

PROCEDURES FOR TAMPER-EVIDENT BAG USE

Preparation for bag use

- The parish business manager, bookkeeper or other representative (other than a member of a volunteer counting group) should place a sufficient supply of the tamper-evident pre-numbered plastic bags in the designated area in the church building (sacristy) prior to each day's Mass. At least one bag should be available for each collection at each Mass.
- Bags should be labeled as to the Mass date & time. The bag numbers should be recorded on the control sheet designating a specific bag number for each collection at each Mass. This roster of bag numbers and the Masses for which they are designated should be kept in a secure place for later comparison when the bags are opened and counted by the volunteer counting team(s). A Tamper-Evident Bag Control Log form is attached.
- A designated person, such as the Head Usher for each Mass is responsible for obtaining the bag(s) before Mass.
- A small emergency supply of extra, number-controlled bags can be on hand in case one of the bags malfunctions or in case another bag is needed because of collection volumes. They should be accounted for each week by the Parish business manager, bookkeeper, or other representative at the time new bags are supplied each week.

Head Usher

- When the collection is finished, the Head Usher and one additional person at each Mass will empty the entire collection from the basket into the numbered tamper-evident plastic bag(s). Each bag is to be signed and dated with a permanent marking pen by the two individuals (this may be done prior to inserting the money into the bags). The bag is to be brought to the altar as part of the gifts or put directly into a safe.
- To seal the plastic bag, remove the paper strip (liner) from the adhesive area at the top of the bag and fold the flap down and seal the tamper-evident plastic bag. Ensure that the contents are properly secured. If the bag is spoiled or unusable the spoiled bag should be kept and not thrown away—it is to be put into the substitute bag that should be available. The paper strip is to be signed by the Head Usher (and one additional person) and attached to the copy of the control log.
- The tamper-evident plastic bag(s), once sealed, will be put into the locked and secured area until it can be opened in the joint custody of the volunteer money counters according to the appropriate procedures. At the final Mass of the weekend the control sheet should also be placed in the locked and secured area until it can be compared by the counting team.

Money Counting Team(s)

- Before opening, the numbers on the bag(s) shall be compared to the numbers on the control sheet and the paper strip liners. The money

counting team(s) (at least two people present) will open the bag(s) with a pair of scissors. The bags should not be ripped open. If there is a discrepancy with the control numbers or if the bag appears to have been tampered with, the counting team should contact the pastor, parish business manager, or bookkeeper; who will in turn contact the Diocesan Director of Administration & Finance (906-227-9114 or 1-800-562-9745, ext. 114).

- The volunteer counting team is to prepare the deposit according to diocesan policies (copy attached). No currency/coin/checks are to be removed from the collection by anyone for any purpose. The Tamper-Evident Bag Control Log Sheet should be attached to the Sunday Collection Control Sheet/Deposit Summary. The parish business manager or bookkeeper is to monitor the entire process including verification of bag numbers assigned and used. The Parish Finance Council should monitor and periodically review the procedures followed by the Parish business manager or bookkeeper and the volunteer counting teams.