

READER INSTRUCTIONS

BEFORE MASS

Punctuality: Please be at the church 10-15 minutes early. Immediate preparation is expected of all readers. This requires arriving in ample time before the liturgy, locating the readings in the Lectionary, putting the Lectionary at the Ambo (5 pm mass), arranging the microphone, and making sure that the sound system is properly functioning. The Lectionary can be found in the cabinet in the back sacristy.

Make sure that the **FIRST** reading is appropriately marked in the Lectionary.

Sign In: A sign in sheet is provided in the alcove next to the Usher's Room. Please take a second to sign in as you arrive. Hopefully this will ease the confusion as to who has shown up and who has not.

NO SHOW

It is your responsibility to get a replacement. In an emergency, please call the second reader to give them ample preparation time to proclaim your reading.

MASS

ENTRANCE PROCESSION

Readers should take part in the entrance procession, but you will not carry the Lectionary. You will walk behind the Altar Servers. Take your seat with your family or in one of the front pews. If a deacon is present, he will carry the Book of the Gospels and process ahead of the priest.

FIRST READING

Right after the end of the opening prayer, the readers and cantor will walk to the center of the church, and bow slightly to the altar. Walk to the ambo for the first reading or take a seat in one of the chairs behind the ambo if you are the second reader.

At the end of the reading, the Lectionary should **not** be lifted off the ambo while saying: "The Word of the Lord".

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

As usual, the choir will handle the Responsorial Psalm, unless you are a reader at the Sunday 7:30 a.m. mass. You will read the Responsorial Psalm at this mass, but not the “Alleluia” as it should always be sung.

SECOND READING

A brief period of silence should be allowed after the Psalm.

After the short pause, the second Reader does the same as the first reader. After the second reading, all of you will leave the sanctuary, bow in front of the altar and return to your seats. The Cantor will sing the “Alleluia” at the lectern on the choir side.

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL/ANNOUNCEMENTS

The reader who proclaims the first reading will do the petitions (unless a deacon is present) and the second reader will do the announcements. When you finish reading the petitions, please remain at the ambo until the priest reads the prayer ending the petitions.

AFTER MASS

Both Readers stand to join the Priest, altar servers, and Eucharistic Ministers in front of the altar. All will bow and recess. **DO NOT CARRY YOUR COATS IN THE RECESSION.** Coats may be left in the sacristy or with another family member.

After all masses, please leave the Lectionary on the ambo.

THE UNEXPECTED AND HOW TO COPE

Here are some common, but always unexpected, problems and how to cope with them:

- **You begin reading and the microphone is not on.....**it should be on as the AV people are in charge of this now. Be sure it is at the right height for you...point it at your chin.
- **You lose your place in the text.....**stay cool...take time and locate your place. To avoid the problem, keep the index finger of one hand running down the side of the page, pointing to your place. This allows you to make eye contact and still keep your place.
- **You misread a part of the text.....**it depends on the type of misreading. If it involves a complete alteration of the sense of the passage, go back and carefully correct the whole sentence and do it slowly. (A common one:”The body was not made for immortality” instead of “The body was not made for immorality.”) Often such serious errors involve the omission of a negative word or the substitution of a word with similar spelling, but different meaning. If the misreading was a simple mispronunciation or misplaced word, plow on with authority.

The tendency is for the listeners to hear the word the author meant instead of what you said. Have faith that some of the mistakes we make as readers may ultimately lead to good. They show that we are imperfect and human, but that we are trying to do a good job and honestly speak the Word of God.

GUIDELINES

- ☒ **SILENCE:** The reader should pause before beginning the first reading while the assembly is settling.
- ☒ In order to enable the assembly to ponder and reflect on the Word proclaimed, a pause of about fifteen to thirty seconds should be observed after each reading
- ☒ Readers begin to read by saying, "A reading from the Book of Exodus." It is inappropriate to add words such as: *"The first reading is..."*
- ☒ If the Responsorial Psalm is recited, readers should begin the recitation with the antiphon. Announcing *"Responsorial Psalm"* is unnecessary.
- ☒ Ministers of the Word should not add any of their own words to the texts.
- ☒ The title of the reading such as "A reading from the Book of Exodus" and the ending, "The Word of the Lord", should be distinguished from the reading itself. Readers do this by ***observing a pause of about three seconds*** after the former and before the latter phrase.
- ☒ While proclaiming the Word, the reader may hold the Lectionary in his/her hands, or place it on the ambo and rest his/her hand on it. Anything that might distract from the proclaimed Word, such as leaning on the ambo, hands in pockets, or shuffling from one foot to the other should be avoided.
- ☒ The reader should never do anything to draw attention to her/himself at anytime.
- ☒ **Clothing should be appropriate for the occasion, modest and in keeping with the dignity of the ministry.**

PREPARATION

To make the service of the Word effective, all readers are expected to be prepared for their ministry. Preparation should be spiritual, scriptural, and practical. Spiritual preparation involves prayer over the text and reflection on its message. Scriptural preparation involves understanding the text. Practical preparation involves mastering difficult words, learning the right pronunciations and practicing the delivery of the text aloud, ideally in the presence of someone who is able to critique the delivery.

The **Lector Workbook** is a very helpful tool where you will find both readings along with the Gospel. Consider all three scripture readings as an aid to understanding the whole liturgy of the Word for a particular Sunday. You may also want to go to the Bible and read the entire chapter of where the reading is found to give you a better understanding of the whole setting.

It may help you better to understand the reading by classifying it. To do this, we divide readings into three general categories that require different approaches.

- The first is a simple narrative or the telling of a story. This usually involves setting the time and place. There will be characters to be created and various events to picture.
- The second category we call progression of reasoning. Many of Paul's epistles are in this class. They usually proceed through steps of reasoning. In this form, emphasis and the drawing of conclusions are of special importance.
- The third category is a catchall for every other type of reading. Most of these require the creation of a mood. This includes visionary accounts, statements of the Law, prophetic exhortations, history, and poetry. Sometimes, you may be able to sense one basic mood-such as praise or lament with many variations.

After classifying the reading, you can then proceed to look for the appropriate ingredients: i.e. Character, mood, steps of reasoning.

Next, check out all proper names for pronunciation. If proper pronunciation is not found in the Workbook, there is a pronunciation guide in the back Sacristy.

Finally, take time to read aloud allowing you to practice your body language, voice elements and eye contact.

Becoming a Better Reader

As a reader, you have a major impact in how the assembly responds to the readings. Whether you are a novice or veteran reader, becoming a better Reader will help you play your role more forcefully.

1. Pray
2. Read Scripture
3. Finding the most important phrase in your reading
4. Find the emotion
5. Practice
6. Use eye contact
7. Project
8. Vary your pace
9. Vary your style

Prepare diligently, pray, do the best you can, then leave the rest to God.