

SOP For Lectors – Ft. Belvoir Catholic Community

(revised 12 April 2013)

Thank you for accepting the call to this ministry of proclaiming the Word of God to God's people. Remember, God is truly present in His Word as He is in the Eucharist, though in radically different ways. How special is your Ministry! God bless you!

This Standing Operating Procedures (SOP) document provides direction for lector scheduling, personal preparation, set-up support before Mass, and participation in the celebration of Mass. This update reflects guidance provided by Father Hill at the April, 2013 lector workshop at the Woodlawn Chapel. It is intended to assist all Ft. Belvoir Ministers of the Word in performing their ministry. If you have any questions, comments, or recommended changes, please contact John Skudlarek, lector coordinator, at john.skudlarek@gmail.com.

Scheduling

1. The 1700 and 0730 Woodlawn Chapel Masses and the 1115 Fairfax Chapel Mass have one assigned lector. The 0915 Woodlawn Chapel Mass and the 0930 Belvoir Chapel Mass have two assigned lectors.
2. For Masses with two assigned lectors, the first person on the schedule for that Mass will proclaim the First Reading and Prayers of the Faithful. (If there is a Deacon assisting, the Deacon will read the Prayers of the Faithful.) The second person will read the Second Reading and the announcements. You may switch the order by mutual agreement.
3. The lector coordinator strives to deconflict the lector schedule with the schedules of the other ministries. However, in the event that lectors have a conflict with another ministry obligation or are otherwise unable to fulfill their lector assignment, they must find their own replacements. For the 0915 and 0930 Masses, please notify the other assigned lector that you will not be there if you can't find a replacement. Under no circumstances will you just "not show up." Although you are volunteers, once you accept the ministry you own that assignment and you participate in an essential role in the Liturgy and share that sacred responsibility in service to the people.
4. The lector schedule is produced in two month increments starting with January and February and continuing through the year. The coordinator will send out a request for each individual's availability during the second week of the month before the updated schedule will be produced. Lectors are requested to respond within five days with their availability to serve during the next two month period. By the third week of the month, the coordinator will send the updated schedule for the following two months to all the lectors.

Personal Preparation

Prepare yourself for your readings. Each year you will receive a *Lector Workbook* with the readings for every Sunday and Feast Day. Prepare for your ministry by reading through the Readings at least twice before arriving at Mass. Set time aside to meditate on the readings and pray over them. It is amazing how often the spirit speaks to the heart through the words. Be sure to read the *Lector Workbook* notes to get the context, pronunciation, and recommended emphasis. Your preparation and understanding of the readings will be a blessing both for you and those who hear God speak through you as you read the Word. If you don't understand the readings or are hesitant in the reading, the people will become distracted. This is precisely the opposite of your mission.

Set-up Before Mass

1. Arrive at least 15 minutes early. Dress appropriately.
2. Initial your name on the sign-in sheet.
3. Choose a seat that gives you easy access to the ambo. You may want to have someone hold the seat or you may choose to leave an article of clothing or your Lector Workbook there. You will process in with Father and return to this seat.
4. Locate the Lectionary and Roman Missal. At Belvoir Chapel, they will be in the basement Sacristy in the top left cabinet marked "Lectionary and Gospel Books." At Woodlawn Chapel, the Lectionary will be in the storage room in the cabinet on the right. Please make sure you have the correct Lectionary (there are several). At Fairfax, they are in the cabinet in the hall behind the altar.
5. Locate and pre-read the Prayers of the Faithful, and Announcements, as applicable. Make sure you are familiar with the pronunciation of any names or acronyms. There are now two binders, one marked "Lector" and another marked "Celebrant." Yours is the Lector's and the priest will use the celebrant's one.
6. Normally, the Song Leader will sing the Responsorial Psalm. If there is no Song Leader, the Lector will read the Responsorial Psalm. Pre-read it to be familiar with it. **DO NOT** gesture or raise your hand like the "Stature of Liberty," to "Cue" the people. We do that by pauses and inflection.
7. Bring the Lectionary and the "Lector" copy of the Prayers of the Faithful and Announcements notebook to the ambo. Open the Lectionary to the first reading. Adjust the microphone if needed **before** mass only. Please be careful of the new sound systems. The microphones are especially sensitive.
8. Place the Roman Missal on the altar and the "Celebrant" copy of the Prayers of the Faithful and Announcements notebook the next to the Presider's chair. In Woodlawn, place it on the seat next to the Celebrant's. At Belvoir, place it on the table next to his chair. Ensure the first

ribbon in the Roman Missal is at the correct Sunday (should be same as Lectionary, for example, 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time).

9. Let the Presider know you are the Lector(s), and find out if there are any special instructions. As noted, if a Deacon is present, he will read the Prayers of the Faithful. The Deacon will also carry the Gospel Book in the entrance procession. (If there is no deacon, the lector will **NOT** carry the Gospel book or the lectionary). If there is a Deacon, get the Gospel Book and give it to the Deacon. Make sure the Presider knows whether you have announcements to read at the end of Mass. If the Gospel book is being used, ensure the clear stand is placed on the altar, at the center. The stand should be stored in the same cabinet as the Gospel book.
10. During special liturgies, such as Christmas or Holy Week, there may be some adjustments to or variations on these procedures.

Participation at Mass

1. Meet the Presider before the beginning of Mass and process in between the Cross/altar servers and the Presider. Then move to your seat.
2. After the opening prayer, the first lector will leave his pew and come forward to the center. Do not be in a rush; let the Presider finish the opening prayer before getting up from your seat. If you are on side of the ambo, proceed directly up the stairs. If you must cross in front of the altar, bow toward the altar at the foot of the steps, then walk to the ambo. Leave the lectionary on the ambo, and proclaim the Word slowly, reverently and clearly. Please do **NOT** adjust the microphone. Start with, "A reading from the book of . . ." just as it is written in the Lectionary. If you make a mistake (and we all do), simply continue on unless it makes a difference to the meaning. In that case, just read the correct words and continue on. **DO NOT APOLOGIZE** or in any other way draw attention to the error or yourself. Pause at the end of the reading before saying "THE WORD OF THE LORD!" After the assembly responds, "Thanks be to God," pause reverently for a few seconds. Then return to your seat in the congregation.
3. After the Responsorial Psalm, follow the same steps as above for the Second Reading. (**ONCE AGAIN, DO NOT RAISE YOUR HAND TO CUE THE PEOPLES' RESPONSE**). If there are two lectors present, the second lector will proclaim the Second Reading. After the Second Reading, leave the Lectionary open for the Gospel reading, or if a Deacon is present, set the Lectionary on the shelf or to the side of the ambo to make room for the Gospel Book.
4. At the end of the recitation of the Creed, approach the ambo as above to read the Prayers of the Faithful. If a Deacon is present, the Deacon will read the Prayers of the Faithful. If there are two lectors present, the lector who proclaimed the First Reading will read the Prayers of the faithful.
5. After the Prayer after Communion and just before the Final Blessing, the Presider will indicate it is time for the Lector to read the announcements. Approach the ambo as above. If

there are two lectors present, the lector will proclaimed the Second Reading will read the announcements. After reading the announcements, return to your pew.

6. When it is time to process out, move from your pew to join the procession and process between the Cross/Altar servers and the Presider.
7. After Mass, return the Lectionary, Gospel Book and stand (if used), Roman Missal, and *Prayers of the Faithful* and *Announcements* notebooks to where you found them before Mass.

Thank you again for participation in this vital ministry!