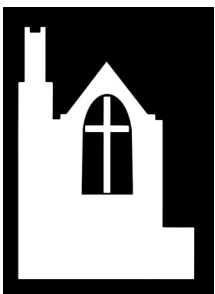


Lectors

Procedures for Mass



Cathedral of the Annunciation

PROCEDURES FOR LECTORS

I. Introduction

- ◆ *“(Christ) is present in his word, since it is he himself who speaks when the holy Scriptures are read in the Church.”
(Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy #7)*
- ◆ *“Those who exercise the ministry of reader. . . must be truly qualified and carefully prepared in order that the faithful will develop a warm and lively love for Scripture from listening to the reading of the sacred texts”
(General Instruction of the Roman Missal #66)*
- ◆ *“(Lectors’) preparation must above all be spiritual, but what may be called a technical preparation is also needed. The spiritual preparation presupposes at least a biblical and liturgical formation. . . The technical preparation should make the readers more skilled in the art of reading publicly, either with power of their own voice or with the help of sound equipment.”
(Lectionary for Mass: Introduction # 55)*

These three statements from core liturgical documents of the Church are just the tip of the iceberg in regard to what the Church pronounces regarding the ministry of Lector. We at the Cathedral of the Annunciation, therefore, place utmost importance on the proclamation of the Word in all of our liturgical celebrations. If, as Catholics, we truly believe Christ is present in our proclamation of his word, then it is not only our duty but our *mission* to proclaim that Word to the best of our ability.

These written guidelines presuppose a certain *biblical and liturgical* background on the part of our Lectors. To help in this regard, we strongly encourage our Lectors to attend annual Lector training sessions and other parish or Diocesan adult faith formation offerings.

The purpose of these written guidelines, therefore, is to focus on the *technical* aspects of the ministry: the who, what, and where of lectoring. For ultimately, the better we prepare, the better we proclaim!

II. Preparation

- **SCHEDULES** Schedules are accessed online through Ministry SchedulerPro. A link to the current schedule is e-mailed to every Lector every three months. Schedules are mailed to those who do not have an email address. Lectors will be assigned to the Mass time of their choice. Frequency of lectoring depends upon which Mass time you prefer and how many Lectors are currently in use at that Mass time. A list of all Lectors, grouped by Mass times, is also available from the Ministry SchedulerPro website and is printed on the back of each month's schedule. **In order to avoid missing your scheduled time, it is strongly recommended that you write scheduled times on your calendar as soon as you receive the schedule.**

- **SUBSTITUTION** If you are scheduled for a date for which you are unable to serve, **it is your responsibility to find a substitute.** A substitute can be requested through the Ministry SchedulerPro site. If you receive the schedule by mail, a list of lectors, arranged by Mass time, is included. *Note: If you know prior to the schedule's printing of the days you either are or are not available, please call the lector scheduler, Patti Stone 209-463-1305, or e-mail pstone@parishmail.com We are happy to schedule you according to your needs.*

- **PREPARING THE WORD** During the week before your scheduled time, read through your reading several times aloud. You will find the reading by clicking the link in Ministry SchedulerPro or on the U.S. Bishop's website: <http://www.usccb.org/>. Reading through this will greatly enhance your ability to proclaim the Scripture and communicate it more effectively to the assembly. Don't forget to pray about it, too! For, ultimately, it is the Holy Spirit working through our vocal instrument which gives our proclamation of God's Word resonance and makes it a truly meaningful event. **This preparation is absolutely necessary.**

III. Before the Liturgy

- **ATTIRE Please dress your Sunday best!**
NOT APPROPRIATE ARE: tank tops, t-shirts, bare midriffs, shorts, mini skirts, jeans, tennis shoes, or flip-flops. Again, this is Christ himself who speaks when the Lector reads. Doesn't Christ deserve better than casual beach wear? As a representative and model of the cathedral parish, we urge you to give this area high priority.

- **ARRIVAL TIME Please plan to arrive at church no later than 15 minutes prior to the start of the liturgy.** This gives you time to sign in, review your reading (and any announcements if you are the second lector), say a prayer, and catch your breath! It is very nerve-wracking for the Presider, the Sacristan, and the other lector to be wondering just minutes before the start of Mass, "Will they or won't they show up?" Frayed nerves lead to frayed concentration and poor liturgy. The whole assembly is thus affected by the tardiness of one minister!

- **UPON ARRIVAL** Once you arrive at church, please report to the West sacristy (facing the altar, it's to the right). On the table will be the sign-in sheet, Lectionary, and Announcement binder. Please:
 1. Sign in next to your name or, if you are a substitute, next to the name of the person for whom you are substituting.
 2. Review the reading you prepared as printed in the Lectionary. Make sure it's the one you prepared!
 3. If you are the second lector, review the announcements in the binder, then place the binder on the cantor's music stand or proximate location. The second lector can then take his/her place in the assembly.
 4. Once both lectors have reviewed their readings, the first lector places the open Lectionary in the ambo. Make sure the light and microphone are turned on.
 5. If no deacon is present, the first lector then reports to the East sacristy (vesting room for clergy) to collect the Book of the Gospels. Once the presiding priest and the altar servers are ready, proceed outside to the front of the church, and await the start of the liturgy.

