

Helpful Resources

Workbook for Lectors and Gospel Readers by Aelred R. Rosser.
Liturgy Training Publications, 1800 North Hermitage Avenue,
Chicago, IL 60622

General Instruction of the Roman Missal. United States Conference of Catholic
Bishops, Liturgy Documentary Series 2. Publication No. 5-543.

*Liturgy Documentary Series 1: Lectionary for Mass, Second Typical
Edition Introduction.* United States Catholic Conference, Inc.,
Washington DC. Publication No. 5-245.

A Well-trained Tongue by Aelred R. Rosser.
Liturgy Training Publications, 1800 North Hermitage Avenue,
Chicago, IL 60622

Pronunciation Guide for the Sunday Lectionary by Susan E. Myers
Liturgy Training Publications, 1800 North Hermitage Avenue,
Chicago, IL 60622

*Living the Word: Scripture Reflections and Commentaries for Sundays
and Holy Days* by Rev. Robert Duggan and Virginia Stillwell,
World Library Publications, 3825 North Willow Road
Schiller Park, Illinois 60176.

Guide to the Revised Lectionary by Martin Connell
Liturgy Training Publications, 1800 North Hermitage Avenue,
Chicago, IL 60622

Lectionary for Mass: Study Edition Sundays, Solemnities, Feasts of the Lord and the
Saints. Liturgy Training Publications, 1800 North Hermitage Avenue,
Chicago, IL 60622

**For information on diocesan formation for
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Diocesan Guidelines for Lectors



Promulgated by the Most Reverend John Michael D'Arcy
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Developed by the Diocesan Liturgical Commission
and the Office of Worship
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Lector

Diocesan Guidelines

“The liturgical assembly truly requires readers, even those not instituted. Proper measure must therefore be taken to ensure that there are certain suitable laypeople who have been trained to carry out this ministry.” (Introduction to the Lectionary #52)

What is a Lector? (This ministry may also be called “reader”, or “proclaimer of the Word”.)

A lector is the person who proclaims the first or second reading at Mass. This person also may lead the Prayers of the Faithful at Mass.

A lector must have the qualifications listed on page 3 and have a desire to minister in this capacity at the eucharistic liturgy. This ministry in the Church requires a person who is of excellent character, and serious about the practice of their faith. the lector must believe that Sacred Scripture is the Word of God and have a deep respect for God’s presence in that Word.

How does a person become a lector?

Pastors propose candidates for delegation as lectors on the basis of objective pastoral need. Lectors should be carefully chosen based on their skills in proclamation, their willingness to complete formation in this ministry, and their evidence of a deep spirituality.

D: The Lectionary is not elevated after either the first or the second reading.

E: A period of silence is observed before the singing of the Alleluia (Gospel Acclamation during Lent). The Alleluia or Gospel Acclamation is not sung from the ambo.

F: The priest or deacon processes the Book of the Gospels to the ambo, and proclaims the Gospel.

“The reading of the Gospel is the high point of the Liturgy of the Word. The Liturgy itself teaches that great reverence is to be shown to it by setting it off from the other readings with special marks of honor: whether the part of the minister appointed to proclaim it, who prepares himself by a blessing or prayer; or on the part of the faithful, who stand as they listen to it being read and through their acclamations acknowledge and confess Christ present and speaking to them; or by the very marks of reverence that are given to the Book of the Gospels.” (GIRM#60)

G: The homily is given. After the homily there is a period of silence.

H: All recite or sing together the Creed. (Sundays, Holydays, and certain feasts)

I: The Prayer of the Faithful is introduced by the presider, led by the deacon or a lector, with response by the assembly. The presider prays the concluding prayer.

“In the readings, the table of God’s word is prepared for the faithful, and the riches of the Bible are opened to them.” (Sacrosanctum Concilium #51)

The Liturgy of the Word at Mass

After the opening prayer has been completed, the lector moves toward the sanctuary, reverences the altar (if he/she passes in front of the altar), and goes to the ambo for the first reading. According to rubrics, the lector does not genuflect during Mass, even if passing in front of the tabernacle.

“The liturgy of the word must be celebrated in a way that fosters meditation; clearly, any sort of haste that hinders recollection must be avoided. The dialogue between God and his people taking place through the Holy Spirit demands short intervals of silence, suite to the assembled congregation, as an opportunity to take the word of God to heart and to prepare a response to it in prayer.

