

Tips for Lectors

- 1) **Preparation is essential:**
 - a) You should read your assigned reading *out loud* several times before coming to Mass. It might be helpful to read it in a monotone the first time (only!) in order to sense what the important words/phrases are.
 - b) Be able to summarize the essential message of the reading in one sentence. If you are proclaiming the 1st reading on a Sunday, a comparison with the Gospel reading may help. Use your Bible to look at the passages before and after your reading in order to understand the larger context.
 - c) Find a particular phrase in the reading to use as a source for personal prayer.
- 2) **Check with the priest celebrant:** If there is any question about which readings are to be used, ask! (Example: Easter Sunday always has a choice for the 2nd reading.)
- 3) **Imitate John the Baptist**, who said, “He must increase, I must decrease.” Never draw attention to yourself, but to the Christ whom you proclaim.
- 4) **Remember the 1st rule of liturgy:** Move slowly, and always act as if you know exactly what you’re doing. This serves several purposes:
 - a) It allows you to act with the dignity that is yours as a Catholic Christian, bringing to the liturgy a noble simplicity and a simple nobility. Walk deliberately, and maintain good posture.
 - b) It helps to ensure that if anything goes wrong, you don’t panic – take a deep breath if needed, then take the necessary steps to correct the situation. If the book is incorrectly marked, take the time to find the correct passage. If you stumble over a word, correct yourself and move on; don’t apologize or lose your confidence, since we all make mistakes.
- 5) **Proclaim to the back of the church:** It’s not enough for the people in the front pews to hear the reading – the whole congregation should be able to receive God’s word.
 - a) Hold your head up and speak clearly
 - b) Don’t keep your eyes fixed on the Lectionary, and avoid quick glances up and down
 - c) Avoid direct eye contact, but look at the various sections of the church during the reading
 - d) Use the microphone properly: Make sure it’s in the correct position before you announce the reading, don’t assume that you don’t have to project your voice just because you have a mike, and avoid moving your head out of its range
 - e) Don’t shout, but use your breath to support your voice
- 6) **Proclamation Style:** The most important thing is to proclaim *slowly, loudly, and clearly*. (Everything else is just icing on the cake.) Be aware of your breathing, pause at the end of phrases and sentences, and maintain a prayerful spirit.