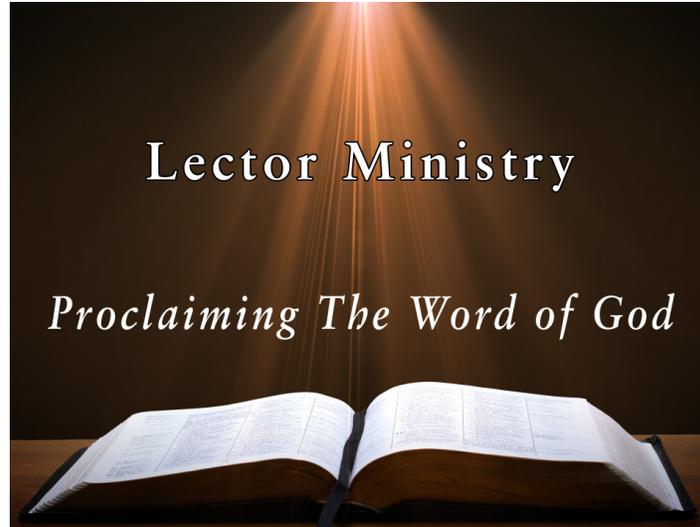


St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church

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Guidelines for Lectors



The Word of God as proclaimed in the sacred Scripture lies at the heart of our Christian life and is integral to all our liturgical celebrations.

(Book of Blessings, 1827)

The proclamation of the Word of God is truly a ministry in the Church. According to the ancient tradition and the teaching of the Church, the readings other than the Gospel are proclaimed by lay ministers called lectors. Lectors bring the living Word of God to the liturgical assembly. In and through them God speaks to the gathered faithful. The ministry of the Word, therefore, is treated seriously and with great dignity.

The Word of God is to be “**proclaimed**,” not merely “read.” For Lectors to properly proclaim Scripture, they must be prepared. The passages for each Sunday should be read, prayed with, and proclaimed aloud a number of times during the week before you are scheduled. If you don’t have a copy of the *Workbook for Lectors*, please pick one up in the sacristy. Become familiar with the hints given in the introduction of the workbook, and utilize the margin notes as well as the pronunciation aids given for each reading.

To assist new lectors and to encourage a uniform procedure among all lectors, we offer the following guidelines.

Before Mass:

- Arrive at least 15 minutes before Mass.
- Dress appropriately.
 - Men: Slacks, shirt and tie (jacket if possible).
 - Women: Modest dress, dress slacks/capris, skirts.
 - Prohibited: Jeans, overalls, shorts, culottes, sweat pants, leggings, low cut blouses and t-shirts, sleeveless tops.
- Check in with the Sacristan on duty so he/she knows you’re present.

- Lector One carries the Gospel Book in procession, reads the first reading and the general intercessions.
- Lector Two reads the introductions at the start of the Mass and the second reading.
- The lectors themselves may choose to switch readings and/or duties prior to the start of Mass.
- Prepare the readings in advance and check for difficult pronunciations.
- Read over the intercessions. Try to find out how names are pronounced.

The Procession:

- The first lector carries the Book of the Gospels, elevated so the top edge of the book is right below eye level, with the front of the book facing the altar. Follow the altar servers in the procession preceding the celebrant.
- If there are no altar servers, the Book of the Gospels will not be used. The celebrant will read from the lectionary on the ambo.
- When you arrive at the steps of the sanctuary, do not stop. Walk up the steps and go around the altar. Place the Book of the Gospels in the stand in the center of the altar with the front of the book facing the people.
- Once the Book of the Gospels is on the altar, bow to the altar and take your place in the congregation.

Proclamation of the Word:

- The lector takes his/her place at the ambo. Adjust the microphone if necessary.
- Look at the congregation and begin reading as it is written in the lectionary, “*A reading from...*” Do not add additional text, such as “*Our first reading is a reading from...*”
- Proclaim the reading loudly enough so that everyone can hear. Read slowly. Most of us read too fast, especially when we are nervous. Give yourself the chance to pronounce the words clearly so the congregation can understand each and every word.
- At the end of the reading, look at the people, pause slightly, and say, “*The Word of the Lord.*”
- If the psalm is not sung, the first lector will proclaim the psalm. If this occurs, pause approximately 10 seconds. Begin by proclaiming the response without any introduction. For example, say, “*With the Lord there is mercy, and fullness of redemption.*” Not, “*The responsorial psalm is...*” or “*The response is...*”
- Raise your arm to cue the people to respond and join them in repeating the response. Then continue with the next verse. When the psalm is completed, pause, then return to your seat.
- After the cantor has lead the singing of the psalm, the second lector takes his or her position at the ambo and proclaims the second reading in the same manner as described above.
- At the end of the second reading, close the lectionary and hand it to an altar server. If there is no server, leave the lectionary on the ambo. Father will read the Gospel from it.

The Prayer of the Faithful:

- The first lector reads the intercessions, or the Prayer of the Faithful. As the congregation recites the creed, the first lector should approach the ambo, this time without any bow to the altar, and time your arrival so that you are in position as the Creed concludes.
- Read them as they are written. At the end of each intercession, look at the people and say: “*We pray to the Lord.*” After the people respond, “*Lord, hear our prayer.*” Read the next intercession.
- After the people respond to the last intercession, turn toward the priest and remain standing at the ambo while the priest concludes the prayer. After the “*Amen,*” return to your seat. Please do not leave the ambo until the prayer is concluded.
- The Book of the Gospels is not carried out at the end of Mass.