



GUIDELINES FOR LECTORS

ST. BERNARD'S PARISH

The proclamation of the Word of God is truly a service to the Church. Lectors bring the living Word of God to the liturgical assembly. The ministry of the Word should, therefore, be treated seriously and with great dignity. (GIRM 55)

The Word of God is not merely read during the liturgy. It is proclaimed, yet not with theatrical show. Effective proclamation involves the delivery of the message with clarity, conviction and appropriate pace. It demands the ability to evoke faith in others by demonstrating one's own faith. Proclamation is a special ministry which presupposes faith. It also rouses faith in those who hear the Word proclaimed. (LM Intro 55)

REQUIREMENTS

All liturgical ministers, especially lectors, must be properly trained for their ministry. This ministry of the Word requires skill in public reading, knowledge of the principles of liturgy, and an understanding of the scriptures. Only properly trained and commissioned lectors should be scheduled for liturgy. (GIRM 101, LM Intro 14)

Lectors are *fully initiated*, practicing Catholics whose lives witness to the Word which they proclaim.

PREPARATION & GUIDELINES

To make the service of the Word effective, all lectors are expected to be prepared for their ministry. Preparation should be spiritual, scriptural, and practical. Spiritual preparation involves prayer over the text and reflection on its message. Scriptural preparation involves understanding the text. Practical preparation involves mastering difficult words, learning the right pronunciations and practicing the delivery of the text aloud, ideally in the presence of someone who is able to critique the delivery.

Immediate preparation is also expected of all lectors. This requires arriving in ample time before the liturgy (20 minutes) and locating the readings in the Lectionary and reviewing the Prayers of the Faithful (if there isn't a deacon).

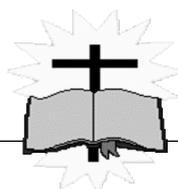
Lectors need to be seated in a place which allows for easy access to the ambo, preferably among the assembly. At the time of the Liturgy of the Word, the lector approaches the ambo slowly and with reverence bowing to the altar before proceeding to the ambo. All movements in the liturgy are performed with dignity and grace; they are never hurried. After the reading, the lector returns to his/her seat in a similar manner. (GIRM 310)

If you are the Lector that carries the Book of Gospels remember to raise the book high enough so that you can see under it as you process down the aisle. Do not carry it so low that you can see over it.

Lectors begin to read by saying, "A reading from the Book of....." as written in the Lectionary. It is inappropriate to add words such as: "The first reading..."

The lector should never do anything to draw attention to her/himself at anytime. Clothing should be appropriate for the occasion, modest and in keeping with the dignity of the ministry.

After you are set at the ambo, pause briefly before you begin reading. The silence will focus the attention of the church. Read slowly. You may feel that you are reading uncomfortably slow, but remember most parishioners are hearing the reading for the first time. This gives them time to process the content. After you finish the reading and



before you say, “The Word of the Lord”, **pause** at a count of 5 and **then** say, “The Word of the Lord.”

As you prepare a particular phrase or sentence, it might strike you as particularly meaningful. This might be a good time to look directly at the parishioners as you speak. Though eye contact is valuable, nodding up and down too much can result in distraction or a disconnected reading.

Stand with even weight on both feet and with reverence, directly behind the ambo, not to its side. Do not lean on the ambo or shift from side to side. Adjust the microphone by gently holding it by the top (not the microphone part) and bend it up or down. The microphone should be pointing toward your chin and not directly at your mouth. Keep a “hands-length” distance away from the microphone to avoid sounding muffled. If you speak as though you are talking to the first pew of people, the microphone will carry you. Proclaim as though the microphone is not there.

If there isn't a deacon at the Mass then look at the “Prayers of the Faithful” and be prepared to read them. Also, look at the Mass intentions and ask for help if you don't know how to pronounce someone's name. Please note that “Pro Populo” is not a person and this intention is not read. “Pro Populo” is Latin and it means “For the People”.

Dress appropriately. Remember, what we wear to church is extremely important. We would hope that everyone – not just our Liturgical Ministers - realizes this. However, we especially ask that all Ministers model proper and “holy attire” that expresses the dignity of our celebration. If possible, the men should wear a coat and tie/collared dress shirt and tie. All clothing should be neat, clean, modest, and appropriate signifying the honor of the ministry you perform. Dress should be conservative, including skirt length and general style. Shorts and jeans are never acceptable.

Remember – you are attending a sacred celebration! Whether you are scheduled in your ministry or not, each Sunday we would hope that your dress would reflect your appreciation of this holy gathering.



GUIDELINES AT A GLANCE

- ♦ Pray with your reading. Remember that you are proclaiming the Word of God.
- ♦ Practice your reading from the Lector's Workbook. Read the reading out loud.
- ♦ Prepare the 1st reading, Responsorial Psalm, and 2nd reading. (One Lector may not show up.)
- ♦ Check in at the Sacristy 20 minutes before Mass. Know your assigned duties.
- ♦ Check to see that the Lectionary has been set to the proper readings and make sure the Altar Server has placed it on the Ambo.
- ♦ Check to see if there will be a Deacon assisting at the Mass. If there is a Deacon, the Lectors *do not* read the "Prayers of the Faithful". This is the ministry of the Deacon. Remember that "Pro Populo" is not a person and this intention is not read.

1st Lector's duty!

- ♦ You are responsible for the 1st reading, and the Responsorial Psalm only if the cantor is not going to sing the Psalm. Also, you will have to carry the Book of Gospels in the procession unless there is a Deacon. Remember to raise the book high enough so that you can see under it as you process down the aisle.
- ♦ If the 2nd Lector/Substitute does not show up, you will also be responsible for the 2nd reading.

2nd Lector's duty!

- ♦ You are responsible for the 2nd reading, and the Prayers of the Faithful (only if there isn't a Deacon).
- ♦ If the 1st Lector/Substitute does not show up, you will also be responsible for the 1st reading and if there isn't a Deacon you will have to carry the Book of Gospels in the procession.

Please dress appropriately!

- ♦ Men, should wear a coat and tie/collared dress shirt and tie with dress slacks and dress shoes.
- ♦ Ladies, please wear a dress, skirt & blouse with sleeves, dress pants and blouse with sleeves, and dress shoes.

Absolutely no low cut clothing. No shorts, capris, short skirts or dresses, jeans, sleeveless shirts/blouses, sweats, and no tennis shoes.