Dear Ministers of Hospitality:

Welcome back from what I hope was a refreshing summer for you and your families.

As we begin the post-Labor Day "new year" here at SJV, I want to thank you for your gift to the Parish.

Your ministry of welcome and hospitality is so very important, and your participation, so appreciated.

The fact is, as we understand Liturgy and Sacramental Life in its fullest sense, every service begins long before the priest or deacon "starts" the proceedings.

If we see Liturgy for its literal meaning, "the work of the people," and Sacraments as "outward signs inward grace," then , your welcoming of our community to worship is, indeed, a ministry and an integral part of the Liturgies and the Sacrament we celebrate.

Theology aside, just from a purely psychological point of view, the quality and character of your welcome sets the tone for each person's experience of the Liturgy.

Your smile, your authentic "Good to see you!," your enthusiastic "here's your worship aid," your compassionate " I see you are new here—if I can do anything to make you feel at home, just let me know," these simple sacraments make all the difference in how our regular community, and our visitors, experience the Liturgy.

On the pragmatic side of this, here's the curious thing about Ministry of Hospitality here at SJV: We always get plenty of people to sign up to do welcoming and greeting, but, when it actually comes to filling in the slots at each door each Sunday, we often are short.

So, to more consistently match the needs of the community with the actual availability of you good folks, Betsy Noga, the Ministry of Hospitality coordinator and I are asking you to return back to us this simple availability/commitment form. We'll collect all the forms, and send out to you a schedule of assignments, together with a roster of your fellow ministers so that you can arrange amongst yourselves for substitutes when needed.

Again thanking you people who are the first line in the Sacramental experience of our Liturgies, I am, yours appreciatively,