

Guidelines for Lectors at St. Michael Parish

The Week Before You are Scheduled to Read

Find your reading in *The Workbook for Lectors and Gospel Readers*. Sometimes there are options so check with the Pastor or Associate Pastor to see which reading you should prepare. Under most circumstances, the presider prefers the option printed in the missalettes.

Plan to set aside time this week to prepare yourself to proclaim the Word of God to the assembly. This means living and praying with the Scriptures and allowing the Scriptures to form you. Look to other lectors and ask if they would suggest ways to help you prepare and give you feedback to help you gain confidence and grow in this important Liturgical role. There are also other printed resources available in the sacristy and some websites devoted to helping lectors that you might wish to try out (listed on the next page).

Remember that for many people in the assembly, your reading will be their only chance each week to be touched by the Word. So it is important to let the Word truly do its work in you. Trust that God will lead you as you grow into your ministry and that you will find whatever methods, resources and help you need along the way.

Before Mass

Please arrive at the church no later than 20 minutes before Mass is to begin. Please dress in your Sunday best.

Upon arrival, check-in with the Mass Coordinator.
Write your initials next to your name on the schedule.

Find your reading in the lectionary in the sacristy. Look it over to make sure it is the same reading you prepared.

Pray with the Presider and other liturgical ministers exactly 10 minutes before Mass in the sacristy.

2nd Reader places the Lectionary on the ambo before Mass begins.

Mass Time

1st reader

You will carry in the Book of the Gospels in procession after the altar servers (in absence of a Deacon), before the Presider. When you arrive at the steps, walk up steps, place the Book of the Gospels on the center of the altar so that the presider has enough room to reverence the altar with a kiss. Come back to bottom of steps, bow with other ministers, then go take your seat among the assembly. After the opening prayer the assembly will sit. You remain standing and then approach the ambo. (Remember to bow upon entering and exiting the sanctuary)

Approaching the Ambo (both readers)

Please walk reverently up the center steps of the sanctuary. If you need assistance going up or down the stairs use the handrail on the south side of the sanctuary.

Before you begin a reading, pause until all in the assembly have settled themselves and you have their attention. When you finish a reading, stop. Bow your head for a silent prayer over the book. (One Glory

Be... is a good amount of time.) Then return to your seat in the assembly. (Remember to bow upon entering and exiting the sanctuary)

2nd reader

Approach ambo after cantor has sung the psalm. Before you announce the reading, Pause, as above, until you have the assembly's attention. When you have finished your reading. Stop. Pray as above. Then place the lectionary on the shelf under the ambo. Again, remember to bow upon entering and exiting the sanctuary.

After Mass

Please return Lectionary and Book of the Gospels to the sacristy. Do not put them in the cabinet. Just leave them on the sacristy countertop.

Resources for Lectors

By answering the call to become a lector you are also moving into a deeper relationship with God as He is revealed in Sacred Scripture. Lectors commit to ongoing faith formation and training activities that prepare them for the calling to the ministry. We will try to provide you with a variety of resources to accomplish this.

The Workbook for Lectors and Gospel Readers

Please take some time to look through *The Workbook for Lectors and Gospel Readers*. It is the primary resource used by our parish lectors. It has:

- the proper readings each week, in the same translation that appears in the lectionary
- a brief commentary about each reading
- pronunciation guides in the sidebars of each reading
- a good introduction about the ministry of reader.

Other Resources in the Sacristy

There are additional commentaries and bible translations in the sacristy for you to explore. There are also books and pamphlets on both the practical and spiritual aspects of publicly proclaiming God's Word.

If you use any of these resources to prepare one week please be sure to return them the next so that they will be available to others who wish to use them.

The Proclaiming the Word

Work with your mentor to master the use of the microphone and hone your special skills as a reader. You will find that to project your voice to communicate with confidence, clarity, and authority you must:

- know your reading
- understand its message
- concern yourself with the mechanics of effective speech (breath control, pacing, voice modulation, etc.)
- pay attention to body language (posture, facial expression, gestures, repetitive movements, etc.)

The fact that you feel called to this ministry means that you probably already have experience with or at least an intuitive grasp of most of these issues. But the more conscious and intentional you become in the use of your speaking skills the more effective you will become as a reader sharing the Word of God with the people you serve.

Please Get Comfortable with Silence. It is a very powerful tool in liturgy.

Silence allows people time to absorb the message. Allow for a brief moment of silence:

- Before announcing the reading
- Before beginning the passage
- At appropriate times within the passage
- Before saying “The Word of the Lord”
- Before leaving the ambo to return to your seat.

Web Resources

I have found a number of promising web resources. I particularly like the very prayerful St. Louis University site <http://liturgy.slu.edu/>.

Here are a few others that look promising. Try them out if you enjoy using web resources and let me know what you think of them.

<http://www.lectorprep.org/>

http://www.emmausjourney.org/reflecting_sundays_reading.cfm

www.netministries.org/bbasics

Some Additional Suggestions

Learn from other lectors. Pay attention to how they use their voices, how they stand, how they dress, how well prepared they seem to be...not to find fault but always to learn the best and most effective ways to share God’s Word.

Study the readings every week. Not just the weeks you are scheduled to read. This will help you more fully participate in the liturgy each week, help you learn more about praying with scripture, and, it will help you feel confident and prepared to step in if one of your fellow lectors is unable to read.

PRAYER OF A MINISTER OF THE WORD

(In Preparation)

Lord, invest me with your power
as I prepare to proclaim the marvel of your message
I have prepared my reading,
I have tried to take within me
the meaning of what I am about to proclaim.
Help me to proclaim, not just with my lips,
but with my whole heart and soul.
Lord, make me a hollow reed
so that your voice will be heard by all who hear me.
Free me of excessive concern over my performance.
Convert my feeling of nervousness and
turn all my apprehension into an energy
for proclaiming your word with power and authority.
May your Spirit live in me and
fill the holy word that I proclaim.

From the lectors of Our Lady, Star of the Sea Parish, Singapore
on <http://www.lectorprep.org/>