

Training Notes for Lectors

Last updated – 2019

Introduction:

- Welcome new lectors! The Parish is very grateful for your ministry!
- The word of God is to be “proclaimed,” not merely “read.” This requires the lectors to prepare adequately for the Mass by practicing the readings beforehand. All Mass readings can be found on the USCCB website (<http://www.usccb.org>), and a quick Google search will help locate audible pronunciations of weekly readings for biblical names and cities.

Preparations:

- Proper attire of the lector: “Sunday best.” Blue jeans and tennis shoes should be avoided; ladies should make sure their shoulders are covered.
- Fulfillment of obligation: the lector is expected to be available for serving when scheduled. Everyone is asked to check in at the back of the Church no less than 10 minutes before Mass is scheduled to begin.
- Attendance Sheet: the lector should sign in at the attendance sheet next to his/her name. If changes in personal schedules prevent one from serving when scheduled, it is the lector’s obligation to arrange for a substitute. When the substitute is found, the substitute should report at the scheduled time, cross off the original name on the attendance sheet and add his/her name in the space provided.
- Generally, there are two lectors scheduled for each Mass. However, if there is only one lector assigned or present at the Mass, he or she will be responsible for performing the duties of both lectors. In addition to the first reading, the first lector is responsible for making the introductory greeting before Mass. The first lector is also responsible for reading the Prayers of the Faithful after the Nicene Creed in the absence of a Deacon.
- Before Mass begins, the lector(s) should review the Lectionary at the ambo and make sure that it is opened to the correct page for the daily readings. They should also glance over the Prayers of the Faithful (located on the shelf of the ambo) in case they may be required to proclaim them in the absence of the Deacon.

Welcome Greeting:

- The first lector will stand at the lectern before Mass begins. He/she should check the song number board and refer to the “Breaking Bread” missal for the name of the processional hymn.
- At the proper time, the first lector will read the welcome greeting, and after a pause, announce the processional hymn.
- After reading the welcome greeting, the lector may return to his/her seat.
- Lectors will not process in with the Priest/Deacon; they will begin Mass from their pew, where they will remain until they approach the ambo.

Proclaiming the Word:

- Following the Opening Prayer, the lector(s) will stand, and with hands folded, approach the sanctuary, bow to the altar and then proceed slowly to the ambo. The first lector will proceed directly to the ambo while the second lector (if there is one) will proceed to the chairs behind the ambo and sit down.
- The First Reading: When announcing the reading, simply say, “A reading from...” as is printed in the Lectionary. (Do not say, “The first Reading is...”). After a pause, proclaim the scriptures loudly and clearly, speaking slowly and distinctly. At the end of the reading, pause,

look at the assembly, and say “The Word of the Lord.” Wait for the people to respond, “Thanks be to God,” before turning to sit down.

- After the first reading, the first lector will turn around and sit down for the Responsorial Psalm.
 1. At the 7:30 a.m. Mass, the Commentator proclaims the Responsorial Psalm. At other Masses, the cantor/choir sings the Responsorial Psalm. (If there is no cantor, the lector will stay at the ambo after the first reading and, after a brief pause, announce the response and proclaim the Responsorial Psalm.)
- The Second Reading: After the Responsorial Psalm, the (second) lector should watch and wait for the cantor to proceed to the lectern. Then the lector will stand and approach the ambo and complete the second reading in the same manner as the first reading.
- After the (second) lector finishes the second reading, he/she should gently close the Lectionary and place it on the stool below the shelf in the ambo. Do not place the Lectionary on the shelf, as that is where the Priest/Deacon keeps his homily notes and the Prayers of the Faithful. *If there is no Deacon, leave the Lectionary open on the ambo.*
- After the second reading is completed, both lectors will step down from the sanctuary, bow to the altar, and proceed to their seats for the Gospel.
- Prayers of the Faithful: If there is no Deacon present, the first lector will return to the ambo at the end of the Nicene Creed to read the Prayers of the Faithful.

Reminders:

- Do not bring a Breaking Bread book with you up to the ambo. Everything that you will need to proclaim the readings should be present for you.
- Remember to bow at the altar before you approach the sanctuary for the first reading and after the second reading when you are returning to your seat.
- Stand about 8-10 inches from the microphone.
- Speak slowly and clearly. Resist the tendency to read too fast. Deliberately pause at natural breaks in the reading to allow the congregation time to absorb the reading.
- Lectors are not intended to be actors. They should not be overly dramatic in proclaiming the readings, nor should they use different voices to denote quotes in the scriptures.
- If you mispronounce a word (i.e. biblical name or location) the first time it appears, then you should continue using the mispronounced word when it appears elsewhere in the scriptures.
- If you trip over your words, you should just keep going. Do not pause and say, “Excuse me,” or some other phrase to disrupt the sentence.
- Exhibit good posture when standing at the ambo and when seated during other readings.
- The lector is not at liberty to change the text of scriptural texts or Prayers of the Faithful.
- Make a heroic effort to stifle a sneeze.

Monthly Ministry Schedule

- The monthly ministry schedule is generated about three weeks prior to the month being scheduled.
- Lectors and other ministers should communicate schedule conflicts no later than the 5th of the month prior in order to avoid being scheduled. Communicate schedule conflicts via email to Wendy Piper at wpiper@delawarestmary.org.
- After the 5th of the month, Wendy generates the schedule and it gets posted to the St. Mary website (<http://www.delawarestmary.org/schedules/>); limited printed copies will be available in the vestibule of the church. Lectors are responsible for checking the schedule and knowing when they are scheduled to serve.
- Lectors are responsible for finding a substitute if they are unable to serve as scheduled.