

**"The LITURGY is the SUMMIT towards which  
the activity of the Church is directed;  
at the same time it is the  
FONT from which all power flows."**

*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy - Documents of Vatican II*

We are called to serve one another as members of the parish community. We are challenged by the example of Jesus to reach out in loving service to others, offering hospitality and welcome to the community at large. Strengthened by our prayer together, we are empowered to make our faith present in our daily lives.

## **Lector Guidelines**

### **Preparation for Reading**

Proclaiming the Word of God is much more than just reading. It can be a powerfully prayerful experience for you - one that you share with the entire assembly. The key to effective proclamation lies in understanding the meaning, the lesson, which is contained within the words you are about to read.

Spend some time in prayer and contemplation during the week before you will be reading. Familiarize yourself with all three readings, so that you understand the tone and the flow of the entire Liturgy of the Word for that Sunday. Review the commentaries found on the photocopies you receive with your reminder note, which will help you understand something about the purpose of the author and the historical setting out of which the passage arises.

Once you have an understanding of the content of the reading, begin to consider the tone and the pace at which it should be read. Read through the reading several times aloud. Decide where it is most appropriate to pause, and for how long. Review any words that you find difficult to pronounce (When in doubt - ask!) Become so familiar with the reading that it would appear you know it almost by heart. This will let you feel comfortable enough to lift your eyes from the page occasionally, to make eye contact with the assembly.

### **When You Arrive At Church**

1. Please be at church 10 minutes before Mass begins; go to the sacristy.
2. Check that the Lectionary is marked at the correct reading. It is Fr. Tom's custom to have you carry this book in the opening procession.
3. Familiarize yourself with the General Intercessions, found in the green binder. These prayers deserve the same quality of reading as do the Scripture. Make sure you know the proper pronunciation of the names for Mass intentions. Remember that family members of those for whom we pray are likely to attend. If you do not know how to pronounce a name, PLEASE ASK! After reviewing the Intercessions, place the binder in the shelf of the ambo.
4. Check with Fr. Tom to find out if the psalm is to be sung or read.

## Procedures for Mass

### Opening Procession

As you participate in the opening procession, hold the book reverently before you, or even better, upheld so that all in the assembly are able to see it. As the procession reaches the front of the altar, the servers will be on either side of the priest, the lector should be on Father's left side. When Father and the servers bow, simply bow just your head. Follow the servers into the sanctuary, place the book on the ambo, reverently walk back to the front of the altar, bow profoundly, and returns to your seat.

### The Readings

For the First Reading, wait until the assembly is seated after the opening prayer and then approach the altar. Bow before the front of the altar, and walk to the Ambo. Before you begin, take a moment to compose yourself and to catch the attention of the assembly. Proclaim the reading with your whole heart. Proclaiming is not the same as reading. When you pause at the end of the reading, then say "THE WORD OF THE LORD," say it with strength and conviction because what you have just read is truly the living Word of the God. Do NOT lift/show the book to the assembly at the end of the readings.

If the Psalm is to be read, Fr. Tom's custom is to have the lector first read the response, then repeat the response with the assembly, read all verses with the assembly, and end with a final reading of the response. If the Psalm is to be sung, simply move to one of the side chairs near the servers until it is time for the second reading.

After the Psalm is read or sung, pause until the assembly is ready to listen with reverence, then begin the Second Reading. After the reading, place the Lectionary on the shelf of the ambo and return to your seat.

When it is time to read the Intercessions allow yourself enough time to get to the ambo before the end of the Creed. The intercessions deserve the same quality of reading as do the Scriptures. Give them appropriate timing and pauses. Again, the words need to catch the attention of the assembly so we can pray with you. After the final intercession, please remain at the ambo until the concluding prayer is finished. As always, bow reverently and return to your place.

### Closing Procession

Lectors do not participate in the closing procession.

Please be aware that Lectors and other liturgical ministers set an example for the assembly. Appropriate dress is required for ministers who wish to convey the importance of giving God our "Sunday Best".

For further resources including scripture reflections, lector notes and pronunciation guides please visit : [www.lectorprep.org](http://www.lectorprep.org)