

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC CHURCH

Proclaiming the Word: A Guide for Lectors

PREPARING TO READ

There are sufficient quantities of the book “Workbook for Lectors and Gospel Readers” for each lector. If you don’t have one, there are extra copies in the Mass Server’s room in the sacristy. You can just take one and keep it at home. This book has an excellent explanation of each reading as well as giving directions on how to pronounce certain words and places for pauses and special emphasis.

As your day to read approaches, spend time with your text. Reflect upon it. Ask yourself these questions:

1. What did the writer set out to say?
2. What kind of writing is it? A song of praise? A lesson? A warning?
3. What tone of voice best delivers this message?

Read the text several times. And, perhaps most important, read it out loud. Check the definition and pronunciation of any word with which you are not familiar. Remember that you must read slowly, loud enough and project your voice. If the congregation can’t hear you, they will not benefit from the readings. In most cases, you must actually speak louder than your normal comfort zone to be heard. Remember you are proclaiming God’s word, not just reading.

Finally, pray over your reading – for the grace to understand it and the ability to deliver it well.

MASS DAY

1. Arrive at least 15 minute early, go to the Mass Server’s room in the sacristy and sign in, so everyone involved in the Mass will know you are in attendance.
2. Go the front pew on the east side of the south transept, near the red votive candles. The first two seats on the east are reserved for lectors. You will go to the Ambo from this seat at the time of your reading.
3. Check the lectionary on the Ambo and make sure the bookmark is in the right place. The Lectionary stays on the Ambo.
4. **Reader B**, spend several minutes practicing the petitions. A copy should be in the lector’s pew for review. The copy you read from will be in the right pocket of the Ambo.

THE ENTRANCE PROCESSION

Lectors are no longer part of the entrance procession. They should be in their seats in the front pew on the east side of the south transept when Father approaches the altar.

THE READINGS

1. After the introductory prayer, which follows the Gloria, the congregation sits down. **Reader A** approaches the Ambo, making a slight bow as he/she enters the Sanctuary. If the microphone at the Ambo needs to be adjusted so it is at the proper height for you to speak into it, adjust it. The best location for the microphone is pointing at your nose. If you normally speak softly, increase the volume of your voice...it is a common complaint that the people can't hear the Lector well enough. Remember to read slowly. You are proclaiming God's Word...not just reading.
2. *Never* say "The first reading is from ..." or, if you're Reader B, "The second reading is from ..." Simply announce: "A reading from ..." At the conclusion of the first and second readings, say: "The word of the Lord."
3. **Reader A** leads the responsorial psalm *if it is recited*. But if it is *sung*, **Reader A** returns to the front pew of the south transept with a bow as he/she leaves the Sanctuary.
4. *If the responsorial psalm is recited*, **Reader B** waits for **Reader A** to sit down before approaching the Ambo, again with a bow as she/he enters the Sanctuary. But if it is *sung*, **Reader B** remains seated until the song concludes.
5. If a *cantor* leads the responsorial psalm, **Reader B** waits for the cantor to return to his or her seat before approaching the microphone. If the responsorial psalm is led from the *choir loft*, **Reader B** waits for the singing to conclude before going to the ambo.
6. After reading the epistle, **Reader B** returns to the front pew of the south transept with a bow as he/she leaves the Sanctuary.

THE PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

1. **Reader B** reads the Prayer of the Faithful (petitions.)
2. Start for the altar when the Profession of Faith reaches this line: "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church. ..." Bow briefly as you enter the Sanctuary.
3. Be at the microphone, with the petitions in open in front of you, when Father introduces the prayer.
4. After each petition, say "we pray to the lord", and the congregation will respond "Lord hear our prayer."
5. Upon concluding the final petition, fold your hands and step back from the microphone, turning at a slight angle toward father so he knows the petitions are concluded and bow your head in prayer.
6. Stay in place until father offers the closing prayer and the congregation responds.
7. When the congregation has responded to Father's concluding prayer to the Prayer of the Faithful, invite children to bring their gifts, read any announcements and then return to your pew. And once again, bow when leaving the Sanctuary.

– John Green
Holy Cross Lector Coordinator
October, 2012