



## Our Lady Queen of Peace Church

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### **The Role of the Proclaimer of the Word of God**

As proclaimers of the word, we share in a sacred process in the life of the Church. “In Sacred Scripture, the Church constantly finds her nourishment and her strength, for she welcomes it not as a human word, but as what it really is, the Word of God” (1 Thessalonians 2:13; Second Vatican Council; Dogmatic Constitution on Revelation [Dei Verbum], 24). “When the Sacred Scriptures are read in the Church, God himself speaks to his people, and Christ, present in his words, proclaims the Gospel. Therefore, the readings from the Word of God are to be listened to reverently by everyone, for they are an element of the greatest importance to the Liturgy” (GIRM [General Instruction of the Roman Missal], 29). Therefore, **we who are privileged to proclaim the Word of God during the liturgy play a very important role in helping to present the Word to the assembly.**

We owe this privilege, as well as the insights just expressed, to the work of the Second Vatican Council, 1962-1965, which issued the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (Dei Verbum) (quoted above) and the document that has most shaped our liturgical experience: the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (Sacrosanctum Concilium). As the Church celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of this document, we proclaimers should celebrate it with particular joy. Among many contributors to the liturgy, it provided for a richer selection of Scripture to proclaim at Mass, it invited the laity into liturgical ministry, including the ministry of the lector, and it urged everyone to listen attentively to the Word proclaimed, because “it is he [Christ] himself who speaks when the holy Scriptures are read in the Church”. (7)

Our mission entails a great responsibility. At Mass, we serve as a bridge between the Scriptures and the faithful. In undertaking this sacred ministry, you are committing yourself to the preparation and the discipline that enables Scripture to become a living Word. According to the introduction to the lectionary of the Mass, this requires that “preparation must above all be spiritual, [though] ... technical preparation is also needed.” The Introduction adds that “spiritual preparation presupposes at least a biblical and liturgical formation ... Biblical formation is to give proclaimers the ability to understand the readings in context and to perceive ... the central point of the revealed message.... Liturgical formation ought to equip proclaimers to have some grasp of the meaning and structure of the liturgy of the word and its connection with the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Technical preparation by the proclaimer should make the proclaimer more skilled in the art of proclaiming publicly” (55). Obviously, this responsibility requires serious effort.