



Saint Raphael the Archangel Catholic Church

To See as Christ Sees and Love as Christ Loves

Reader Notes

Reader's Prayer:

*May the Lord be in my heart and on my lips
that I may worthily proclaim the good news of salvation.*

The first step in preparation for your assignment at a liturgy should be prayer to the Holy Spirit for guidance that you will not only understand the Word of God but also be able to communicate God's Word.

One Week Before

Please use your *Workbook for Lectors and Gospel Readers* or go online <http://www.nccbuscc.org/> to review the readings. It will help you to understand the readings and in turn help you to be a more powerful minister of God's Word.

Practice: It would be well to practice both readings, out loud, in the event you are the only Reader present that day. If you are the only reader signed-in and it is fifteen (15) minutes prior to mass, please ask another reader in the congregation to read. If there is a reading that is more difficult than the other, please have the called upon reader proclaim the less difficult reading.

Identify the type of passage you are to read – a story, a dialogue, a prophecy, a letter, a parable, a song. Ask a few questions:

- Where is the climax?
- What is the tone of the reading? (comforting, scolding, warning, information, intimate) Pick out the most important sentence or phrase. Try to communicate it above all else.

Look up difficult words – their meaning and how to pronounce them. Your mission is to communicate meaning.

Let your facial expressions help you express the Scripture's message. The voice is only one part of proclamation.

Consider yourself a "proclaimer of the Word of God." It is the skills of a proclaimer you will be learning and fine-tuning, not those of an actor, radio announcer, or toastmaster.



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Dress properly/appropriately for the sacredness of the celebration. Appropriate attire is: suit/sport coat, shirt & tie for the men and dress, suit or skirt and blouse for the women. Readers are discouraged from wearing jeans, shorts, t-shirts or mini-skirts.

Before Mass

The day of your assigned reading, be at church at least 20 minutes before Mass. Check off your name on the list on the bulletin board and be sure the other reader is signed in; introduce yourself to the presiding Priest and Sacristan. Prior to Mass we pray with the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion in the ministry preparation area.

The first reader will announce the welcome and Mass intention from the podium in the choir after the bell has rung. A copy of the welcome, Mass intention and closing announcements will be in the working sacristy. Following the opening announcement and once the procession has already reached the sanctuary floor, the first reader moves toward a seat near the ambo by walking behind the congregation and not along the sanctuary floor. After the first reader has received Holy Communion, s/he moves again to the podium in the choir area to make the closing announcements. This announcement is made following the Prayer after Communion. The first reader also announces the closing hymn. This takes place after the priest gives the final blessing.

The second reader will practice the Prayers of the Faithful, which are kept in the ambo and in the ministry preparation area. There will also be a copy in the working sacristy. The second reader checks the ambo for the Prayers of the Faithful and the Word. The second reader should obtain the Book of the Gospels from the Sacristan and wait in the hall. Check that the marker ribbon is at the proper reading. Mentally note the page number. Enter the procession behind the altar servers and before the Presider. Place the Book of the Gospels standing up on the center of the altar. Then take your seat.

Please note: When a deacon is present for the liturgy he will carry in the Book of the Gospels and read the Prayers of the Faithful. The second reader in this case will read only the second reading.



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First Reading

After the opening prayers, dismissal of children for their Liturgy of the Word (Sunday 9:30 a.m. Mass), and the Presider takes his seat, the first reader will proceed to the ambo. Hands may be clasped or at your side. Ushers will be seating late arrivals. **TAKE YOUR TIME.** Bow to the altar prior to approaching the ambo. When at the ambo, look around. If people are walking to their seats, **WAIT** (don't stare at them to make them feel uncomfortable). Look around and make eye contact with the congregation. Take a moment to say the Reader's Prayer. When everyone is settled, begin with: "A reading from...". Since you've practiced for several days, you know where the reading is from, so instead of reading it, look at the congregation and state the reading.

Your voice must carry to the choir as if there were no microphone system. **PROJECT YOUR VOICE**, but do not yell. Try to sound joyful, proclaiming the **GOOD NEWS**.

Use silence and pauses to maximize effectiveness. Maintain good posture at the ambo. Remember you are doing more than reading, you are proclaiming the Word of God.

When your reading is finished, again look up, make eye contact with the congregation, then say: "The Word of the Lord."

Then, place your two hands on the two pages of the open lectionary and bow your head to signal to the congregation that the silence that follows your reading is for reflection and prayer on it. After a few moments of silence, leave the ambo to return to your seat in the assembly. Be mindful that a member of the choir will be approaching the ambo to lead the Responsorial Psalm from there. Please bow to the altar at the same time as the cantor.

Second Reading

When the cantor completes the Responsorial Psalm, the second reader proceeds to the ambo. Take your time. Procedure is the same as for the first reading. As after the first reading, place your hands on the open lectionary and bow your head until the music begins. Then, place the lectionary on the shelf in the ambo and move to your seat in the assembly.

The Presider or Deacon will proceed to the ambo for the Gospel and homily. When the Presider returns to his chair, after the homily, make eye contact with him. The Creed is



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not always said and, if this is the case, he needs to let you know it is time to proceed to the ambo for the Prayers of the Faithful.

If the Creed is said, proceed to the ambo at: “We believe in one, Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.” Check with the Presider on how to handle the Prayers of the Faithful if there is a baptism during Mass.

Read the day’s response only if it is not the usual, “Lord, hear our prayer.” If there is some other response, say the following: “Our response after each petition will be _____. (pause) However, do not pause so long that the congregation thinks they are expected to repeat it at this point. You may need to repeat the response a few times for the congregation to confidently respond.

When finished reading the petitions, stay at the ambo. Lower your head as the Presider says the closing prayer. Announce the intention of the second collection that may follow. Close the leather binder, replace it on the shelf of the ambo and return to your seat.

End of Mass

Thank the Holy Spirit for graces received.

Special Notes

We prefer to have one male and one female Reader at each Mass. Please keep this in mind when getting a substitute. Everyone is responsible for getting their own substitute if unable to fulfill their assigned duty.

If you stumble, literally or figuratively, just go on. Remember, the Holy Spirit is with you, and no one will notice if you don’t make an issue of a mistake.

The readings are the GOOD NEWS of God. Please smile or otherwise look happy to be reading the Word of God.

Thank you for volunteering to be a Reader – an important liturgical ministry in the Church. Let’s continue to pray for one another.

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