

MINISTRY OF WORD ... LECTOR/COMMENTATOR GUIDELINES

ALL MINISTERS—please be attentive to the schedule and arrange for your own substitutes when needed.
ALL MINISTERS—please arrive 20 minutes early so that you have made all of the necessary preparations prior to people gathering. We know Tim Dieringer typically does preparations at 5:30 and 8:30, but there are times he is not there and **YOU ARE** responsible to make sure all is ready.
ALL MINISTERS—please check-in with the commentator on your arrival. The commentator needs to know if you are present so he/she can find a replacement if necessary.

If you are ready early—sit down and prayerfully reflect and pray that you may fully minister at this Eucharistic Celebration.

PREPARATION

- Check if you are lector or commentator.
- Practice your reading during the week (Lector—1st reading; Commentator—2nd reading). **YOU MUST READ FROM THE HEART... YOU ARE WHAT YOU ARE READING.**
- A proper amount of practice time should be devoted to "proclaiming" the readings. A few minutes before Mass just isn't satisfactory. This is why it is especially important for you to find a sub if you can't make your scheduled time; so they have time to prepare as well.
- You should take home a copy of Breaking Bread at the beginning of the liturgical year (1st Sunday of Advent). There are always extra copies in the sacristy on the shelf. If you desire the information provided in the Lector's Workbook (Excellent tool for pronunciation and emphasis, as well as some background on the author and audience and the context in which it was written) borrow a copy from the shelf in the sacristy (Cycle A) or stop by the Parish Center and copy pages for the week.
- **Father shared with us that it is not necessary to bow in front of the altar when you cross-over. We have all bowed and greeted our Lord at the beginning of Mass so it is often more of a distraction than if we reverently return to our place.**

LECTOR

BEFORE MASS

- Get the "Book of Gospels" from Father's vesting area to be carried in and **check to make sure the lectionary with the 1st and 2nd readings is on the ambo.**
- "Check out" the prayers of the faithful
- **Adjust microphone's level & position at ambo—to adjust the mic, you must move it at the base—not the neck of the mic.**
- Go over the 1st reading one final time from lectionary itself so the physical layout of the page is familiar.
- Spend a few moments composing yourself in prayer prior to the procession.

DURING MASS

- Gather with other ministers and Father.
- Follow in procession after Eucharistic Ministers. Hold the "Book of Gospels" (nothing else) with both hands on the side or bottom with cross or design facing forward and opening to the left. The text should be held out about 18-24 inches before the face and elevated so that the bottom of the book is about eye level. Deacon Tim carries the Book of Gospels when he is serving
- When you reach the sanctuary—**place the Book of Gospels on the stand on the altar—step down and bow with Father and all of the ministers.**
- Take your place in the sanctuary behind the ambo. After Opening Prayer, people sit and you move to the ambo **with energy and dignity.**
- At the end of the reading take a breath and proclaim confidently "The Word of the Lord" as something in which you take great pride, then pause at side and wait for the responsorial to begin before returning to your place.
- Return to the podium by the choir for the prayers of the faithful—when Deacon Tim is serving, he reads the Prayers.

- At end of Mass, join in procession after the EM's— we do not process out with book.
- After 10:30 Mass Return Book of Gospels & Lectionary to vestry and

NOTE—Duties of Lector if Deacon Tim is not present are:

Carry Book of Gospels and Read Prayers of the Faithful

COMMENTATOR

- Get Commentator sheet in sacristy (room by tabernacle). They are in the drawer under the safe. Check to see if there is anything special.
- Take a minute to reread the 2nd reading from the lectionary itself so that the physical layout of the page is familiar.
- There is a place on the back of the sheet for you to make a checklist so you know that all ministers are present ... **THEY SHOULD EACH CHECK IN WITH YOU WHEN THEY ARRIVE BEFORE MASS.**
 - Ask members of the assembly to present the gifts. Try to vary these: a family, a couple, singles, etc. —wait until closer to Mass starting to ask so you get someone that does not always get asked.
 - Remind a EM or an altar server to light the candles at the Ambo and Altar
 - **NOTE: If there are ministers not present, please take it as part of your ministry to ask people to fill-in at the last minute.**
 - Find out opening hymn from Cantor or choir director. State the number of the hymn twice when you announce the opening song (i.e. # 428, Servant Song , # 428)

- When it is time for Mass to begin proceed to podium and wait for Father (or Deacon Tim to signal for you to begin. Greet the people and wait for their attention. Begin the Prayer for Peace, then read the commentators part.
- Stand at the altar step waiting for procession.
- After "reverencing the altar" (the bow) move to the ambo side with the lector.
- Sit during 1st reading and responsorial.
- Move to the ambo **with energy and dignity** for the 2nd reading and proclaim.
- After you complete the second reading take a breath and proclaim confidently **"The Word of the Lord"** as something in which you take great pride, place the lectionary on shelf in ambo, then pause at side and wait for the gospel acclamation to begin before returning to your place.
- Come forward at the end of Mass and process out alongside the lector.

REMEMBER: You are like the MC of the Celebration. You are also a "coordinator" as you check in with the various ministers. Father is especially grateful if you can "handle" the altar servers and the questions or replacements for other ministries.

Last bits of info —

Do you know that the lighters are kept in the safe? Check it out so you can find them if necessary.

And Batteries for the microphones are in the top drawer where Father vests.

These are comments from one of our current lectors:

Lector/Commentator Notes on Preparation

Historically these readings were told or even performed by a story teller to a group of people gathered to listen to the word of God. So it is best if you can put yourself in the role of a story teller. One of my mentors said that she thought of reading a story to her young children when reading. Not because the congregation is childlike. More because these readings can be very dry and, as you know, not so fitting to our period. Of course, there are the few great readings that we all love to get “on our weekend” that speak for themselves. But very often we find ourselves with a rambling, no commas or periods, Saint Paul reading that, read as is, makes little sense to even the reader let alone the congregation. The following are a few things I do to hopefully turn this into a listening event and a learning moment for the congregation.

Know the content of your reading. I use the **Workbook for lectors and gospel readers**. They come in the three year cycle A, B, and C. Holy Family has a shared set in the room to the left of the altar. Use it, borrow it, or buy a set. Mine is from another parish that provided a copy to every lector every year. Just a bit more cost than each of us taking a breaking bread home every year. Maybe less

Why is this so helpful?

- It explains what the writer is experiencing at the time the reading was written.
- It explains what the listener was experiencing at the time the reading was written.
- It gives hints on words to emphasize during the reading and pronunciation help.
- This will help you to pick out when and where to emphasize words and since you know the message, help you to deliver a story that everyone can understand better.

Read slower than you think you should. Break up the sentences into sound bites like you are a politician. I used to write commas in my copy of the reading where I wanted to pause while practicing. **If you do nothing else, do this!**

Practice your reading by reading it out loud. Yes out loud. Listen to yourself and make corrections to pauses and emphasis. Practice often in the week ahead of your assigned mass. I suggest at least three 10 minute sessions after preparing by reading the material in the **Workbook for lectors and gospel readers**. I know we all can get by cramming the morning of the mass, but it is so much more fun to really nail a reading.

The last thing is to remember to make sure the Holy Spirit is there with you when you read. He / She has been making great story tellers out of us ordinary people for many thousands of years.