

PROCLAIMING THE WORD OF THE LORD AT ST. RITA PARISH

THE WEEK BEFORE:

Commit - If you are unable to attend your scheduled Mass please try to find a substitute. If you cannot find a sub, please notify the deacon and/or the other lector assigned to your Mass so he/she can be prepared to do both readings. It is always ideal to have two **prepared** lectors.

Internalize - Internalize the passage by reading it every day of the week prior to Mass. This will give you the conviction to proclaim the message more effectively. Also, in the event of a longer and shorter version of the reading, check with the priest or deacon before you arrive to see which will be used. Use the Lector's Workbook. It's a great resource!

THE DAY OF:

Arrive at least 10 minutes before the Mass begins. Identify yourself to the deacon or presiding priest and inform him that you are a lector. Check with the presider for any special instructions. Confirm the pronunciation of any difficult words or names from the reading. By being prepared and arriving early, you will be able to adopt the reverence due this important ministry.

Before Mass begins, go up to the Ambo and find the readings in the lectionary.

Before approaching the ambo, be ready to read and proclaim. Get your reading glasses out ahead of time so you can slip them on, find your place in the lectionary and begin.

Dress and Decorum: Gentlemen should wear slacks and a shirt with a collar. Ladies should dress modestly. Short skirts, open shoulders or backs and cleavage are not appropriate. The manner of dress should be as dignified as the ministry of proclaiming the Word.

THE PROCLAMATION

- 1) **Be Confident** - Start strong and confidently. Memorize the introduction to the reading (e.g. "A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians.") Note – it is pronounced using the article "a" (uh) as opposed to "A" (pronounced AAY) Memorize the first line of the reading so that you can begin the reading maintaining good eye contact with the congregation.
- 2) **Keep Pace** - Speak slowly and let it flow. By practicing ahead of time, you will be able to develop a rhythm that should be maintained throughout the passage. Don't trail off at the end of sentences or at the end of the passage itself. Deliberately pause at natural breaks in the reading to allow the congregation time to absorb the reading.
- 3) **Don't Eat the Scenery** - Do not be overly dramatic in proclaiming the reading as that can become distracting to the congregation. We are lectors, not actors.
- 4) **Watch Your Margins** - Margins are very important. Proclaim the introduction then wait a few beats before proclaiming the actual passage. After you have proclaimed the passage, wait a few beats and then announce the **"The Word of the Lord"**. Finish strong!
- 5) **Project** - Speak to the corners of the church.

First Reading (Lector 1)

- Enters with the procession
- After the priest has read the opening prayer and the congregation begins to sit down, Lector 1 proceeds up towards the ambo, pausing to briefly bow before the altar. If you are lector at the Mass with the Children's Gospel (9:00 am during the school year), do not begin until the priest blesses/dismisses the children and returns to the presiders chair.
- As a courtesy, turn to the page in the lectionary where the second reading begins.

Second Reading (Lector 2):

- During the last refrain of the responsorial psalm, Lector 2 stands and proceeds to the ambo, pausing to briefly bow before the altar.

Please note that many of the sentences in the Pauline or other NT letters have to be studied, read and proclaimed very carefully and with a lot of emphasis in order for their meaning to be fully grasped by the average congregation.

- Softly close the lectionary book and take it with you to the side lectern.

Prayers of the Faithful (Lector 1):

- At the beginning of the last paragraph of the Nicene Creed ("I believe in one holy, catholic, and apostolic Church...") proceed to the steps of the sanctuary nearest the ambo but do not go up just yet.
- As the priest is introducing to the Prayers of the Faithful, proceed up to the ambo. When the introduction is finished, read the intercessions. After each intercession, briefly pause and announce **"We pray to the Lord."** Remember this is a statement; not a question.
- After the last intercession, wait until the Priest gives the closing prayer (through Christ our Lord, amen). Then announce the gift bearers and head back to your seat bowing briefly towards the altar.

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HELPFUL WEBSITES

<http://www.lectorprep.org/> (provides a variety of preparation materials for the readings)

<http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings-audio.cfm> (provides a podcast of the reading – you can listen to someone else proclaim the reading)

<http://www.usccb.org/bible/> (provides the readings for any given day's Mass)

PRAYER OF A MINISTER OF THE WORD

(In Preparation)

Lord, invest me with your power
as I prepare to proclaim the marvel of your message
I have prepared my reading,
I have tried to take within me
the meaning of what I am about to proclaim.
Help me to proclaim, not just with my lips,
but with my whole heart and soul.
Lord, make me a hollow reed
so that your voice will be heard by all who hear me.
Free me of excessive concern over my performance.
Convert my feeling of nervousness and
turn all my apprehension into an energy
for proclaiming your word with power and authority.
May your Spirit live in me and
fill the holy word that I proclaim.

Amen.