

ROLE OF LECTORS

INTRODUCTION:

The Ministry of Lector has matured from a mere reader of biblical words to a proclaimer of faith and revealer of our stories of faith. Quite naturally, Lectors have experienced their own faith growing through this ministry. Saint Luke Church will seek to increasingly provide opportunities to further enrich the Lectors and thus, the entire parish in this fashion.

Since the homily is rooted in the biblical text of the liturgy, the Lector's roll is heightened in importance. Truly, you prepare the way of the Lord by your deepening your awareness of the significance of the Lector's proclamation of the Word at each Eucharist.

The place of proclamation is a significant space, i.e., the Table of the Word. The Church word is Ambo, or referred to as the lectern for the unfamiliar. Each Lector must learn to adapt their personal style to benefit in a maximum manner from this space. A certain uniformity of proclamation by all Lectors (rather than a highly personalized and stylized manner) will tend to enhance God's Word.

Each minister should perceive a strong relationship with the rest of the celebrating assembly and other liturgical ministers. Liturgical celebration is a cooperative ministerial effort, and thus the model desired at Saint Luke Church.

The Lector should be advised that the command of your voice, pitch, enunciation and understanding of the text will embrace the community in a manner that even technology cannot provide.

Holding and cradling the Lectionary during the proclamation with both hands, as well as eye contact, will increase your presence to the community. "Sliding and pointing" fingers and simply reading without looking up tend to inhibit the effectiveness of the reader. A cure for this dependency will be increased with preparation, practice, and experience.

Reflection, critique, exploration of style, and overall effectiveness are areas ripe for further growth development, an on going evaluation in the Ministry of Lector.

PREPARATION

1. Familiarize yourself with the readings at home during the week. Study their context, style, meaning, etc. The parish will make commentaries available to you through "The Lector's Workbook."
2. Being a Lector is more than just reading. PRAY over the texts for greater clarity and understanding so that you might be able to proclaim and share the Word in a more meaningful way.
3. Recite the readings aloud to hear yourself. PREPARE. Preparation is half the ministry. A successful proclamation is almost always a sign and fruit of preparation.

PRIOR TO MASS

1. Come 15-20 minutes before Mass is to begin. Identify yourself to the Mass Coordinator and Celebrant. All ministers, including Lectors, must sign in the Chapel (reception desk at 5:00PM Mass) to review any final preparations with the Celebrant.
2. There are two Lectors. Lector 1 provides the introductory words of welcome and proclaims the Old Testament reading. Lector 2 proclaims the New Testament reading and the petitions.
3. Take a look at the Lectionary to finalize your preparation. Lector 1 should review the welcoming introduction to Mass. Lector 2 should review the prayers of petition for proclamation.

BEGINNING OF MASS

In the spirit of a hospitable gathering, we encourage you to welcome others as they come to Mass. **All ministers should be Greeters.**

Immediately after music rehearsal is complete, Lector 1 will go to the Ambo (lectern) to read the introduction. The introduction will always end with the community rising to greet one another. By word or gesture invite them to do so. Allow yourself to feel the spirit of the moment and greet others as you return to your seat. Occasionally, the celebrant will provide the introductory words and initiate the greeting.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING/OLD TESTAMENT

1. Upon conclusion of the Opening Prayer all will be seated except the Reader. Observing the silence of the community, the Reader will proceed to the Ambo from the left side to commence with the reading. Delay/wait until the entire community is still and quiet. If people are being seated or seating themselves, begin reading only when they stop and the coordinator has moved away from eyesight. This is important when we are crowded. Rule of thumb: If anyone is doing anything anywhere during the Proclamation, they will not be paying attention to you, the Proclaimer.
2. All your movements should be graceful and dignified. Never hurry. No bowing or genuflection is to be done.
3. It is strongly suggested to pick up the book and hold it in both hands. This gesture gives visual impact and maximizes eye contact.
4. Begin by saying, "a Reading from the Book of_____." No commentary is needed. Omit the fine print in the Book.
5. At the conclusion of the reading pause for a moment. Look at the community. Hold the book in front of you slightly raised but not in any exaggerated manner, and say. "The Word of the Lord." (No longer do we use "This is...")
6. Remain quietly at the Ambo as you place the book to rest. Your cue to move will be the music that begins the Responsorial Psalm. Do NOT move until the music begins. Then walk gracefully to your seat.

SECOND READING/NEW TESTAMENT

1. After the Responsorial Psalm is sung, silence is observed. Lector 2 will rise and walk without hurry and with grace to the Ambo and also enter from the left side.
2. The procedure is the same as the first Lector. Pick up the book and hold it with both hands. Announce the reading with the usual, "a Reading from the Book of_____." (same as above)
3. After the reading, remain quietly standing in place until the music begins for the Alleluia/Gospel Acclamation. When the music begins, return to your place and remain standing for the Gospel.

PRACTICAL HINTS

1. Please **arrange for a substitute** when you cannot make a scheduled Sunday. It is helpful to notify the Coordinator of the Mass in questions. If all else fails, call coordinator of Lectors.
2. You may sit anywhere, but try to **be relatively accessible** by being at the end of the row of chairs.
3. Hold book up. Wait to gain the attention of the community by using silence and eye contact effectively. Do not ever try to compete with people moving about; you will lose every time.
4. Remember to dress in a manner befitting public worship. Some form of “Sunday Best” or “Business Casual” attire is expected.
5. You **will be expected to participate in training/enrichment sessions** for Lectors that are scheduled occasionally during the year.
6. Take initiative to affirm other Lectors when they have been particularly effective. Even identify issues for Lectors when a proclamation was not as effective as it could have been.
7. Be ready to ask questions, make suggestions to improve the ministry, and remain open to further growth and development for all at Saint Luke Church in our liturgical life.
8. You must project with confidence and energy. You can rarely be too loud in proclamation, but you can be too soft and monotone. Remember that proclamation of scripture is vastly different than reading a book or any other kind of speaking in public.
9. It would seem that any Lector would be a year-round student of Lectionary cycle of the readings. One would be aware of the readings through preparation and reflection throughout the Church year.
10. The parish provides a “Lector’s Workbook” for a small donation and can well offer other materials in the future to assist you in your ministry. Please utilize these helps in your ministry.
11. The sound system, while enhancing the reader, will not overcome dull, lifeless proclamation, only make it louder. **Remember you bring the “Word of God” to life.**

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