

# GUIDELINES FOR LECTORS

## SS. John and Paul Parish

### LECTOR'S PRAYER

*May the Lord be in my mind, on my lips, and in my heart,  
that I may worthily proclaim the good news of salvation.*

**THE WORD OF GOD** contained in Scripture we read each Sunday is the way through which we understand the relationship between the Bible and our God who revealed it to us. While Sacred Scripture contains history, it is not a history lesson. While it contains stories, it is not just stories. God's Word is a living and dynamic presence in our lives, and through it, as you proclaim it, God speaks to His people. Therefore, thank you so much for saying "YES" to this important ministry! You have an important role and responsibility in our celebration of the Eucharist.

As a lector, you enter into a relationship with God's Word as revealed in Sacred Scripture and you take upon yourself the duty and privilege of bringing the Word of God to life.

When you stand at the ambo, you give voice to ancient words that heal, strengthen, encourage and challenge. In a very real sense, you do what the prophets once did. You are to announce the Lord's Words!

Your task is both simple and complex. You proclaim Scripture to the assembly but you also present it to them for their understanding. Your ministry requires preparation! It is an important ministry and responsibility and the way you approach and perform it should reflect its holy nature.

## SOME GENERAL INFORMATION:

- A liturgical minister may perform only one liturgical ministry at a time at Mass. Thus, if you are called to minister as a lector, you may not also perform the function of a Eucharistic Minister or an usher at the same Mass.
- **There will be two lectors at each Mass.** The first lector will read the announcements and the first reading. The second lector will read the second reading, **and if the Deacon is not present**, the Prayers of the Faithful.
- Prepare your reading well. Reflect on its meaning. Practice at home to become comfortable with your reading. Know how to pronounce difficult words.
- If you are unsure of the readings, please ask Fr. Marty or the presider.
- Dress "UP" neatly and conservatively. (Flip-Flops, tennis shoes, sun dresses, tank tops, T-shirts, low-cut tops, shorts, and blue jeans are inappropriate for Sunday Mass.)
- Proclaim God's Word! Speak loudly, clearly, and slowly. Utilize voice control, appropriate pauses, and eye contact.
- Be reliable. Each lector is responsible for serving when scheduled. Please be courteous: if you cannot serve when assigned, please arrange for a substitute.
- Be present at least 15 minutes prior to Mass. Go over your reading before the start of Mass. Review the Prayers of the Faithful.
- Spend some time in prayer. Pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you in your proclamation and speak through you as His instrument.

- For the entrance procession the lectors will be behind the altar servers and in front of the priest. One of the lectors will carry the Book of the Gospels. Carry it out from your body, about ten inches and at chest level. You should be able to see over the top of the book. If you are “older”, please carry the Book of the Gospels at a level that is comfortable and safe. **If Deacon Bob Glaser is present, he will process in with the Book of the Gospels and the lectors will not process in.**
- When you reach the front of the Church, the lector carrying the Book of the Gospels will stop briefly but DOES NOT BOW OR GENUFLECT. (You are holding a sacred object.) The lector carrying the Book of the Gospels will proceed up the steps and to the front side of the altar and place the Book of the Gospels there. Come back and bow with the servers. Then you may proceed to your seat.
- After the opening prayer, as everyone is sitting down, the first lector will proceed to the ambo. Before entering the Sanctuary, please bow to the altar. Please use the reading in the Lectionary: “A reading from....” You do not need to say “Our first reading is a reading...” or “Our second reading is a reading...” Once you have said this, pause for a count of three before starting. After you have finished, pause for a count of five before saying “The Word of the Lord...” Return to your seat.
- After the Second Reading, the second lector will please close the Lectionary and place it under the ambo. When you leave the Sanctuary, please bow to the altar.
- When the Profession of Faith gets to the point: “I believe in the Holy Spirit....” the second lector will make your way to the ambo for the Prayers of the Faithful. When you have finished, turn, face the priest and wait for him to finish the prayer. While everyone is sitting down, walk back to your seat. **If Deacon Bob is present, he will proclaim the Prayers of the Faithful.**
- The new General Instruction of the Roman Missal places even more emphasis on the importance of silence in the liturgy. The Liturgy of the Word is to be celebrated in a way as to promote silence and reflection and

prayer. “The liturgy should include brief periods of silence, accommodated to the gathered assembly, in which, at the prompting of the Holy Spirit, the Word of God may be grasped by the heart and a response through prayer may be prepared. These are observed before the Liturgy of the Word itself begins, after the first and second reading, and at the conclusion of the homily.” (GIRM 56) In other words, when you finish a reading, count to 5 before saying: “The Word of the Lord...”

- Please note: the lectors do not process out with the priest and the altar servers.
- Take a deep breath. It is normal to feel nervous, and not just the first time!

*“All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching,  
for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness”*

*2 Timothy 3:16*