

Role Of The Lector

The Lector is a Parish leader who steps forth from the Assembly to welcome the Assembly to worship, who proclaims God's Word in the Scriptures for the nourishment of the Assembly, who prays the prayers of petition on behalf of the Assembly, and who delivers Announcements to inform the Assembly.

Organization

Lector Chairperson is Dom Rinaldi, 859-5087, or email to Dominick@Rinaldi1.com. The chairperson schedules Lectors for all Sunday, Holy Day and special occasion Masses. The chairperson is also a member of the Parish Worship Commission representing the concerns of Lectors.

Scheduling

Two Lectors are scheduled for each Sunday and Holy Day Mass whenever possible. The monthly schedule is available at www.sthenryparish.com under *Liturgical Ministers*, and in the Bulletin TWO Sundays before it goes into effect. Lectors themselves, not the chairperson, are responsible for securing substitutes if they are unable to read as scheduled. Our Worship Commission expects two Lectors at most Masses and therefore it is expected that substitutes be found for each Lector if either or both Lectors are unable to serve at their appointed time. Try to give substitutes at least a week's notice, when possible, so they can properly prepare the readings. Failure to be present or to secure a substitute three times in the period of a year may result in removal from the ministry.

The schedule is prepared the 10th of each month. When you know in advance that you will be unavailable on a specific date, inform the chairperson and you will not be scheduled on that date. Likewise, advise the chairperson if you are available only on specific dates.

Preparation For Reading

A *Workbook For Lectors* is provided for each Lector. Workbooks include readings for one Church Year, and are distributed in November at least two weeks prior to the First Sunday of Advent.

Review the material at least five days in advance of the reading to establish the basic meaning or theme of the readings. Identify the key terms or phrases, which convey the basic meaning or theme. The readings are just a small segment of the original writing, which in some cases may leave the exact meaning somewhat unclear. Review the background information provided for each reading in the *Workbook* to help establish the meaning. Reviewing the reading with its surrounding passages in the Bible provides a broader view.

During the initial review, check for any unfamiliar words. The *Workbook* provides pronunciation assistance and a dictionary can be very helpful with meanings.

Rehearse the readings aloud each day for about 10 minutes.

Your objective during the review and rehearsal period is to take the Scripture passage and:

- ❖ Analyze it, make the Word part of yourself, reflect on the Word, and let the Word speak to you, to guide you to the author's intended meaning;
- ❖ Use your talents to enthusiastically express that meaning.

Preparation should lead toward reading interpretively. A casual conversational style is not suited for reading Scripture. Not even a professional can deliver an effective interpretive reading by scanning the Lectionary in the Sacristy before Mass.

To further assist your preparation, you can obtain the Call to Worship (Welcome), Petitions and Announcements three days in advance by going to www.sthenrymusic.com and clicking the appropriate date under *Lector Notes*.

Interpretive Reading

Interpretive reading requires you:

- ❖ to enthusiastically express the reading to the Assembly with your own inspirational potential;
- ❖ to evoke some response from the Assembly (i.e. the attention of the Assembly is captured and held through the reading).

The tools of the Lector are the same as those used by newscasters and actors. The Lector must skillfully use all the tools of the interpretive reader to communicate effectively with the Assembly.

Interpretive Reading Tools

- ❖ **Enunciation** – Each word must be clear, distinct and complete. This requires the reader to extend the mouth opening. Use a mirror to check for what may at first seem like an exaggerated mouth opening.
- ❖ **Expression and Empathy** – The reader must express the emotions of anger, fear, compassion, hope and so forth that the writer has tried to communicate. Word coloring - through the use of empathy, words can be highlighted or underlined to strengthen a point.
- ❖ **Tempo And Pauses** – By varying the speed of delivery, the mood can be changed from telling a story to deliberate declaration to accelerated excitement. Pauses help to indicate structural divisions between thoughts. Care must be taken to be sure that pauses are used for transitions between thoughts and not just for mirroring punctuation. Note that Scriptural punctuation does not necessarily follow thought transition.
- ❖ **Volume And Inflection** – Loud, medium or soft variations can be applied whenever the meaning of a passage can be enhanced. The variations of the Lector's fundamental or habitual pitch can draw attention to a key point. Slight variations in voice quality and pitch can help the Assembly identify multiple speakers in a reading.
- ❖ **Poise, Posture, Eye Contact, Facial Expression** – Movements of the head and body can reflect the mood of the reading. More importantly, confidence, poise and posture help transfer the Assembly's attention from the reader to the reading itself. The use of eye contact with the Assembly before, during and after the reading establishes a comfortable relationship with the Assembly. An

expression on your face may also help to convey the meaning of a reading.

- ❖ **Project To The Back Row** – Always project your voice to the entire Assembly all the way to the back row, even when looking down at the text. Avoid reading to the Ambo or the microphone.
- ❖ **Error Recovery** – Even with the best preparation there is the potential for error during a live reading. If you make an error it is important to maintain your poise and confidence. As a general rule, a single word error does not require re-reading unless it is a key point. A multi-word error such as blending two words creating a non-word, or jumping to the wrong line in a reading requires a re-read. Do not dwell on the error.