Proper times for silence during the liturgy of the word are, for example, before this liturgy begins (liturgy of the Word), after the first and after the second readings, and after the homily.” (#28)

- A: Begin: “A reading from.....”**
End: “The Word of the Lord” All respond: Thanks be to God.
Do not change this formula in any way. For example, DO NOT begin “Our first reading today is....” or any similar beginning.
- B. A period of silence is observed after the reading.** After the assembly has responded “Thanks be to God” a period of silence is to be observed. According to the parish custom, the lector may stay quietly at the ambo for this silence, or may leave the ambo, and the length of the silence is determined by the cantor. The cantor moves to the ambo and proclaims the responsorial psalm after the silence.
- C. If there is a second reading, it is proclaimed at the ambo as described for the first reading.** There will always be a second reading on Sundays and Holydays. During the week, there will be only one reading and a Gospel except on certain feasts and solemnities.

Who can be a lector?

1. Man, woman or young person.
2. A person in full communion with the Catholic Church.
3. A person serious about the practice of their faith.
4. A person who is willing to complete a parish or diocesan formation process.

What is required for formation?

All new candidates for lector must receive training, either from their pastor or his delegate, or through the Diocesan Office of Worship. **No person, no matter how well educated or trained, may be excused from formation for the ministry of lector.**

The instruction must include the following:

1. Scriptural Spirituality for Ministers of the Word.
2. Preparing the Scriptures prayerfully.
3. Instruction in Liturgy of the Word.
4. Proclaiming the Word: practicum and formation in public speaking.

What happens upon completion of training?

1. New lectors may be commissioned for publicly proclaiming the Word by their pastors. The “Order for Blessing of Readers (Book of Blessings #1831ff) may be used.
2. Certificates are available from the Office of Worship for those completing the required preparation within their own parishes or at the diocesan formation sessions.
3. Lectors should consider advanced training in order to continue their spiritual and technical growth.
4. Lectors are required to attend a retreat or time of directed spiritual reflection once a year. This may be a diocesan parish, or private directed reflection/retreat.

What is proper dress for lectors?

Ordained ministers such as the celebrant and deacons are required by liturgical prescription to wear certain vestments. Although a specific form of vesture is not required for lectors, the dignity of the Sacred Liturgy requires that those accepting the call to such ministry dress in a manner reflecting the profound nature of the

Preparation

Ahead of time:

- Use Sacred Scripture often as a source of your private prayer and meditation outside of your assigned times.
- When you have been assigned to PROCLAIM the Word to the assembly, prepare, read aloud and PRAY the readings during the preceding weeks.
- Consider how your assigned reading relates to the Gospel and the homily. The Lector Workbooks which are available will be helpful for this preparation.

On your assigned day:

- Arrive ahead of time on the day you are scheduled so that you can enter into a spirit of prayer before the liturgy begins.
- Make certain well ahead of time that the Lectionary is correctly marked and that the microphone is adjusted properly.
- After the liturgy, do a mini self-evaluation by asking: “did I PROCLAIM the meaning of the Scriptures, or merely read the words? Did I effectively communicate the assembly God’s word of salvation using all the skills available to me? What can I do to improve the next time?”

*“The Word of God as proclaimed in Sacred Scripture,
lies at the heart of our Christian life
and is integral to all our liturgical celebrations.”
(Book of Blessings #1827ff)*

All quotes and referenced numbers are from the Introduction to the Lectionary unless otherwise indicated.

The Lectionary was promulgated by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments on October 6, 1997, and by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops on June 19, 1998. The Introduction to the Lectionary contains liturgical law for the celebration of the Liturgy of the Word at Mass.

1. The readings are always to be proclaimed at the ambo (#16). The ambo may only be used for the readings, the responsorial psalm, the Easter Proclamation (Exsultet), the homily, and the prayer of the faithful. It may not be used for announcements or for song-leading.
2. “because of the dignity of the word of God, the books of readings used in the celebration are not to be replaced by other pastoral aids, for example, by leaflets printed for the preparation of the readings by the faithful, or for their personal meditation.” (#37) In other words, never proclaim the Word of God from a piece of paper, missalette or anything other than the Lectionary.
3. You may never change the words of a reading, or proclaim a non-scriptural text during Mass. (#57 GIRM)
4. “Whenever there is more than one reading, it is better to assign the readings to different readers, if available.” (#52)
5. The Book of the Gospels is carried by the deacon or reader (lector) as part of the Entrance Procession. It is not carried out in procession. The Lectionary is no longer carried in procession.
6. Readers should participate fully in the singing and the prayers at Mass as members of the assembly. They come forward to the ambo at the appropriate time to proclaim the Word and return to the assembly after completing their ministry.

*“The Sacred Scriptures, above all in their liturgical proclamation,
are the source of life and strength. As the Apostle Paul attests,
the Gospel is the saving power of God for everyone who believes.
Love of the Scriptures is therefore a force reinvigorating
and renewing the entire people of God. (#47)*