IV During the Liturgy

- GATHERING SONG The **first lector**, unless a deacon is present, walks in the Gathering Procession right before the Presider, holding the Book of the Gospels in the air, as high as is comfortable. Walk in a way that bespeaks the importance and dignity of the celebration, the Book which you carry, and the ministry which you represent. Once you reach the foot of the sanctuary steps, do not bow or genuflect. Proceed up the steps to the back side of the altar (facing the people). Place the Book flat on the altar in the center. Leave the altar by the left side (facing out) as the Presider will be coming up on the right side. When you reach the bottom of the steps, genuflect to the tabernacle, then proceed to your seat in the assembly.
- FIRST READING The **first lector** proclaims the first reading only. After the presiding priest leads the Opening Prayer, the people will sit. Unless there is a dismissal for Children's Liturgy of the Word, at this time the first lector then walks to the first raised level in front of the altar and bows to the altar. You are bowing to the altar (a great symbol of Christ), and not to the crucifix or the tabernacle behind the altar. Please be sure your eyes focus on the altar at this point. The bow should be at the waist, including the head and upper body (not just the head).

After bowing, proceed to the ambo in a reverent, unrushed manner. Wait until the assembly has settled in and appears ready to listen. Adjust microphone to your mouth, if necessary. Pause a moment, & begin:

1. Read the text as written. Do **not** say, "The first reading is..." or "this morning's reading is," etc..
Simply begin with, "A reading from the book of..."
If you can, memorize this introduction, and say it while making total eye contact with the people.
Elicit & wait for the assembly's focused attention.
2. Pause several seconds to let the introduction "sink in" before continuing.
3. Proclaim the reading, **slowly** and with feeling. Use expression and emotion. Tell the story! Speak in a loud, but not overpowering voice. The Cathedral echoes, so over enunciate!
4. Pause several seconds after reading the scripture.

5. Then say, “The Word of the Lord,” and wait for the assembly’s response.

6. Step back with head bowed in silent reflection for a few moments.

Following the first reading, the first lector then leaves the ambo and returns to the first raised level in front of the altar. You will bow again to the altar, this time together with the Cantor (unless the Cantor is also pianist). After this bow, return to your seat and breathe easily. Your job is finished for today!

- SECOND READING The **second lector** proclaims the second reading only. After the Cantor proclaims the Responsorial Psalm, he/she will leave the ambo and go to the first raised level in front of the altar (Unless the Cantor is also the pianist). You will bow to the altar in unison with the Cantor. (See *first reading notes on bowing*)

After bowing, proceed to the ambo in a reverent, unrushed manner. Adjust the microphone to your mouth, if necessary. Pause a moment, and begin:

1. As with the first reading, read this text as written. Do **not** say, “The second reading is…” or “this morning’s second reading is,” etc..Simply begin with, “A reading from the book of…”If you can, memorize this introduction, making total eye contact with the people. Elicit and wait for the assembly’s focused attention.
2. Pause several seconds to let the introduction “sink in” before continuing.
3. Proclaim the reading, **slowly** and with feeling. Use expression and emotion. Tell the story! Speak in a loud, but not overpowering voice. The Cathedral echoes, so over enunciate!
4. Pause several seconds after reading the scripture.
5. Then say, “The Word of the Lord,” and wait for the assembly’s response.

6. Step back with head bowed in silent reflection for a few moments.
7. After the silent reflection, close the Lectionary and place it on the lower shelf in the ambo.

Following the second reading, the second lector then leaves the ambo and returns to the first raised level in front of the altar. Bow again to the altar, this time alone. Then return to your seat.

- ANNOUNCEMENTS The **second lector** reads any announcements. Toward the end of Communion, proceed to the Cantor's side of the sanctuary and be ready near the microphone with the Announcement binder. Following Communion there is a period of silence. Then the Presider leads the Prayer After Communion. Then, come the Announcements. While the announcements certainly don't have the weight of scripture (thus we do not read them from the ambo), they are still important for the life of our parish. So be sure to read slowly, loudly, clearly, and with expression, so that the messages are clearly communicated to the people. After you complete the announcements, step back from the Cantor's stand. Your job is finished!

IV. After the Liturgy

- Please help the Sacristan by returning the Lectionary and the Announcement binder to the table in the West sacristy.
- Know how much we appreciate you for your ministry of Lector! God bless you!

If you have any questions regarding this document, please contact Patti Stone, at Cathedral of the Annunciation:

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