



## Guidelines for Lectors

St. Mary's Catholic Church, Malta, MT - adopted \_\_ 2021  
Includes [Diocese of Great Falls-Billings Guidelines dated 10.2007](#)  
and list of Lector Procedures for individual reference

### Reading and Explaining the Word of God

(according to the [General Instruction of the Roman Missal](#) (GIRM.)

*When the Sacred Scriptures are read in the Church, God himself speaks to his people, and Christ, present in his own word, proclaims the gospel" (GIRM #29.)*

*The lector is instituted to proclaim the readings from Sacred Scripture, with the exception of the Gospel. He/she may also announce the intentions for the Prayer of the Faithful and, in the absence of a psalmist, proclaim the Psalm between the readings (GIRM # 99.)*

*In texts that are to be spoken in a loud and clear voice, whether by the priest or the deacon or by the lector, or by all, the tone of voice should correspond to the genre of the text itself, that is, depending upon whether it is a reading, a prayer, a commentary, an acclamation, or a sung text; the tone should also be suited to the form of celebration and to the solemnity of the gathering. Consideration should also be given to the characteristics of different languages and the culture of different peoples" (GIRM #38.)*

1. The Parish Pastor in consultation with the parish pastoral council, staff members and community, determine the needs and the persons best qualified to serve the parish in this ministry. Those invited into this ministry should realize that it is a leadership role in the community.
  2. This ministry is open to women and men who have been fully initiated. They must be practicing Catholics, in good standing with the parish community, and possess a love of the scriptures. Regarding the age of lectors, generally speaking it is recommended that lectors be 16 years of age.
  3. Lectors exercise their ministry during the Mass, at a Sunday Celebration in the Absence of Priest, and to the homebound and nursing home communities. Lectors should dress appropriately for their ministry.
  4. Lectors must be properly trained in both the theology and the practice of their ministry before beginning this ministry. They need the perspective and ability to understand the Word and to interpret the scriptural texts. Ample material is available to assist with background and understanding. Ongoing formation is encouraged at least annually. (St. Mary's purchases new Workbooks for Lectors each year – if you don't have one, please contact leaders Mary LaFond or Jill Hould.)
  5. Good communication skills are necessary for anyone who proclaims the word of God. Pauses, enunciation, phrasing, and speed with which one proclaims should be well practiced. Silence after the readings is essential. Lectors use the text as written; they do not add their own words.
  6. Lectors slowly pace themselves in procession carrying the Book of the Gospels, not the Lectionary, (GIRM #120.d) slightly elevated. The assembly sees the Book of the Word and the respect with which it is held.
  7. The Psalm is usually sung, and is the role of the cantor, unless there is no music or cantor.
  8. A simple commissioning of lectors takes place during the Eucharist. The length of service for each lector is left to the discretion of the pastor/pastoral administrator, as long as the minister remains a member of the parish. It recommended to be renewed every three years, giving both the parish and the minister the opportunity to reconsider the commitment.
  9. Scheduling ministers for this ministry is important, even during difficult seasons and vacation months lest the impression be given that the ministry is trivial or unimportant.
  10. Parishes may train youth (teenagers) to lead the intercessions for the assembly, thus teaching them the skills of the proclamation and communication and preparing them for the ministry of lector.
  11. At children's Liturgies (school/RE), children may fulfill the role of lector if they have been trained in proclamation and communication skills, proper dress, as well as reading skills. Be cognizant that Mass is not an opportunity for performance.
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## PROCEDURES FOR LECTORS

### Preparation the Week Before:

- Please use your lector workbook to prepare for your ministry. When you use the reading for your daily prayer it supports your good preparation.

### Preparation Just Before Mass:

- Please come early. Fifteen minutes before Mass, check in and let Fr. Felix know you are present.
- As Lectors are available, we would like to return to having 2 lectors for each service. If there is only one lector scheduled or present, you are both lector #1 and lector #2. If two are present and if there is no music, please decide who will read the Responsorial Psalm (petitions.)
- Lector should look at the Lectionary on the ambo before Mass. Know exactly where your reading is in the book, so that if somebody else closes the book, you can find your place without panic.
- Lector brings the Book of the Gospels from the sacristy to the gathering space for the procession. Please see the procession order posted in the Server Closet.
- Lector reviews the copies of the intercessions/ and announcements on the sacristy counter. Leave them there. Copies are already in the binder on the ambo; feel free to double check.

### In the Liturgy:

When there are two lectors, the first returns to his/her seat after the reading and before the Responsorial Psalm is intoned. The second lector would then approach the ambo after the Psalm and return to his/her seat before the Gospel Acclamation.

When only one lector proclaims both readings, he/she should be seated during the Psalm response.

- Lectors begin to read by saying, "A reading from the Book of Exodus" as written in the Lectionary. It is inappropriate to add words such as: "The first reading..."
- If the Responsorial Psalm is recited, lectors should begin the recitation with the antiphon. Announcing "Responsorial Psalm" is unnecessary.
- Ministers of the Word should not add or change any words of 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. Lectors do this by observing a pause of about three seconds after the former and before the latter phrase. The same tone of proclamation should be maintained for "The Word of The Lord".
- While proclaiming the Word, a lector may hold the Lectionary in his/her hands, or place in 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 Lectionary or the Book of Gospels should not be lifted off the ambo while saying: "The Word of the Lord".
- The lector should never do anything to draw attention to her/himself at any time. Clothing should be appropriate for the occasion, modest and in keeping with the dignity of the ministry.



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### Additional Notes:

- **The End of Mass:**
  - Join the procession after Mass.
  - Lector 2 returns the Lectionary to the sacristy.
  - Lector 1 returns the Book of the Gospels to the sacristy and places it in its box.
- **Microphones:**
  - Don't get too close.
  - Adjust the microphone angle at the top or at the base.
- **Body Language:**
  - Proclaim to everyone.
  - Make essential eye contact, turn your body (not just your head) to look at the worshippers. Turning yourself about 30 degrees to each side will make it look like you are proclaiming to both sides without turning your back on either.
- **Use Your Voice:**
  - Enunciate clearly. Check the workbook for pronunciation key to help with difficult words.
- **What to Wear:**
  - Use common sense. The Word of God should get all the attention, and the lector should be as transparent as possible.
  - Appropriate clothes do not mean "formal" dress.
  - Avoid clothing that may be a distraction, particularly rival schools, political statements and images or words that might be divisive.

**Lector Ministry leads are Jill Hould phone # \_\_\_\_\_ and Mary LaFond 406.390.0762. Please contact them if you have concerns or needs. They will notify you of upcoming training.**

Scheduling is coordinated by Office Manager, Brenda Rummel. Printed Schedules are available in the back of the Church and online [www.saintmarysmalta.org](http://www.saintmarysmalta.org)

Please secure your own replacement if you are unable to serve at your scheduled time.



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