s) or pistons available for guest organists?  |
|  | Which pistons have the typical hymn-accompaniment registration? |
|  | Anything tricky about the instrument? (e.g., sticking keys, ciphers, unusual method to set the pistons and powering up the instrument.) |
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| **Planning prelude/postlude** |
|  | Choose music based on ease and the number of general pistons you have available.  |
|  | What is the expected length for preludes, offertories, and postludes? (Suggestion: choose pieces that require minimal or no piston changes.)  |
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| **On the day of the Service** |
|  | Review the order of worship and verify it is the same as what you have planned.  |
|  | Introduce yourself to the presider, cantor, choir director, etc.  |
|  | Register prelude, postlude, anthem.  |
|  | Check the regular hymn/service music accompaniment pistons.  |
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| **After the Service** |
|  | Keep a document about the church, so that you don’t have to revisit them every time you substitute.  |
|  | Keep copies of the orders of worship (music menu/list) from each church and review them when substituting again.  |
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| **Other Strategies and Tips** |
|  | Use color-coded sticky notes to quickly signal which manual you intend to use.  |
|  | Find a “designated nodder” in the choir or ask the cantor to help with cues.  |
|  | If you substitute for funerals and weddings regularly, keep a binder ready with frequently used hymns and other music. All your music will be ready at a moment’s notice!  |