



Our Lady of Perpetual Help Standard Operating Procedures for Lectors

Lectors assist the priests and deacons of the parish in conveying the scriptural readings that make up the Liturgy of the Word to the assembly at mass and liturgical celebrations in a reverent, clear and meaningful way so that the assembly may understand the message of the reading, and to make the word present in community life and thereby transform people's lives.

TO BECOME A LECTOR

- All lectors must be properly trained for their ministry. This ministry of the Word requires skill in public reading, knowledge of the principles of liturgy, and an understanding of the scriptures. Only properly trained and commissioned lectors should be scheduled for liturgy. (General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM) #101, Lectionary for Mass (LM) Intro #14)
- For pastoral reasons family members or friends may be allowed to read during funeral or wedding liturgies even though they are not formally trained and commissioned as lectors. The parish should provide assistance to them so that God's Word is properly proclaimed.
- Lectors are fully initiated, practicing Catholics whose lives witness to the Word which they proclaim.
- On special occasions and for pastoral reasons, a young person who is not yet fully initiated (that is, confirmed and has received first Eucharist) may be permitted to lector during a liturgy. Proper training, however, is expected.
- All lectors should be commissioned for their ministry, preferably during a Sunday Mass. The blessing used for this commissioning is found in the Book of Blessings. (Chapter 61)
- Those who are presently lectors should periodically participate in spiritual enrichment programs.

PREPARATION

Lectors are expected to read clearly, accurately and with proper expression before the assembly, so that the Word of God can be easily heard and understood by all. To do this, it is important to prepare.

INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION

Honor and Privilege:

- The Word of God is precious to us; it nourishes our faith.
- Reading from the Bible to people assembled in church is not ordinary reading but proclaiming.
- Proclaiming is reading aloud what we believe to be true, and reading in such a way that others will believe it too.

Responsibility:

- Read the first, second, and gospel reading, found in “Workbook for Lectors”, know the general theme of all three readings.
- Pray with the reading, asking God to help you understand its message.
- Look up in the dictionary any words you don’t understand and check on pronunciations if not already listed in the workbook.
- Practice reading your text out loud, slowly and distinctly, as many times as necessary (at least two or three). Practicing the readings can help you gain confidence in proclaiming the Word.
- Pace yourself, pausing wherever there is punctuation or a break in the text. The most common failing in reading the word is to rush through it, reading too quickly.
- Dress appropriately (“Sunday best” – conservative, no shorts, t-shirts or slippers)

The following are some useful Internet links to help you prepare:

- Lector Preparation (<http://www.lectorprep.org/>)
- Online Biblical words pronunciation guide (<http://netministries.org/Bbasics/bwords.htm>)

The lectors schedule will be available in the church hospitality room and on the parish website at www.olphewabeach.org (click on “Parish News” and under the “Schedules” heading click on “Lectors”).

All lectors are responsible for being present at their scheduled time. If you are unable to attend, you are responsible for obtaining a replacement and/or informing the Lector Coordinator for assistance.

PRE-MASS PREPARATION

- Lectors must arrive 15 minutes before Mass. Inform other lector of your presence.
- Check ambo for folder. Folder for Lector #2 will contain the General Intercessions (Prayers of the Faithful) and announcements (IF not being done by celebrant). Practice reading them and keep the folder with you. **DO NOT** take anything out of the folder, but if you **MUST**, then please return it.

- Do a microphone check. Test the microphone to see how you sound and the distance you should stand from the microphone.
- Check that the lectionary is in place and at the appropriate reading.
- Check the Book of the Gospel to see if ribbon is at the appropriate Gospel reading.
- Check to see if there will be a procession (clue: altar servers carry the cross to the back of the church.) Bring Book of the Gospels for procession. If Deacon IS present, Deacon processes. Procession occurs for Presentation for Baptism (usually 3rd weekend).
 - If an instituted Lector and/or Acolyte is serving at the Mass, then he will process the Book of the Gospel. Scheduled lector will still read the readings.

MASS RESPONSIBILITIES

Please sit within the first two rows, on the ambo side of the church. The lectors are responsible for the following:

First Lector

- Processing with the Book of the Gospels, if Deacon NOT present
- First Reading

Second Lector

- Second Reading
- General Intercessions (Prayers of the Faithful), if NOT being done by deacon or celebrant.
- Announcements, if NOT being done by deacon or celebrant.

If needed, each lector should be prepared to proclaim both readings.

If lector is vertically challenged, place step-stool near the ambo as preparation for use.

