



## C. Children's Offering and Parish Culture

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Your parish has a unique culture that is influenced by everyone who participates in it. Creating a welcoming and gracious atmosphere at the parish is an essential step toward drawing people into the mission of the parish. Only then can we invite others to know Christ and the Gospel.

Structure a **Children's Offering** project to help families understand stewardship. Our Sunday Visitor, [www.osv.com](http://www.osv.com), has abundant resources for helping form attitudes and actions for giving. Creating a holy home – what Pope St. John Paul II often called the domestic church – begins with a prayerful acknowledgment and appreciation of all the gifts God has given us.

- Use a children's offering activity at Mass to provide a public witness of gratitude.

### Hospitality and Evangelization

As we seek to welcome everyone, even strangers, we must make sure they feel at home. First and foremost, this invitation should be directed toward their needs with sensitivity to their individual circumstances.

Foster a welcoming, stewardship parish by having regular **greeters** before Mass. Remember, we are Christ's ambassadors (2 Corinthians 5:20). Providing hospitality to strangers is a hallmark of Christian stewardship. In the Gospel of Matthew, good stewards were commended for their hospitality: "*I was a stranger and you welcomed me.*" (Matthew 25:35)

There is a lot of anecdotal evidence suggesting that the ability of a first-time visitor to have a meaningful experience of Christ in the liturgy is directly impacted by the warmth of the welcome extended by the local worshipping community. When people say hello, the worship experience is enhanced. A warm welcome is part of evangelization, work necessary in a church's mission to help people discover or renew faith in Christ.

*"I was a stranger  
and you welcomed  
me."*

*(Matthew 25:35)*