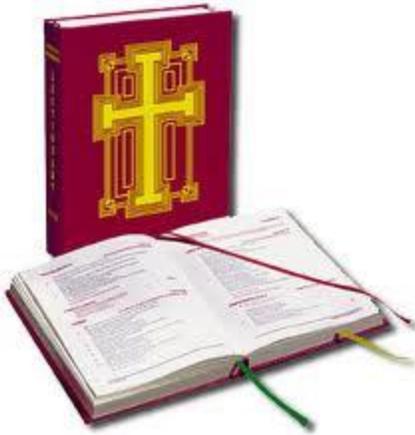


Parish Ministry of Lector



Proclaimers of the Word of God

The Liturgical assembly fully requires readers, even those not instituted. Proper measures must therefore be taken to ensure that there are certain suitable laypeople who have been trained to carry out this ministry.

(Introduction to the Lectionary #52)

What is a Lector?

This ministry may also be called reader or proclaimer of the word.

A lector is the person who proclaims the first or second reading at Mass. This person also may lead the Prayers to the Faithful at Mass.

A lector must have the qualifications listed below and have a desire to minister to this capacity at the Eucharistic liturgy. This ministry in the Church requires a person who is of excellent character, and serious about the practice of their faith. The lector must believe that Sacred Scripture is the Word of God and have deep respect for God's presence in that Word.

Who can be a Lector?

- ✚ A man, a woman, or a young adult.
 - ✚ A person in full communion with the Catholic Church.
 - ✚ A person serious about the practice of their faith.
 - ✚ A person who is willing to complete a parish formation process.
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What is proper dress for Lectors?

Although a specific form of dress is not required of lectors, the dignity of the sacred Liturgy requires that those accepting the call to such ministry dress in a manner reflecting the profound nature of the call.

How do I prepare to Proclaim the Word of God?

What to do ahead of time:

- ✚ Use Sacred Scripture often as a source of your private prayers and meditation outside of your assigned times.
 - ✚ When you have been assigned to PROCLAIM the Word to the assembly, prepare, read aloud, and PRAY the readings during the preceding weeks.
 - ✚ Consider how your assigned reading relates to the Gospel and the homily. The Lector workbook will be helpful for this preparation.
 - ✚ On your assigned day, arrive ahead of time on the day you are scheduled so that you can enter into a spirit of prayer before the liturgy begins.
 - ✚ Make certain well ahead of time that the Lectionary is correctly marked and that the microphone is adjusted properly. **There are two necks on the microphone—if you do not speak directly into the microphone you cannot be heard.**
 - ✚ After the liturgy, do a mini self-evaluation by asking:
 - Did I PROCLAIM the meaning of the Scriptures, or merely read the words?
 - Did I effectively communicate to the assembly God's word of salvation using all the skills available to me?
 - What can I do to improve next time?
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The Liturgy of the Word at Mass

- ✚ The lector reads the announcements (in the celebrant's book) before the Mass begins. Then gets the Book of the Gospels from the sacristy and goes to the main entrance of the Church.

- ✚ The Lector will process in, in front of the celebrant, with the Book of Gospels (unless the deacon is present). Stop at the sanctuary steps and wait. Go up to the altar and place the book on the altar after the celebrant reverences the altar.

- ✚ After the opening prayer has been completed the lector goes to the ambo for the first reading.
 - Begin: A reading from...
 - End: The Word of the Lord. All respond: Thanks be to God.

- ✚ Do not change this formula in any way. For example, DO NOT begin our first reading today is...or any similar beginning.

- ✚ A period of silence is observed after the reading. After the assembly has responded Thanks be to God a period of silence is to be observed. The lector may stay quietly at the ambo or stand to the side during the singing of the responsorial psalm.

- ✚ If there is a second reading, it is proclaimed at the ambo as described for the first reading. There will always be a second reading on Sundays and Holy Days. During the week, there will be only one reading and a Gospel except on certain feasts and solemnities.

- ✚ The Lectionary is not elevated after either the first or the second reading.

