

Guidelines for Lectors

*“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”
(John 1:1-2)*

- I. Make daily reading of scripture a priority. The parish bulletin publishes each week the Readings of the Day for the upcoming week, or they can be accessed at www.usccb.org. Every lector is encouraged, at minimum, to read and reflect on the Sunday readings for each week whether you are assigned or not.
- II. As part of your preparation for proclaiming, reflect on the context in which your assigned text is situated by reading the verses that come immediately before and after. (Daily reading of scripture helps immensely with this process!)
- III. Read, reflect, pray and practice, practice, practice! The primary role for the lector is to focus the attention of the Assembly on the Word of God, not him/herself. The lector is merely the instrument God uses to make His words come alive.
- IV. Your scheduled day has arrived – what to do:
 1. Arrive 15 minutes (at minimum!) prior to the beginning of Mass, reserve a place in the pews for yourself to sit during Mass (in reasonable proximity to the ambo), go to the sacristy, sign in and check the lectionary to make certain the correct Sunday readings are marked. If you are the alternate lector, and no deacon is serving, you will offer the Prayer of the Faithful (or if either of the two other assigned lectors has had a last-minute emergency and has not arrived, you will also proclaim one of the scripture readings); take time to familiarize yourself with the petitions, especially the correct pronunciation of names. Lector 1 should place the lectionary on the ambo before lining up for Opening Procession. It is recommended that the alternate lector carry the Prayer of the Faithful folder in the opening procession.
 2. Opening Procession: Lector 1 carries the Book of the Gospels (elevated with the front of the book facing forward), next in line after the cross bearer; Lectors 2 and 3 come next (walking together). Lector 1 places the Book of the Gospels face down on the altar before joining the Presider, Lectors 2 and 3 one on either side of Presider and the acolytes to reverence the altar before taking one’s place in the pews.

****Note:** When a deacon serves, he carries the Book of the Gospels in processional. At those Masses when the deacon preaches, he will also offer the Prayer of the Faithful. If he serves at Mass, but does not preach, he will also offer the Prayer of the Faithful. (With two deacons at our parish, most Masses will have a deacon serving,)
 3. When it is your time to approach the ambo to proclaim your reading, please make certain that you take a few moments at the ambo before beginning to proclaim. You want to make certain that the congregation is seated and has quieted before beginning to proclaim so that everyone can hear God’s word. Remember also to introduce your reading as identified in the lectionary: “A reading from the”
 4. Prayer of the Faithful: If you are responsible for offering the Prayer of the Faithful, please approach the ambo while the Creed is concluding. That way there is not an awkward gap between the priest’s introduction to the Prayer and the beginning of the petitions. A good “cue” for when to approach the ambo are the words “I believe in one,

holy, catholic and apostolic Church..." (or, "I believe in...the holy Catholic Church," when we recite the Apostles' Creed).

5. Recessional: Your "cue" to line up for the recessional is when the Presider begins to walk toward the altar, usually after the first verse of the closing song. Presider, lectors and acolytes move to the base of the altar steps. Lectors follow the cross bearer, followed by the other acolytes and Presider. (The Book of the Gospels remains at the ambo during the recessional; it is not carried out.)
- V. Lector 1 is responsible for retrieving the Book of the Gospels, lectionary and Prayers of the Faithful notebook from the ambo, returning them to the sacristy so that they are ready for the next Mass.
- VI. For lectors who may also serve as a Minister of Hospitality, Eucharistic Minister, Cantor, Music Minister or Acolyte, please do not serve in any of these liturgical roles when you are assigned to lector. Each liturgical role plays an integral part in the mosaic of the Mass, and as such, each merits the sole attention and energy of the respective minister.
- VII. Remember: It is your responsibility to secure a substitute if you are not able to serve as scheduled. The first person you should contact is the alternate lector scheduled for your respective Mass.

Weekday Daily Mass:

1. The lector for daily Mass is responsible for proclaiming the first reading and responsorial psalm. They are also responsible for proclaiming the second reading on the rare occasion that there is one prescribed (e.g. for a special feast or solemnity). The priest will offer the Prayer of the Faithful.
2. After proclaiming the first reading, please pause for a few seconds before going into the responsorial psalm. To proclaim the responsorial psalm, begin by simply saying the response (e.g. "Praise the Lord, my soul!") and wait for the Assembly to reply. There is no need to introduce the responsorial psalm by saying, "The response is..." or some other variation on this.
3. The lector is not part of the opening procession or recessional.
4. There is no need to go the sacristy to sign in before Mass.