

Lectors

Paragraph 101 of *The General Instruction of the Roman Missal* states: ...lay people may be deputed to proclaim the readings from Sacred Scripture, people who are truly suited to carrying out this function and carefully prepared, so that by their hearing the readings from the sacred texts the faithful may conceive in their hearts a sweet and living affection for Sacred Scripture.

General Guidelines

- Christ is present in His Word. Proclaiming that Word is a true ministry. Beginning with a prayerful attitude, realize that it is the Holy Spirit who speaks through you to the assembly.
- Proclaim the Word with emphasis and deliberation. Words must be spoken clearly and distinctly. The pace needs to be slower than normal conversation to allow the people to hear, understand and form a mental picture of what is being said. Be aware of the power of pauses between sections of text.
- Practice the readings aloud to get the feel of the text for proper pacing and emphasis. Use the lector resources which the parish gives you at the beginning of each liturgical year. Understanding the type of literature and the context of the Scripture aids in proper proclamation of God's Word.
- Plan to arrive at church at least **15 minutes before Mass** begins. This allows time to prepare yourself mentally and physically for proclaiming God's Word. It also permits time to review the readings, the Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful) and any announcements. Similarly, if you arrive early you can be notified of any last minute changes or special proceedings. Do not leave the sacristy until you have determined that the other lector is present or not.
- On the lector schedule, the first person listed reads the First Reading. The second person reads the Second Reading and announcements at the end of Mass. If a deacon is not present, the second person also reads the Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful).

Genuflections and Bows

- A genuflection is made to Christ present in the tabernacle at the beginning of Mass and while leaving at the end of Mass. At all other times during Mass, the altar of sacrifice, which represents Christ, becomes the focal point of our worship. Consequently, we do not make any reverences toward the tabernacle during Mass. Rather, we bow to the altar of sacrifice when passing in front of it. **The only time lectors need to bow is if they are passing in front of the altar on their way to or from the ambo.**

Specifics

- Approximately 5 minutes before Mass begins, place the lectionary, opened to the day's First Reading, on the top shelf of the ambo. Then, place the binder containing the Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful) and announcements (if any) on the ambo's middle shelf.
- **Proclaiming the Readings:** After the Collect (Opening Prayer), reverently walk to the ambo, **turn the microphone on** and begin. Speak directly into the microphone, keeping it about 6 inches away. Remember that if you turn your head away from the microphone, it will not pick up your voice as well. **Turn off the microphone after reading.**
- Pauses are to be observed after each of the readings. This allows time for reflection on the readings just proclaimed. The Liturgy of the Word should be celebrated in such a way as to promote meditation on God's Word. Any type of haste which might impede recollection should be avoided.
- **First Reader:** Do not remain at the ambo after the people have responded, "Thanks be to God." The Responsorial Psalm is always sung by the cantor and the assembly. The organist will begin once the lector has been seated. *If there is no second reader, please sit in the chair behind the ambo in order to be ready for the second reading.
- **Second Reader:** Do not remain at the ambo after the people have responded, "Thanks be to God." The organist will begin once the lector has been seated. The Gospel Acclamation is sung by the cantor.
- **Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful):** If a deacon is not present, approach the ambo toward the end of the Creed to read the intercessions. Remain until the celebrant has finished the concluding prayer.
- **Announcements** (if any): Approach the ambo when the celebrant rises and says, "Let us pray," after communion. Once the Prayer after Communion is finished, the announcements are made. When finished, make your way back to your seat. The lector does not recess out.
- After Mass, return the lectionary and binder to the sacristy.

EXTRA NOTES

- Please contact Mary Beth Homan at the parish office before the next schedule is prepared if a different Mass assignment is desired or if you wish to be removed from the list.
- Once the new schedule is distributed, it is asked that you make note of your schedule on your personal calendar.

- If a conflict arises making it difficult for you to lector as scheduled, please contact one of the other lectors in a timely manner to either switch or sub for you. A list with contact numbers is available with your schedule.

Thank you for ministering as a lector at Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish!

*How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of the one bringing good news,
announcing peace, bearing good news,
announcing salvation, saying to Zion,
“Your God is King!” ~Isaiah 52:7*

When the Scriptures are proclaimed in the Church, God Himself is speaking to His people.

Lectors have this dignity and privilege to proclaim the Word. God bless you in this ministry!