- ✚ A period of silence is observed before the singing of the Alleluia (Gospel Acclamation during Lent). The Alleluia or Gospel Acclamation is not sung from the ambo.

- ✚ Next, the priest or deacon proclaims the Gospel.

- ✚ The reading of the Gospel is the high point of the Liturgy of the Word. The Liturgy itself teaches that great reverence is to be shown to it by setting it off from the other readings with special marks of honor: whether the part of the minister appointed to proclaim it, who prepares himself by a blessing or prayer; or on the part of the faithful,

who stand as they listen to it being read and through their acclamations acknowledges and confess Christ present and speaking to them; or by the way marks of reverence that are given to the Book of Gospels. (GIRM #60)

- ✚ The homily is given. After the homily there is a period of silence.
- ✚ All recite or sing together the Creed. (Sundays, Holy Days, and certain feasts)
- ✚ The Prayer of the Faithful is introduced by the presider, led by the deacon if present) with response by the assembly. The presider prays the concluding prayer.
- ✚ After the reading the server or lector extinguishes the candles by the ambo.

Additional Information:

- ✚ The Lectionary was promulgated by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments on October 6, 1997, and by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops on June 19, 1998. The Introduction of the Lectionary contains liturgical law for the celebration of the Liturgy of the Word at Mass.
- ✚ The readings are always to be proclaimed at the ambo (#16 Introduction of the Lectionary). The ambo may only be used for the readings, the responsorial psalm, the Easter Proclamation (Exsultet), the homily, and the prayer of the faithful. It may not be used for announcements or for song-leading.
- ✚ “Because the dignity of the word of God, the books of readings used in the celebration are not to be replaced by other pastoral aids, for example, by leaflets printed for the preparation of the readings by the faithful, or for their personal mediation.” (#37 Introduction of the Lectionary) In other words, never proclaim the Word of God from a piece of paper, missalette or anything other than the Lectionary.
- ✚ You may never change the words of a reading, or proclaim a non-scriptural text during Mass. (#57 GIRM)
- ✚ “Whenever there is more than one reading, it is better to assign the readings to different readers, if available. (#52 Introduction to the Lectionary)
- ✚ The Book of Gospels is carried by the deacon or reader (lector) as part of the Entrance Procession. It is not carried out in procession. The Lectionary is no longer carried in procession.

- ✚ Readers should participate fully in the singing and the prayers at Mass as members of the assembly. They come forward to the ambo at the appropriate time to proclaim the Word and return to the assembly after completing their ministry.
- ✚ The Sacred Scriptures, above all in their liturgical proclamation, are the source of life and strength. As the Apostle Paul attests, the Gospel is the saving power of God for everyone who believes. Love of the Scriptures is therefore a force reinvigorating and renewing the entire people of God. (347)
- ✚ To be a proclaimer of the Word is an awesome ministry and responsibility!
- ✚ In the new Introduction of the Lectionary it says, #47: “To be received and integrated into the life of Christ’s faithful, the word of God demands a living faith. Hearing the word of God unceasingly proclaimed arouses that faith.
- ✚ “The Sacred Scriptures, above all in their liturgical proclamation, are the source of life and strength. As the Apostle Paul attests, the Gospel is the saving power of God for everyone who believes. Love of the Scriptures is therefore a force reinvigorating and renewing the entire people of God. All the faithful without exception must therefore always be ready to listen gladly to God’s word. Then this word is proclaimed in the Church and put into living practice, it enlightens the faithful through the working of the Holy Spirit and draws them into the entire mystery of the Lord as a reality to be lived. The word of God reverently received moves the heart and its desires toward conversion and toward a life resplendent with both individual and community faith, since God’s word is the food of Christian life and the source of the prayer of the whole Church.
- ✚ What powerful images of spiritual transformation...
- ✚ “source of life and strength “saving power of God” “force reinvigorating and renewing the entire people of God” “moves the heart...toward conversion”.
- ✚ As a Proclaimer of the Word, you are the instrument of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit works through your being and your voice to accomplish, in the Sacred Scriptures proclaimed aloud, the spiritual transformation of those listening.