

Ministry of Lector



Saint Patrick's Pro-Cathedral Newark, New Jersey

Lector's Prayer

May the Lord be in our heart, on our mind, and on our lips, that we may worthily proclaim his Word.

The Role of the Lector at Mass

Thank you for volunteering to serve Saint Patrick's Parish as a Lector. The ministry of Lector is one of the most visible roles of service at liturgy. We appreciate all of you who are willing to take that ministry seriously, prepare well for it, and help bring the living Word of God to our parish community.

In the early days of the Church lay people proclaimed God's Word in the liturgical assemblies. Gradually, though, this responsibility became one of the minor orders conferred on men in training for ordination to the priesthood.

As Vatican II challenged all of us to reassess our baptismal role, the role of Lector and reading Sacred Scripture in Church services once again became open to lay people. Reading is therefore one way in which we can publicly witness to our faith, in answer to our baptismal call,

If serving as a Lector is to be a Ministry, a "witness to faith" for a person, then the reading has to be much more than just a good sight reading and articulation of words. As a servant of the community, our reading must be a true proclamation.

The Bible is God's Word, and Jesus is the Word made Flesh. Just as Mary gave flesh to the Infant Christ, so too do Lectors give flesh to the Word Who is Christ. We are His instruments. Christ is present, of course, regardless of our style as Lector, but the reality of His presence is strengthened and increased when His Lector proclaims with faith, skill and compassion.

Serving as a Lector is not just helping out at church on Sunday. The Lector truly proclaims the Word, and brings about the presence of Christ in His Word within the worshipping community, and enables listeners to hear how God's Word calls each of us to His service and to serve God's people.

General Guidelines

Dress and Decorum

1. As public witnesses to the Eucharist, our behavior and dress should reflect our respect for the role of service we perform.
2. Dress should be appropriate for Sunday: no flip-flops, jeans, T-shirts, sweatshirts, shorts, and so on. The Lector should be dressed in a way that can be an example for others, and not a distraction.

Responsibilities and Duties of Lectors

1. The lector has a responsibility to the whole community in a very clear way, since he/she will be the instrument through whom the people hear God's Word. Preparation and practice are to be as much a part of the lector's responsibility as they are for a cantor or choir.

2. There will be **two Lectors** scheduled for every weekend Mass. Please do not presume the other lector will be there, so it is necessary to prepare both readings.

3. Lectors should be in the sacristy area **at least 15 minutes before Mass**. This is the time to ask any questions you might have, and, on occasion, receive special instructions.

If there are optional readings or if there are long and short versions of a reading, check with the presider for the correct reading. Be sure to check that the large red Lectionary is in the pulpit, with a ribbon marking the proper readings, and open to the first reading.

4. Lectors process in as part of the entrance procession. Lectors should be behind the altar servers.

When the procession reaches the front, **Lectors 1 and 2** bow to the altar and then go to their seats.

NOTE: If a DEACON is part of the celebration, He carries the Book of Gospels. If no deacon is part of the Celebration **Lector 1** carries the Book of Gospels.

5. After the Opening Prayer (Collect), **Lector 1** waits for a moment so that everyone can get settled in place. He/she then moves from his/her seat, bows to the altar, and moves toward the pulpit.

6. The Lector simply announces "A Reading from..." and then pauses slightly before proclaiming the reading.

The Lector **does not** say "*The first reading is...*"

Do not read the small red print at the start of a reading, which simply summarizes the whole reading.

At the end of the reading, the Lector pauses slightly before saying "The Word of the Lord."

NB: it is easy to drop your voice at this point. Please keep the voice very strong. **Lector 1** leaves the Lectionary in place on the ambo.

Lector 1 then returns to middle isle waits for Cantor and bow together then Lector 1 goes to his/her seat.

7. If the Responsorial Psalm is to be recited, **Lector 1** remains in the pulpit to lead the psalm.

Lector 1 reads the Responsorial Verse and then the first part of the psalm.

Lector 1 pauses after each section of the psalm and raises his/her right hand to indicate to the congregation that they should recite the Responsorial Verse.

After the last response, **Lector 1** pauses briefly and then returns to his/her seat. Do not bow to the altar as you leave.

8. If the Responsorial Psalm is to be sung, the **Cantor** then will come forward to lead the responsorial psalm.

OR, the organist leads the Responsorial Psalm from his/her place.

9. After the Responsorial Psalm, **Lector 2** waits until Lector 1 or the Cantor leaves the pulpit and returns to his/her seat and then comes forward.

Lector 2 bows toward the altar, and then proceeds to the pulpit and reads the second reading in the manner prescribed.

Lector 2 then takes the Lectionary from the pulpit and places it on one of the chairs used by the ministers of the Mass.

Lector 2 then returns to his/her seat.

10. After the homily and creed, the presider will introduce the Prayers of the Faithful.

Lector 2 goes to the pulpit as the congregation prays "*We believe in the Holy Spirit....*" near the end of the Creed, so that there is no delay after Creed before the Intercessions.

Lector 2 will then read the petitions. The petitions will be in a binder on the shelf in the pulpit.

Lector 2 then returns to his/her seat.

Suggestions for Lectors

1. Practice each week's readings even when not assigned. It is good to familiarize yourself with Scripture.

Be careful with the end of sentences and phrases. It is very easy to both drop the voice and to speed up near the end of a sentence or phrase, thus making the words difficult for the people to understand. Keep the same pace and volume, even at the end of a sentence/phrase.

2. Do not hurry! Let people be seated and quiet down. Within the reading itself, do not rush through. Pause after the reading before saying "The Word of the Lord."

3. Prepare! It is so much richer and expressive if we have prepared well, looked up pronunciation of words and names, and have taken time to really study the reading so that it makes some sense to us. Practice reading aloud.

4. Learn to read with a microphone. Microphones do not mean that we should speak softer or softly. We should read above normal in volume and let the microphones amplify your voice. Adjust the angle of the microphone as well.
5. What if only one lector shows? Hopefully, an available lector will have offered his/her services prior to Mass.
6. Please do not presume that your partner will be there. We want two lectors, not one. Please obtain a substitute if you cannot make your scheduled assignment.
7. Normally, a person serving as a Lector does not fill any other ministry during a particular Mass. Therefore, you should not serve as a Minister of the Eucharist at the same Mass at which you are serving as a Lector.
Of course, situations will arise where, for the good order of the celebration, you may be called upon to fulfill two ministries.
8. Keep a current missalette at home to practice the readings.
9. Website with pronunciation guide.
<http://netministries.org/resources/resource-pronunciation-guide>
10. Website with daily readings.
<http://www.usccb.org/>

**THANK YOU FOR SAYING YES! TO SERVE
OUR LORD.**