

GUIDELINES FOR LECTORS

ST. MARY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH

Revised 09/27/2012 by Fr Jeremy Gries

Lector Ministry

The ministry of Lector is to proclaim God's living word at Masses and other liturgical gatherings where Scripture readings are included. Through the Lector, God continues to feed his people at the table of the Word. The Lector is expected to be knowledgeable of the Scripture as well as willing and able to devote the time needed to prepare for each reading. Lectors are appointed. Those interested in this ministry are evaluated based on their talents. Ongoing training is required.

Guidelines for Proclamation

1. Prayer:

The lector needs to ask God in prayer for the special grace to be effective when proclaiming of the Word of God.

2. Meditation:

By meditating on the Scripture text, the lector searches out the true meaning of the passage. This helps to give a faithful interpretation of the text when read in the liturgical celebration.

3. Real Joy:

Joy is the heart of good celebration. The lector, as a central figure in the celebration, must try to carry that joy and share it with the assembly by facial expression, quality of voice and manner of presentation.

4. Readings that are Heard:

The lector should have one goal in mind -- to prepare in such a way, to proclaim in such a way, that the community simply has to listen to what the lector reads.

5. Personal Word:

The lector enables the reading to come alive as a message for today, as a true celebration in faith, as a personal word. The Word of God itself is alive when it is proclaimed. Proclamation, however, is different than an actor-like dramatic reading of the Biblical texts.

6. Practiced Readings

To lector before others demands special preparation and care. Even if the church is not large, the lector needs to practice in a loud, proclaiming voice.

7. Service

In the Liturgy, the lector is a carrier of the Word of God. It is a great privilege. The lector should bring to the task of reading a deep sense of service to those for whom he/she reads, a profound respect for the Scriptures and dedication to excellence.

8. Living the Word:

The lector must strive to make the Word that he/she proclaims a part of his/her own life from day to day. The authenticity that flows from that is a powerful sign to others.

In Preparation To Proclaim

1. Ahead of Mass or Service, read and re-read the text from the lectionary several times. Meditate on it and try to understand its meaning.
To find upcoming readings: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/index.cfm>
2. Work on vocal elements: pronunciation, enunciation, mood, pace, timing, emphasis, pitch.
To hear a biblical name or location pronounced: <http://netministries.org/Bbasics/bwords.htm>
3. Practice proclaiming the text aloud until you are satisfied that it is the way it should be, and until you are comfortable with the manner of presentation. Have someone who has knowledge of liturgical reading listen to you and give help where needed.
4. In preparing for Mass, remember that appearance is important. Please adhere to the Dress Code. Dress should be “business casual.” Dress conservatively and professionally for the liturgical service at which you will serve as lector. Avoid distracting and/or inappropriate apparel, such as halter/tank tops, mini-skirts, tight clothing, flashy jewelry and shirts and/or pants with large graphic designs/words, jeans, flip-flops and sports jerseys. Keep in mind that each Mass is attended by a cross-section of our parish and choose apparel that is simple, respectful and appropriate for the community whom you are to serve. If you are not dressed appropriately, you should not serve as a Lector at that Mass. Proclamation of the Word of God is a dignified duty, and the Lector should dress accordingly.

Scheduling

Schedules are prepared each month and are sent by e-mail or mailed to your home. Each minister is scheduled according to the information sheet on file with the parish. After this training, you can expect to begin your rotation as a Lector the next month. Until then, you are encouraged to check in with the priest prior to Mass to see if any substitutes are needed for that Mass.

When you receive the schedule, if you foresee a conflict, it is ***each minister's responsibility to find a substitute*** for your scheduled time. If you need to change your scheduled reading date, please try to switch with another lector rather than getting a substitute.

General Guidelines for Lectors

- It is requested that all volunteers serve in only one liturgical ministry per Mass. For example, if you are a lector than do not volunteer to be an Usher or Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion.
- Before crossing in front of the altar and/or entering the sanctuary, the lector is asked to pause slightly and give a slight bow to the altar.

- The lector should never bow to the presider/priest unless it is the Archbishop or a visiting prelate (i.e., bishop or abbot).

Liturgy Procedures for Lectors

Arrival at church:

- Arrive 15 minutes early.
- Check in with the priest. If you arrive later than 15 minutes early you could be replaced. Please do not argue with the priest if you are replaced.
- If you are subbing for another lector, provide this information to the priest.
- Wear a Lector cross if available.

Procession:

- The lectionary is kept on the ambo/lectern in church, while the Book of Gospels is kept in the sacristy.
- The procession crucifix is kept in the church.
- The lector follows the processional cross carrying the Book of the Gospels.

Readings:

- Only read what is in the Lectionary. Do not add “Second (or First) Reading” or make any edits to the text. At the end of the reading, state “The Word of the Lord”.
- The Lectionary needs to be opened at the ambo to the first reading before Mass begins.
- Following the first reading, step up and sit at the bench seat behind the ambo for the Psalm.
- After the Second reading, the lector closes the lectionary and places it inside the ambo, so that the ambo is clear for the priest to place the Book of Gospels.

Prayers of the Faithful (i.e., Petitions):

- The Prayers of the Faithful will be kept inside the cover of the Book of the Gospels
- Following the Creed, please be prepared to come forward to proclaim the Prayers of the Faithful
- Lector may begin to move forward while the presider/priest gives the invitation to prayer.
- Lector to say “Let us pray to the Lord” after the last petition where the assembly is invited to add their own petitions in silence.
- Lector can place the Prayers of the Faithful back into the cover of the Book of the Gospels.
- Lector to remain at the ambo until the presider/priest has completed the closing prayer.

Recessional:

- The priest initiates the recession by walking to the altar. The lector picks up the Book of Gospels from the ambo and moves to the base of the steps.
- Return the Book of Gospels to the sacristy.
- Return your cross to the hook in the sacristy.