

Saint Luke Catholic Church

Lector Guidelines

Role

The Ministry of the Word is vital to the life of our parish because it is through the lector that the “word of God comes alive”. The celebration of the Liturgy is not just the responsibility of the Priest. Priests need the help of the people who are serious about living out their baptismal right and responsibility to worship. It is not sufficient, however, simply to have a “warm body” filling a given role. Those engaged in this liturgical role need to be well-prepared for this role and know how to carry it out with reverence, dignity and understanding.

Unlike any other text that we will ever hear, the Sacred Scriptures are not only information for us, but they are the vehicle that God uses to reveal himself to us. The Scriptures are the means by which we come to know the depths of God’s love for us. Those who proclaim the Scriptures must be truly suited to perform the function and should be well prepared, so that the faithful by listening to the “Word of God” from the sacred texts may develop in their hearts a warm and living love for the Sacred Scriptures.

By proclaiming the scriptures you are preparing the congregation for the Homily.

Preparation at Home

Study the Scriptures:

- o Each Lector is given their own copy of “Liturgy of the Word” Missal. All readings for the Liturgical year (except certain feast days at the discretion of the Pastor) are found in that missal.
- o Read the Gospel first. Then read the first and the second readings with the psalm in between. These readings are intended to prepare the congregation to hear the Gospel.
- o Read your selection out loud to yourself to find the words or the phrases that are difficult to pronounce.
- o Open yourself to the meaning of the text. Pray for the spirit to open the ears of those who will hear the reading (including your own).
- o Pray for the strength to put aside your own ego and for the Spirit to speak through you.

Understanding the selection:

- o Using your Missal, study the text to come to an understanding of the meaning of the entire passage. As a good resource, the weekly, **Criterion**, publishes a section, *The Sunday Readings*, which provides an overview of that weekend’s biblical readings.
- o Identify the important words or phrases.
- o Determine the literary form of the text. Is it a story, a letter/epistle or a poem? It is important that all three forms are not proclaimed in the same fashion.
- o Using your Bible might help you to understand the passage in its context.
- o Make sure you are pronouncing words correctly. If in doubt of correct pronunciation or unfamiliar words, check a dictionary or the small, pink booklet located in the Sacristy next to the Lectionary on the bookcase.
- o Study the punctuation, paying particular attention to how ending marks complete the thought within the passage.

- o Practice the selection out loud as often as you feel necessary. Be aware of your voice quality, volume, dictation, pace, rhythm and eye contact.
- o Take your time as you read.

On the Day You Lector

Attire:

Ordained Ministers are required by Liturgical prescription to wear certain vestments. Although a specific form of vesture is not required of Lectors, the dignity of the Sacred Liturgy requires that those accepting the call dress in a manner reflecting the profound nature of the call. Slacks, suits, or dresses are appropriate for women. Ties and or jackets are preferred for men. To ensure the appropriate dignity and reverence, everyone should avoid jeans, shorts, t-shirts, bare mid-drifts, halter-tops, and flip flops.

Arrival at Mass

Before Mass:

- o **Arrive 15 minutes before Mass** is to begin and **check in with the Sacristan/Presider** for any additional instructions. In order to maintain an appropriate environment in the Sacristy, please **review the readings, from the Ambo & NOT in the sacristy**, one last time to see it as printed in the Lectionary.
- o **Make sure the Lectionary is on the Ambo, opened, and marked** appropriately for the readings of the day with the ribbons.
- o **Make sure the Petitions are on the Ambo and review the name(s)** for the Mass you are serving (ie. 7:30am, or 9:00am, etc.).
- o **Make sure the Book of the Gospels is appropriately marked** and on the counter in the Sacristy in preparation for the Procession. Decide which lector is to carry the Book of the Gospels in the Procession.
- o **Do not linger in the Sacristy.** Proceed to the Narthex for the Procession. **Lectors at the 7:30 mass should proceed to the hallway outside the Sacristy.**

The Procession

Order for Procession:

- o 5:30, 9:00, and 11:30 Mass: Master of Ceremonies, Thurifer, Crucifer, Acolytes, Lector, Lector with Book of the Gospels, Presider.
- o 7:30 Mass: Master of Ceremonies, Lector, Lector with Book of Gospels, Crucifer, Acolytes, Presider.

