

Gathering Space Guidelines

St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish

“The Gathering Space or Narthex is a place of welcome—a threshold space between the congregation’s space and the outside environment. In the early days of the Church it was a “waiting area” for catechumens and penitents. Today it serves as gathering space and as the entrance and exit to the building. The gathering space helps believers to make the transition from everyday life to the celebration of the liturgy; and after the liturgy, it helps them return to daily life to live out the mystery that has been celebrated.”

(Built of Living Stones, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.)

If the church proper can be likened to a dining room, our Gathering Space is something like the parish’s family room: we greet one another before and after the liturgy, spending time with our fellow parishioners just like our family “hangs out” together...we gather around the bodies of our deceased members and visit with their families...we decorate it for the seasons of the year just like we do our own homes...we post news about the parish’s life (just like our children’s artwork!)...we collect the charitable gifts we offer to the poor and needy...we hang portraits of our parish family’s members.

As it is our parish’s “family room”, we need some guidelines to help respect each other and our parish campus, and provide adequately for the parish’s ministerial needs, while also observing the fire code. Therefore, the following norms are to be observed:

1. The literature racks, Outreach Kiosk, vocations table, etc. are for official parish usage only. The monitoring of these areas is the responsibility of the pastoral team. If you would like to include your ministry’s materials in the literature racks or utilize the other furniture, please contact the appropriate member of the pastoral team. Unapproved materials may be discarded without notice.
2. Use of the Gathering Space for special events, fundraisers, activity signups, etc. should be secured as soon as you know you need it. Contact the facility scheduler to reserve the space.

Details regarding weekend usage of the Gathering Space:

-On a non-Fellowship Weekend, there is space for 4 ministries/organizations, each with ½ of an 8’ table, scheduled through the facility scheduler in the parish office. If there are less than 4 groups, one group may be able to utilize a whole table.

-Normally, Outreach activity takes place at the Outreach Kiosk, and is coordinated through the Pastoral Associate for Outreach. If an Outreach

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ministry or activity requires more space, they can request one of the table spaces but will ordinarily have lower priority than other groups due to the dedicated space available at the Outreach Kiosk.

-On Fellowship Weekend, two whole tables are dedicated to food. One table is dedicated to Vocations Committee. These are the only 2 activities permitted.

3. Our Gathering Space is not available to “outside” organizations without prior approval of, and at the discretion of, the pastoral team.
4. All religious materials or pamphlets for sale or distribution must be reviewed and approved in advance by a member of the pastoral team.
5. Distribution of political materials is strictly prohibited.
6. Nothing is to be taped or adhered to the doors, windows, floors and/or walls in the Gathering Space (or any of our campus buildings) without the express permission of the facilities staff. Consider utilizing the TV screens for publicizing your event or activity by contacting the communications coordinator.
7. Serving food for immediate consumption (outside of the normal Fellowship Weekend arrangements) should have prior approval by a member of the pastoral team.
8. For all physical arrangements such as tables, easels, etc., contact the Pastoral Associate for Facilities Management and Maintenance at least one week prior.