Lector Assignments

When two Lectors are scheduled to read, duties are split in a logical manner. The first Lector listed on the schedule carries the Book Of The Gospels in procession, reads the first reading and the Petitions. The second Lector listed on the schedule does not participate in the procession, reads the Call To Worship (Welcome), the second reading and the Announcements.

Before Mass

Lectors are to arrive at least 15 minutes before Mass. The Presider reserves the right to proclaim all the readings if the Lectors have not arrived 10 minutes before Mass time. The Call To Worship, Lectionary, Petitions and Announcements (if any) are found on the counter top in the Ministers Room. Unless you are otherwise notified, the Responsorial Psalm will be sung at all Masses. In the unlikely event there is no musician at the Mass, you would be expected to read the Responsorial Psalm.

Check to see that the Lectionary on the Ambo is set to the proper reading, and confirm that the Petitions, Call To Worship (Welcome) and Announcements are in place.

Review the reading(s) in the Lectionary in the Ministers Room to familiarize yourself with the text layout. Review and rehearse the Call To

Worship, Petitions and the Announcements (if any) aloud, using all the tools of an interpretive reader. Announcements are to be read as printed unless otherwise directed by the Presider before Mass. Your objective before Mass is to minimize surprises.

About five minutes before Mass time both Lectors should assemble with the Servers and Presider in the Priests' Sacristy for prayer and last minute instructions.

Microphone Usage

Be sure the Ambo and Cantor Lectern microphones are properly positioned before reading. The best results are achieved by speaking slightly above or slightly below the microphone. The microphone mount is comprised of a rigid tube with flex joints at the top and bottom. Raise and lower the microphone by grasping the rigid tube near the bottom flex joint. The microphones are always on; they do not have on/off switches.

Ambo Step

The Ambo has a built-in step in its base that can be used to elevate a younger reader about six inches. If the younger reader is the first Lector, the step can be pulled out before Mass. Otherwise the step is pulled out when the reader approaches the Ambo. In either case, the step is to be pushed back into the base of the Ambo when the younger reader completes the reading.

Call To Worship (Welcome)

The Second Lector reads the Call To Worship from the Cantors Lectern when directed by the Presider or the Music Director.

Procession

Assemble in the rear of church with the Servers and Presider. The Lector walks immediately behind the Servers and before the Presider. The Book Of The Gospels, symbolizing The Word Of The Lord, is to be held high for all to see. When the procession reaches the front of the church, the Lector goes to the foot of the Sanctuary steps to the left of the Servers. Continuing to hold the Book Of The Gospels high, the Lector nods slightly forward and back when the Presider and

Servers bow. The Lector remains in place at the foot of the Sanctuary steps until the Presider kisses the Altar. The Lector then lowers the Book Of The Gospels (to avoid tripping on the Sanctuary steps) and moves to the rear of the Altar and sets the Book Of The Gospels in the acrylic book stand, then proceeds to the first bench on the left (south) of the center isle.

Scripture Readings

After the Presider reads the Opening Prayer of the Mass (the Assembly responds with "Amen"), the Presider sits down in the Presidential Chair. The first Lector moves to the Ambo for the first reading. Proclaim the introduction to the first reading and pause for a count of 3 (a reading from the book of... pause 1 - 2 - 3), complete the reading and again pause for a count of 3 prior to closing the reading with "The Word of the Lord".

If the Responsorial Psalm is to be sung by a Cantor or the Choir, proceed to your seat after completing the reading, do not wait for the Choir to begin singing.

If you are to read the Responsorial Psalm, pause at least 30 seconds after completing the first reading then proceed with the Responsorial Psalm. Then return to your seat.

After the Cantor completes the Responsorial Psalm and exits the Sanctuary, the second Lector moves to the Ambo. Proclaim the introduction to the second reading and pause for a count of 3 (a reading from the from the first letter of... pause 1 - 2 - 3), complete the reading and again pause for a count of 3 prior to closing the reading with "The Word of the Lord". Place the Lectionary on the Ambo shelf to allow space for the Book Of The Gospels. Proceed to your seat after completing the reading; do not wait for the Choir. The Gospel Acclamation (Alleluia) is only to be sung, do not read the Gospel Acclamation.

Petitions (Intercessions)

During the Profession of Faith (Creed), the first Lector moves to the Ambo on the words "...we believe in the Holy Spirit..." to prepare for the reading of the Petitions. The Lector remains at the Ambo until the Presider concludes the prayers of Petition.

Communion

Lectors receive Communion with the Assembly, generally moving to the center isle.

Announcements

After Communion the Presider returns to the Presidential Chair and, following a brief period of quiet meditation, the Presider and Assembly rise for the Prayer After Communion. Upon completion of the Prayer After Communion the Presider nods to the Lector or requests the Announcements. The second Lector goes to the Cantor's Lectern to read the Announcements.

Recessional

Lectors do not participate in the Recessional, but remain in place with the Assembly until the Recessional (final) hymn is completed. The first Lector then returns the Lectionary to the top of the Ambo and sets it to the first reading, then reverently returns the Book Of The Gospels to the stand in the rear of church.

Thank You!

Thank you to all the men and women of the Parish who serve as Lectors. The seriousness with which you prepare and carry out your service greatly enhances our liturgical celebrations. The Word is enriched by your enthusiastic proclamation to the Assembly.