

GUIDELINES

Ministry of the Word – Lectors

The Liturgy of the Word is AS IMPORTANT as the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Proclaiming the Word of God is much more than just reading. It can be a powerfully prayerful experience for you, one that you share with the entire assembly. The key to effective proclamation lies in understanding the meaning and the lesson of the scripture, which is contained within the words you are about to read. This ministry also requires a sense of decorum and respect for the sanctuary and the altar area. How you are dressed does make a difference.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR LECTORS

1. Spend some time in prayer and contemplation during the week before you will be reading. Familiarize yourself with all three readings, so that you understand the tone and the flow of the entire Liturgy of the Word for that Sunday. The following website: <http://liturgy.slu.edu/>, from St. Louis University is an excellent source for the each week's readings. Review the commentaries found on this website as they will help you understand something about the purpose of the author and the historical setting of the scripture.
2. Once you have an understanding of the content of the reading, begin to consider the tone and the pace at which it should be read. Read through the reading several times aloud. Decide where it is most appropriate to pause, and for how long. Review any words that you find difficult to pronounce (This website link provides pronunciations for difficult biblical words, <http://netministries.org/Bbasics/BBwords.htm>). Become so familiar with the reading that it would appear you know it almost by head. This will let you feel comfortable enough to lift your eyes from the page occasionally, to make eye contact with the assembly.
3. Arrive 10 minutes early and check the readings in the Lectionary to note any differences to the one you have been practicing.
4. Altar protocol:
 - When processing with the Book of the Gospel, use the front altar steps.
 - When approaching or leaving the altar area to proclaim your Scripture reading, use the right side altar steps.
 - If crossing the center aisle, pause at the center, bow towards the altar, then proceed to the ambo up the right side steps.

LOGISTICS

1. Check the schedule as soon as you receive it for your assigned dates. If you lose your schedule, a copy will be posted to the website, www.st-marys.de, (as soon as it is updated).
2. If you cannot meet your obligation for whatever reason, **IT IS UP TO YOU** to get a substitute from the Lector list. Please get your substitute early in the week so they have time to prepare. If an emergency prevents you from finding a substitute, call the Coordinator.
3. **PRIOR** to the start of Mass – Place the English Lectionary at the ambo. The English Lectionary and Book of Gospels can be found in the cabinet in the Sacristy. The Lectionary should be put on the ambo and opened to the correct page before Mass begins.
4. Before starting the reading, adjust microphone to applicable height.

1st LECTOR

1. Prior to Mass, have a seat saved in the pews, preferably the right side of the church, to go to after participating in the procession.
2. Remain in the back of the sanctuary until the procession begins.

3. Lector position is after altar servers, cross bearer, and others; but, directly in front of the priest(s)
4. Carry the Book of the Gospels about shoulder height, with the front of the book facing forward (binding to your right).
5. Follow the altar servers to the foot of steps of altar area. Stand to the right of the priest, i.e., between the priest and the cross bearer. **Do not bow!**
6. Follow the cross bearer up the **right side** of the front altar steps around and behind the altar.
7. Place the Book of the Gospels **in the holder** (if present) on the corporal (cloth) that is on the altar. The front of book must face the congregation, i.e., binding to be to the left, as viewed by the congregation. If the holder is not present, place the Book of Gospels in the middle of the corporal.
8. Go to your previously saved seat via the right side altar steps.
9. After the Opening Prayer, when the congregation has been seated, move to the ambo via the right side altar steps, and wait until the congregation is settled.
 - If you will cross the center aisle, pause at the center, bow towards the altar, then proceed to the ambo via the right side altar steps.
 - If children are being dismissed for “Liturgy of the Word”, wait until they have walked half way up the aisle, then proceed to the ambo via the right side altar steps. Do not step up to the ambo until the children have left.
10. Proclaim the Scripture to the congregation: PAUSE; “A reading from the book of . . .”; PAUSE; proclaim reading; PAUSE; finishing with “The Word of the Lord”.
11. **Responsorial Psalms:** If there is no choir present, then the 1st Lector will also read the Responsorial Psalms. Take a breath or two and then introduce the Psalm with, “The responsorial Psalm”. Read the response once, then raise your hand at arm’s length to invite the Parish to respond the second time as your read. It is always good to continue this between paragraphs of the Psalm. The raising of your hand is not only an invitation to participate; it is also a signal as to when they should participate.
12. **Do not close** the Lectionary. Turn the page, if necessary, for the next reader.
13. Pause briefly, back up a step, and bow towards the open Word of the Lord, then return to your seat via the right side altar steps.

2nd LECTOR

1. After the Psalm has been sung and the cantor has returned to the choir area, stand and go to the ambo via the right side altar steps.
 - If you will cross the center aisle, pause at the center, and bow towards the altar, then proceed to the ambo via the right side altar steps.
2. Proclaim the Scripture to the congregation: Pause; “A reading from the book of . . .”; pause; proclaim reading; pause; finishing with “The Word of the Lord”.
3. **Gospel Acclamation:** Just before the Gospel reading is the Gospel Acclamation. It is normally sung by the choir, but if there is no choir present, then the 2nd Lector will need to read it. Take a breath or two and then read the Gospel Acclamation.
4. Close the Lectionary and place it on the ambo shelf.
5. Pause briefly and then return to seat via the right side altar steps.
6. The Book of the Gospels **IS NOT** taken out with the procession at the end of Mass.
7. **Bring the Book of Gospels and the Lectionary BACK to the Sacristy after Mass – when the congregation is out of the Church.)**