

Guidelines for Lectors

Lector's Prayer

May the Lord be in our heart, on our mind, and on our lips, that we may worthily proclaim his Word.

Thank you for volunteering to serve our parish in this way. The ministry of lector is one of the most visible roles of service at liturgy. We appreciate you for being willing to take that ministry seriously, preparing well for it, and helping the community's Scripture reading become the living Word of God.

DRESS AND DECORUM

1. As public witnesses to the Eucharist, our behavior and dress should reflect a real respect for the role of service we perform. That is why the Church asks that those who are not living the Catholic faith not come forward for this ministry. This does not mean we have to be perfect, only that in general, our lives conform to Catholic principles. It is expected that you will be a registered parishioner as well. At times, for various personal reasons, one goes through a period of uncertainty as to one's relationship with the Church. If that occurs, it is best to take some time off from exercising this ministry of Lector.
2. Dress should be appropriate for Sunday: no flip-flops, T-shirts, sweatshirts, shorts, and so on. The Lector should be dressed in a way that can be an example for others.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES OF LECTORS

1. The lector has a responsibility to the whole community to proclaim the readings in a very clear way, since he/she will be the instrument through whom the people hear God's Word. Preparation and practice are to be an important part of the lector's routine.
2. Lectors should arrive in the sacristy area at least 15 minutes before Mass. The reason for getting there early is that this allows time for the lector to review the readings and the petitions, as well as to receive occasional special instructions. If there are optional readings or if there are long and short

versions of a reading, check with the presider for the correct reading. Confirm that the large red Lectionary has a ribbon marking the proper readings.

3. The lector will normally process in as part of the Entrance Procession. The Lector should be about 6 feet from the altar servers and holds the Lectionary up (front forward) so that it can be seen, about head high or slightly higher. The focus is on the symbol which calls attention to the meaning behind the symbol – God’s Word.

When the procession reaches the front, it should not stop, but continue to flow. The lector follows the altar servers up the front steps, around the altar, bows to the tabernacle at the same time as the presider, and then places the Lectionary on the ambo and opens it to the first reading. The lector then goes to their seat.

4. After the Opening prayer, the lector waits for a moment so that everyone can get settled in place. He/she then moves toward the ambo to proclaim the readings.

5. Announce the Scripture reading simply as it is stated in the reading, i.e. “A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah,” etc. There is no need to say something like, “the first (second) reading is...”. Also, do not read the small red print at the start of a reading, which simply summarizes the whole reading. After the reading, the lector pauses slightly before saying “The Word of the Lord.” It is easy to drop your voice at this point. Please keep the voice very strong.

6. If a cantor is present at Mass, the lector returns to his/her chair and the cantor will come forward to lead the responsorial psalm. If there is no cantor, the lector will lead the responsorial psalm. The lector should pause for a few seconds to allow the congregation to reflect on the first reading before reading the response.

The second reading is then proclaimed by the lector.

7. If a cantor is present at Mass, the lector returns to their seat following the second reading, and the cantor will come forward to lead the “Alleluia”. If there is no cantor, the congregation will sing one chorus of Alleluia, the lector will proclaim the verse, and the lector returns to their chair as the second “Alleluia” verse is sung.

8. After the homily and creed, the presider will introduce the Prayers of the Faithful. The lector will then read the petitions. The petitions are in the booklet on the ambo shelf. The lector may wish to look these over before Mass and make sure that the booklet is open to the proper date. Please move up to the ambo near the end of the Creed, so that there doesn't have to be a delay from the Creed to the Intercessions. Also, please do not leave the ambo until after the presider’s prayer is finished. This is less distracting. As a courtesy, the lector may wish to return the Lectionary to the page with the first reading, particularly at the Saturday evening Mass.

9. After the presider concludes the Prayers of the Faithful, the lector may be seated in the congregation.

TIPS FOR LECTORS

1. **Slow down!** Let people be seated and quiet down. Within the reading itself, do not rush through. Pause after the reading before saying “The Word of the Lord.”
2. Prepare! It is so much richer and expressive if we have prepared well, looked up pronunciation of words and names, don't stumble over sentences, have taken time to really study the reading so that it makes some sense to us. All of us mess up occasionally—that is inevitable. But when the reason is our lack of preparation—that is wrong. Practice aloud. Readings are available online at www.usccb.org/nab, or you may take a Missalette home for the week.
3. Learn to read with a microphone. Microphones do not mean that we need to speak softer or softly. We should read above normal in volume and let the microphones amplify even that. We have a good microphone. Do not stand too close to the microphone or else you'll "pop your p's". Adjust the angle of the microphone as well. There is no point in being a lector if we are not reading clearly, slowly and loudly enough so that people can understand the reading.
4. Please try to get to Mass early. It keeps you from rushing in and you get a chance to look over the reading in the Lectionary we use.
5. Dress appropriately. It adds to everyone's experience of prayer and praise if the lector dresses well. It is distracting, when you do not.
6. Watch the end of sentences and phrases. It is very easy to both drop the voice and to speed up near the end of a sentence or phrase, thus making the words difficult for the people to understand. Keep the same pace and loudness, even at the end of a sentence/phrase.

MISCELLANEOUS

1. Substitutes: **you are responsible for finding your own sub** if you cannot read at your scheduled time. Schedules are available in the server's sacristy and online at www.maryhoc.org. If you have questions about the schedule, would like to change your preferred Mass time, etc., call Kathy Albrecht at 763-5729.
2. If you are also a Communion Minister, Usher, or other liturgical minister, we will try to schedule you for only one role at a given Mass. There can be exceptions to this but, in general, if you have been assigned to be the Lector, you will not be serving in another capacity at the Mass.