



## **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.

They further assist the priests and deacons of the parish in reading the introductory remarks to the Mass and to the readings as well parish announcements.

### **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.

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/bbbott.htm>)
- Bible Speech (<http://www.biblespeech.com/>)

The lectors schedule will be available in the church hospitality room and on the parish website [www.olphewabeach.org](http://www.olphewabeach.org) (click on “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 to obtain a replacement and/or informing the Lector Coordinator.

### **PRE-MASS PREPARATION**

- Lectors must arrive 15 minutes before Mass. Inform other lector of your presence.
- Check ambo for folders. Folder for Lector #1 will contain the announcements. Folder for Lector #2 will contain the introductions, and Prayers of the Faithful. Practice reading them and keep the folder with you. **DO NOT** take anything out of either folder. If you do not know pronunciation of names, ask for correct pronunciation.
- 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 is procession with the Book of the Gospel. (clue: if altar servers carry cross) Bring Book of the Gospel for procession. If Deacon is present, Deacon processes. Procession occurs for Presentation for Baptism (usually 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend).

### **MASS RESPONSIBILITIES**

The lectors are responsible for the following readings:

#### **First Lector**

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

## Second Lector

- Introductions to the Liturgy of the Word, if Deacon NOT present
- Second Reading
- Responsorial Psalm (if not sung)
- Prayers of the Faithful, if Deacon NOT present

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

If lector is vertically challenged, prepare to use and place step up stool near ambo.

## **DURING MASS**

1. **Procession** (when appropriate) – By First Lector or Deacon, if present. (Check with the celebrant if necessary).
  - 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 high for the assembly to see 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)
  - Lay the Book of the Gospel in the middle of the altar approximately three inches from the edge with the front cover facing up.
  - After laying the Book of the Gospel down, bow at the altar, then proceed directly to your chair UNLESS celebrant is waiting for you to join them in bowing (pay attention to what's going on and be flexible).
2. **“Introductions to the Liturgy of the Word”** (when required) – By Second Lector or Deacon, if present.
  - Introductions are done at the choir microphone. First “intro” is done after celebrant’s initial greeting (after Sign of the Cross, and “*Peace be with you...and also with you*”).  
*Note: Due to new microphone stands, DO NOT adjust the height of the microphone by pulling up or down on the microphone holder. Instead, make any adjustment by loosening the screw that holds the arm in place. Ask a choir member if you need assistance.*
  - After concluding prayer, assembly will sit and First Lector to move near ambo and remain there until Second Lector finishes the second “intro”.
  - After concluding prayer and once assembly gets seated, Second Lector to do second “intro”.
  - Sometimes there’s only one or no introductions at all OR visiting celebrant may not stop after initial greeting (e.g. Fr. Mark Gantley) to allow first “intro”...be flexible!!!
3. **First Reading** – By First Lector.
  - Done at the ambo after concluding prayer and after the second intro.
  - Wait for assembly to be settled and quiet before you begin.
  - Introduce the reading: “*A reading from ...*” and pause. Memorize the introduction, that is, “*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, bow your head in silent reverence/reflection, and wait until the first note of the responsorial psalm.
- At the first note of the responsorial psalm, turn page (if necessary) to the Second Reading before going back to your seat.
- There is NO bowing before or after the reading.

#### 4. **Second Reading** – By Second Lector.

- Done at the ambo after completion of the responsorial psalm.
- Wait for assembly to be settled and quiet before you begin.
- Introduce the reading: “*A reading from ...*” and pause. Memorize the introduction, that is, “*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, take a step back, and bow your head in silent reverence/reflection.
- At the first note of the “Alleluia” close the lectionary and put it on the bottom shelf then return to your seat.
- There is NO bowing before or after the reading.

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.
- Immediately after the Creed, proceed to ambo with folder and be prepared to begin reading the intentions.
- Priest will do 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, bow your head in silent reverence/reflection, until Father collects the intercessions with the concluding prayer. Say “*Amen*”. Put the folder on the bottom shelf of the ambo and return to your seat.

## 6. Announcements – By First Lector.

- Done at the choir microphone after concluding prayer for communion and before the Concluding Rite and Dismissal. *Note: Due to new microphone stands, **DO NOT** adjust the height of the microphone by pulling up or down on the microphone holder. Instead, make any adjustment by loosening the screw that holds the arm in place. Ask a choir member if you need assistance.*

## AFTER MASS

- ✓ Return Book of the Gospel to the altar, bow reverently.
- ✓ Make sure Lector # 1 and Lector # 2 folders are 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@hickam.af.mil](mailto:derek.salis@hickam.af.mil) and home – [dereksalis@aol.com](mailto: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 256-7269.