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MINISTERS OF THE WORD/LECTORS

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PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Every liturgical celebration follows a ritual which is marked by rubrics (highlighted in red print) describing in detail what are to be observed, in terms of wording or physical postures. A certain flow is followed to enable the congregation to be engaged in the celebration. For example, there are designated periods of pauses and silence in the Lectionary. Where they are not indicated, pauses and delays are unnecessary and therefore to be avoided.

Have your schedule of proclamation (reading) days clearly displayed among your household reminders. Please arrange for a substitute if you cannot be there yourself.

NOTE: It is a good idea to always be ready and prepared to read the Readings for the current Sunday so that you are not taken by surprise if asked to be a replacement for Lectors who are not able to attend at the last minute.

Arrive at the Church at least fifteen (15) minutes before Mass starts. The Lector's stand, near the piano, has the Ordo, the Lector's Workbook and a book of pronunciations available for reference. Using the Ordo as reference, check the readings in the lectionary on the Ambo to make sure the book is open to the designated reading. Review the Commentary.

The lector positions themselves at the outside of a pew near the front of the church on the side of the Ambo so that they can approach the Ambo from the center aisle, making a Profound Bow to the Cross or to the Blessed Sacrament before taking the steps to the Altar, and after dismounting the steps from the Altar. It is important that the Lector's appearance creates a smooth transition from one part of the Mass to another.

The Lector only removes their mask once they are positioned at the Ambo and replaces their mask before leaving the Ambo.

Beginning after the last bell, the Lector reads the Commentary. This will include the Entrance Antiphon in the absence of a cantor. The Lector then returns to their seat for the Opening Prayer.

The Lector again approaches the Altar from the centre aisle, making a Profound Bow, at the beginning of the Liturgy of the Word, and proclaims the First Reading, Psalm (in the absence of a cantor), Second Reading and in the absence of a cantor, the Gospel Acclamation, returning to their seat when the cantor is present. At all Masses the Lectionary will be used for the Gospel and will be left open for the Gospel Reader. When leaving the altar, the lector proceeds down the steps to the centre aisle, turns and bows once more, and returns to their seat for the reading of the Gospel and the homily.

At the midpoint of the Profession of Faith, the lector again approaches the Ambo from the centre aisle in preparation for the Prayer of the Faithful, remaining at the Ambo until the Celebrant finishes the concluding prayer.

In the absence of a cantor, the Lector returns to the Ambo once the priest has moved to the centre aisle to distribute communion to read the Communion Antiphon.

Begin your proclamation with the introduction, e.g. "A Reading from the Book of the Prophet..." or "A Reading from the Letter of St. Paul to..." Do not introduce the Reading by saying: the "First Reading", "Responsorial Psalm" or the "Second Reading". At the end of the reading, pause for three (3) seconds and then say, "The Word of the Lord". Pause for five (5) more seconds before proceeding to the Psalm, the Second Reading or the Gospel Acclamation.

When proclaiming the psalm repeat the response (R/) before reading the first verse and raising your right hand, lead the response (R/) after each verse. Prior to beginning the Gospel Acclamation raise your right hand to signal the congregation to stand, and when all are standing, begin.

When reading, always ensure that the Microphone is centered on your mouth and modulate your voice to the right level. Maintain an even pace, without rushing or extended pauses.

PREPARING FOR THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD OF GOD

Read and pray the Word of God one or two days before the scheduled proclamation from your own copy of the Lector's Workbook.

Anyone can read Scripture. Only a believer can proclaim it. Get the points of the reading clear in your mind. When the reading is finished, people ideally should be clear what message the reading conveys.

Pray for guidance. Read silently for comprehension. Look up any words not understood. Check pronunciation of names, preferably before Sunday so that the pronunciation comes easily and smoothly. A pronunciation guide is also available on the lector's stand in case you are in doubt.

Place the Reading in context, especially if verses are missed. Identify the type of Reading: a story, a prophecy or a law, a letter, a psalm.

First Reading is usually related with the Gospel. The response to the Psalm usually summarizes the First Reading.

YOUR WORDS ARE LIFE, O LORD!

Lord,

You are our way, truth and life.

You teach us your truth through your Word.

Send your Spirit into our hearts
to guide us in this Ministry of Proclaiming your Word.

May we continue to pray your Word
which reveals your plan of salvation to all who listen.

Thank you, Lord,
for speaking to us and for revealing yourself to us
through your Son, Jesus Christ.

Amen.