Procedure:

- o The Lector without Book of Gospels remains in procession. Without stopping, the Lector with the Book of the Gospels walks up behind the Altar, places the Book of the Gospels in the center of the Altar face down, six inches from the edge of the Altar, and returns to bottom of the step to bow and return to seat.
- o When the gold Book of the Gospels is used, open it slightly, and **stand it** in the center of the Altar with the cover facing the congregation.

The Readings

First Reading:

- o Approach the sanctuary, bow at the altar, and proceed to the Ambo. Use the railing at the eastside of the sanctuary for support, if needed.
- o Position yourself so that the microphone is 4 or 5 inches from your mouth.
- o Read exactly what it on the page...DO NOT add additional words.
- o Proclaim the ritual liturgical language, "A reading from..."
- o Upon completion of the reading, pause slightly before looking at the people, and begin the closing ritual dialogue, "The Word of the Lord."
- o Wait for the people's response, "Thanks Be to God" and pause slightly. If appropriate, return to your seat, reverencing the Altar (bowing) on your way back.

7:30am Mass Psalm Response (except when it is sung):

- o Proclaim the psalm response. For example: "The Lord is my shepherd, there is nothing I shall want." Raise your arm and repeat the psalm response with the people joining in.
- o Read the verses, look up and raise your arm and repeat the response.
- o When the psalm is completed, pause slightly. Return to your seat, reverencing the Altar (bowing) on your way back.

Second Reading:

- o Approach the sanctuary, bow at the altar, and proceed to the Ambo. Use the railing at the eastside of the sanctuary for support, if needed.
- o Gently adjust the microphone. It should be 4 or 5 inches from your mouth.
- o Read exactly what it on the page...DO NOT add additional words.
- o Proclaim the ritual liturgical language, "A reading from..."
- o Upon completion of the reading, pause slightly before looking at the people and begin the closing ritual dialogue "The Word of the Lord."
- o Wait for the people's response, "Thanks Be to God" and pause.
Sequence: A Sequence is used on certain special Holy Days such as Easter.
 - o If the Lector is to read the sequence, pause between the second reading and the sequence. Read the sequence and pause, as above.
- o After the completion of the Second Reading (or sequence), close the Lectionary and place it on the shelf of the Ambo to make room for the Book of Gospels.
- o Return to your seat, reverencing the Altar (bowing) on your way back.

Prayers of the Faithful:

- o Approach the Ambo when you hear the words, "The Holy Spirit", in the Creed.
- o **Pray** the petitions, do not just read them. Prayer has a tone and attitude different from proclaiming the readings at Mass.
- o Conclude each petition with, "Let us pray to the Lord", unless otherwise directed. The congregation responds, "Lord, Hear our prayer", unless otherwise directed.
- o At the completion of the petitions, remain at the Ambo until after the Presider has finished his prayer.
- o Return to your seat, reverencing the Altar (bowing) on your way back.

Communion Antiphon: 7:30 Mass Only:

- o Approach the Ambo, with your Missal, when Eucharistic Ministers leave for the sacristy. As the Presider receives holy communion, announce the page location of the antiphon.
- o Read exactly what is on the page. Return to your seat, reverencing the Altar (bowing) on your way back.

After the Mass

- o Make sure that the Book of the Gospels is placed back in the Sacristy and that the Lectionary and Petitions are in place on the Ambo.
- o After the 11:30am Mass, return all books and papers to the Sacristy.

When you are unable to serve as a lector at your scheduled time

- o It is very important that we have **two lectors** at each Mass. Our experience has been that the proclamation of the scriptures is much richer and deeper with two Lectors.
- o It is **YOUR** responsibility to locate a substitute when you have a scheduling conflict. All Lectors are provided with a Lector's Schedule, along with names and phone numbers (email addresses soon to come) to facilitate the process of locating a substitute.
- o Should you misplace your schedule, one can be located on our parish website at www.stluke.org

Special Scheduling

- o Special requests are made for Lectors for Feasts, Festivals, and Holy Days such as Christmas, Easter, Immaculate Conception, etc. Please be prepared to volunteer for these special times.

Thank you for living out your baptismal right, sharing your God-given time and talents by accepting the role of Minister of the Word, and for carrying out this role with reverence, dignity, and understanding.

Monsignor Schaedel
Pastor

Marcia Capuano
Lector Coordinator
mbcapuano@sbcglobal.net
(317) 843-0676 (h)
(317) 753-7729 (c)

Diane Schafer,
Director of Religious Education
dschafer@stluke.org
259-4373 ext. 256

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