DURING MASS

1. **Procession** (when appropriate) – By First Lector or Deacon, if present. (check with Sacristan if present and/or watch if the altar servers are going to the back. DO NOT ask the celebrant.)
 - Process slowly and reverently with the Book of the Gospels, behind the cross bearer and altar servers and before celebrant.
 - Hold Book of the Gospels up slightly above the head and process all the way to the altar without stopping. (If you carry a sacred object – cross, book, etc. – you do not need to bow while carrying the object)
 - Place the Book of the Gospel in the holder on the altar with the front cover facing you. After placing the Book of the Gospel, proceed directly next to celebrant to bow altogether. Pay attention to what's going on and be flexible. Visiting celebrant may not wait for you to bow. If that's the case, bow after putting the Book of the Gospels down and proceed directly to your seat. .
2. **First Reading** – By First Lector.

- Done at the ambo after concluding prayer.
- As everyone is sitting done, walk to the front of the altar, bow to the altar with what is called a “simple bow” which is bowing with the head only, then move to the ambo.
- If there is CLOW, wait for children to be gathered/excused, and as the last children depart proceed to the altar, bow, then go to the ambo.
- Introduce the reading: “*A reading from ...*” and pause. Memorize the introduction. For example, “*A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah*” and look up at the assembly while saying it.
- Read the text slowly, pausing wherever there is a break in the reading, at commas and periods. Read with feeling and conviction so that people can understand the Word, appreciate it and even remember it.
- Make eye contact with people in all areas of the church. If you practice the reading enough, you can make more eye contact and people will sense that you know the Word of God. Remember to focus on Jesus.
- Change the tone and inflection of your voice according to the reading, not monotone. The Lector is present to God – to the degree that God is present in the Word – when the Lector proclaims the Word.
- Pause at the end before saying: “*The Word of the Lord.*”
- When you’re done, take a step back, and bow your head in silent reverence/reflection.
- Turn the page (if necessary) to the Second Reading before going back to your seat (Note: Do not linger since the cantor will be moving toward the ambo for the responsorial psalm shortly after the reading.)
- Move to the front of the altar (cantor will be to your right) and do a “simple bow” together (this is in reverence to the altar) and return to your seat.

3. **Second Reading** – By Second Lector.

- Done at the ambo after completion of the responsorial psalm.
- Upon completion of the responsorial psalm, move toward the sanctuary/ambo (cantor will be to your left) and bow BEFORE entering the sanctuary (this is in reverence to the altar).
- Wait for assembly to be settled and quiet before you begin.
- Introduce the reading: “*A reading from ...*” and pause. Memorize the introduction. For example, “*A reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans*” and look up at the assembly while saying it.
- Read the text slowly, pausing wherever there is a break in the reading, at commas and periods. Read with feeling and conviction so that people can understand the word, appreciate it and even remember it.
- Make eye contact with people in all areas of the church. If you practice the reading enough, you can make more eye contact and people will sense that you know the word of God. Remember to focus on Jesus.
- Change the tone and inflection of your voice according to the reading, not monotone. The Lector is present to God – to the degree that God is present in the Word – when the Lector proclaims the Word.

- Pause at the end before saying: *“The Word of the Lord.”*
- **When you’re done DO NOT touch/handle the lectionary**, (1) take a step back, (2) bow your head in silent reverence/reflection, (3) close the lectionary and put it on the bottom shelf.
- Move to the front of the altar and do the “simple bow” (this is in reverence to the altar) and return to your seat.

Father or Deacon will pick up the book of the Gospels from the altar and carry it to the ambo. Upon finishing the Gospel, he will carry it to the front of the ambo and place it on the display groove.

5. **“Prayers of the Faithful”** – by Second Lector (or Deacon, if present).

- Done at the ambo and usually after the Nicene Creed.
- During the last line of the Creed, proceed to the ambo with the folder, and bow upon entering the sanctuary.
- Be ready to start after priest completes introductory statement then Second Lector (or Deacon, if present), reads intercessory prayers.
- Pause after each prayer before saying *“We pray to the Lord ...”* *Note: Unless told otherwise, always end each intention with “We pray to the Lord” regardless of what is written on the paper.*
- After last intercession, take a step back, bow your head in silent reverence/reflection until Father collects the intercessions with the concluding prayer. Say *“Amen”* and put the folder on the bottom shelf of the ambo.
- Move to the front of the altar and do the “simple bow” and return to your seat.

6. **Announcements** – By Second Lector IF not being done by deacon or celebrant.

