

# General Guidelines for Lectors

## Selection Process

All Catholics in good standing, fully initiated in the Church (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist) who are aware of proper diction when reading, are eligible to participate in the Lector ministry. Parishioners interested in becoming lectors should notify the Parish Office and be instructed on the proper attire, correct use of the microphone, and how to proclaim the Word of God.

## Entrance Rite

1. The deacon (or in his absence, a reader) carries the Book of Gospels. The Lectionary is never carried in procession; instead it is placed on the ambo, and open on the reading of the day, prior to mass.
2. Readers and other ministers precede the deacon and priest and make a deep bow to the altar before going to their places.

Notes:

- The bow is made to the altar which represents Christ – not the cross.
- During the Mass those who pass before the tabernacle do not make any signs of reverence toward it.
- Ministers who carry liturgical objects make a simple bow of the head instead of either the genuflection or the deep bow.
- The deacon, or reader, who carries the Book of Gospels omits the usual reverence, places the book on the altar and then makes reverence to the altar. (The reader makes a deep bow; the deacon kisses the altar along with the priest.)

## Liturgy of the Word

The biblical proclamation and preaching is itself a sacramental act in which God speaks to his people and Christ is present among his disciples in His own word. Any kind of haste is avoided to encourage a spirit of recollection. Non-biblical texts are never substituted for the readings or psalms.

## First Reading:

1. Both lectors walk reverently to the center front of the Altar; make a deep bow, then proceed to the ambo. The reader of the first reading remains standing in front of the ambo, the second reader sits.
2. The reader then begins the first reading from the Lectionary. The reader waits until all are quietly seated before beginning the reading.

Notes:

- Whenever possible, someone other than the priest or deacon reads the lessons before the Gospel – ideally one reader for each lesson. Except for the proclamation of the Passion of the Lord, the readings may not be subdivided among several readers.
- In the absence of any other reader, the deacon reads these texts. In the absence of even a deacon, a concelebrating priest, if present, proclaims these scriptural texts. When no other competent

minister is present, the presiding priest read the lessons. This should be the exception rather than the rule.

- The readers are to speak in a way that is audible, clear and intelligible.
- An acclamation follows each of the readings: **“The word of the Lord/Thanks be to God.”** This is a way for the people to honor the word of God, receiving it with grateful hearts.
- A brief period of silence is then observed so that the Word of God might be taken into the hearts of the people by the fostering of the Holy Spirit.

## **Responsorial Psalm**

1. The psalmist (cantor of the psalm) leads the sung responsorial psalm – which is ideally sung. When the psalm cannot be sung a reader in a meditative style leads it.
2. Only texts approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops may be used. Other songs or hymns are not permissible.

## **Second Reading**

When there is a second reading, the reader goes to the ambo when the psalm is concluded. The text is then proclaimed as described above. Both readers then walk reverently back to the center front of the Altar, make a deep bow, and return to their seats in the congregation.

## **General Intercessions**

In the intercessions, the people respond to the Word of God and exercise the office of their baptismal priesthood, offering prayers to God for the salvation of all. The deacon, cantor, reader or other member of the faithful announces the intentions in a clear, calm and intelligible way.

**For complete liturgical instructions on the lector ministry within the Mass visit the Manchester Diocese [website](#).**