

Lector Guidelines

Sacred Heart Catholic Church

Thank you for your willingness to serve our community as a lector during Masses. This important ministry helps all of us to hear and absorb the written Word of God and so more readily put it into action in our own lives. The following guidelines have been created to help you grow and develop in your ministry as a lector. Thank you again for your generosity of time and talent.

Preparation

Lector workbooks are available in the Reconciliation Room or the Sacristy. The readings for each week are explained, difficult words are phoneticized, and tips for the readings are given, so that the lector can proclaim the Word in the best possible manner. Please take one home for your use. Please practice the readings aloud at least two times at home. This will help you to pronounce the words, and will help with a good pace of reading. Practice reading distinctly and unhurriedly. It is very easy to read too fast, and thereby lose the meaning in a rush of words. Avoiding distracting movements or gestures will help the congregation focus more clearly on the proclaimed Word and not so much on the lector. Mistakes happen and if you make a mistake, even a “big” one, don’t stop to apologize or explain. It is better to simply restart the line on which you have erred and not draw attention to the mistake.

Be sure to pause between the announcement of the scripture and beginning to read, and the end of the reading and the conclusion. The phrases, “A reading from the book of Amos” and “The word of the Lord”, are not actually parts of Sacred Scripture and should be read apart from the actual scripture.

If the situation arises that the Responsorial Psalm needs to be read rather than sung, please do not announce, “The Responsorial Psalm is...” Simply read the Psalm once and then invite the congregation to repeat it by raising your hand above the ambo.

Do not read the Alleluia verse. The Alleluia is never read. If it is not sung, it is omitted.

Schedules

The monthly schedule is provided by e-mail or US Mail to every minister household. Please inform the church office ***no later than the 20th of each month*** as to your availability for the following month.

If you are scheduled for a time when you cannot participate, please let the church office know so a sub can be found. The schedule is printed and placed in the Reconciliation/gathering room, as well as in the glass bulletin board at the church entrance.

Order of Lectors during the Mass

The first person named is the one who normally carries the Book of Gospels in the procession if the deacon is not present and does the first reading *and the Responsorial Psalm (when not done by the choir)*. Also, he makes sure that the microphone is turned on. The second person named is the one who will normally read the Second Reading. He will participate in the Procession and when there are only two altar servers, he will carry the Cross. Both need to arrive about 15 minutes before Mass begins.

Processional Sequence

Form

The procession will be led by the processional cross (carried by an altar server or the second lector) and will be flanked by two altar servers bearing candles. They will be followed by the first (and second) lector and the extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion (EMHC), two by two. The deacon will follow next with the Book of Gospels and then the priest. If the deacon is not present, the first lector will carry the Book of Gospels in his place.

Execution

The cross and candle bearers will lead the procession and move from the procession to their assigned places without stopping. As they are carrying items in procession, they do not bow at the foot of the altar. The cross bearer will move directly to the cross stand and place it there and then go immediately to his seat. The candle bearers will continue to the sides of the altar and place the candles on the altar and move immediately to their seats. The lector(s) will approach the foot of the altar and bow to the altar together and then move immediately to their seats. The EMHC's will follow suit, bowing to the altar and then moving immediately to their seats. The deacon (or first lector) will continue up the steps of the sanctuary and place the Book of Gospels on the altar between the candles. The deacon will then step back and wait for the priest to reverence the altar and will then follow the priest to the chairs. If the first lector has carried the Book of Gospels in procession, he will place the Book on the altar, bow slightly, and then go immediately to his seat.