- Done at the choir microphone after concluding prayer for communion and before the Concluding Rite and Dismissal. *Note: Adjust the microphone to the appropriate height needed. Ask a choir member if you need assistance.*

COVID-19 Interim Changes:

1. **First Lector:** Currently no processing in until further notice. When the bell rings for the start of mass, the first lector will go to the cantor microphone to do the Parish Stewardship Prayer. Ask the parishioners to “Please stand” (if not already standing), then say, “Together let us recite the Parish Stewardship Prayer” then say the prayer together. The prayer is on the last page of this SOP. Once processing in returns, then this will likely fall on the shoulders of the Commentator. More to follow on that.

2. **First Lector:** The first lector will remain at the ambo to read the Responsorial Psalm after completing the first reading. After the first time doing the response, the lector will raise their hand for the parishioners to repeat it. That will continue until the last psalm is completed. When done, the first lector will then go down to the front of the altar (far left when facing the altar),

joined by the second lector (far right when facing the altar), both bow and second lector will go to the ambo while the first lector returns to their seat.

3. **Second Lector:** After completing the second reading, the second lector will ask the parishioners to “Please stand” then say the Alleluia (twice), raise their hand for the congregation to also do the Alleluia twice, then do the Alleluia response in the lectionary. When done, the second lector raises their hand for all to say the Alleluia twice again. The second lector then puts the lectionary down into the ambo and proceeds to the front of the altar to bow, then return to their seat.

(Note: Effective on Holy Week starting on March 27-28, 2021, which is Palm Sunday weekend, singing will be allowed and the cantor/choir will do the Responsorial Psalm and Alleluia again. Consequently, paragraphs 2 and 3 above will be discontinued until further notice. Paragraphs 1 above and 4 below still apply.)

4. **First or Second Lector:** One of the lectors is responsible for sanitizing the ambo, lectionary, book of the gospels and lector’s folder after the mass. Please do not spray directly onto the books, but spray a paper towel and wipe/dry the outsides of each book and the pages of the folder. This will continue to be done until COVID-19 is no longer a threat to safety.

AFTER MASS

- ✓ Return Book of the Gospel to the altar, bow reverently.
- ✓ Make sure Lector # 2 folder is returned to the bottom shelf of ambo for the next Mass.
- ✓ Replace Lectionary from bottom shelf to the top of ambo opened to the First Reading for the next Mass.

CONCLUSION

- The preceding pages may seem to be overly detailed to those who have been active in the ministry for many years, but it serves both new and established Lectors to help create a more standard process. By striving for procedural consistency among Lectors, the assembly will feel more at ease, enabling them to be free from distractions and enter more deeply into the celebration.
- At times you will make mistakes in these procedures. What is most important is to maintain an attitude of reverence and worship towards the real presence of Jesus in the Word made flesh of the Eucharist and be warm and hospitable to members of the assembly.

FROM LECTOR COORDINATOR – DEREK SALIS:

REMINDERS AND KEYS TO SUCCESS

- ❖ Practice, practice, practice...
- ❖ Remember the 3 B's – B prepared, B early, and B flexible...
- ❖ When e-mailing Derek go to **BOTH** his work and home e-mail addresses: (work – derek.salis@us.af.mil and home – dereksalis@aol.com)
- ❖ Advise Derek **NOT LATER THAN** the last Friday of the current month of any date(s) you're unavailable for the upcoming month to avoid any scheduling conflicts...
- ❖ Keep your contact info up-to-date and advise Derek of any changes...
- ❖ Keep your contact sheet handy and arrange for a replacement if necessary...
- ❖ You should serve in **ONLY ONE** ministry per Mass (make arrangements between appropriate ministry coordinators to preclude any conflict of schedule).
- ❖ Make sure you obtain a new schedule **BEFORE** the first weekend of every month (you may be on it for that weekend...!!! If you didn't receive one, contact Derek immediately... Home phone 674-1253, work phone 449-8842, cell phone 780-8016.

PARISH STEWARDSHIP PRAYER

Heavenly Father, My parish is composed of people like me. I help make it what it is. It will be friendly, if I am. It will be holy, if I am. Its pews will be filled, if I help fill them. It will do great work, if I work. It will be prayerful, if I pray. It will make generous gifts to many causes, if I am a generous giver. It will bring others into worship, if I invite and bring them in. It will be a place of loyalty and love, of fearlessness and faith, of compassion, charity, and mercy, if I, who make it what it is, am filled with these same things. Therefore, with the help of God, I now dedicate myself to the task of being all the things that I want my parish to be. Amen

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