

St. Joseph Parish
Guidelines for Lectors
2025-2026

Preparation to Proclaim The Word

SCHEDULE

- Sign up on Ministry Schedule Pro (MSP)
- New lectors will get email instruction from Gail Assenmacher as soon as you have attended training
- You will get an email to enter blackout dates for the next time block
- You will receive a notification that dates have been filled, so please mark your calendar immediately with your assignment(s)
- Email reminders will be sent as requested prior to the weekend you are scheduled
- For those who do not have computer access please contact Gail at 734-426-8483
- If you cannot serve at your scheduled time please acknowledge such on MSP and a notification will be sent out to all lectors

IN ADVANCE OF YOUR DAY TO PROCLAIM THE WORD

- Read over both Old Testament and New Testament readings, The Gospel and the background material from your lector workbook
- Always prepare to read both passages whether you divide responsibilities with another lector or not
- Reflect on each passage and its values to the community gathered
- Check the proper pronunciation of unfamiliar words (margin of workbook)
- Practice the reading aloud SLOWLY with attention to phrases and pauses
- Practice various ways to communicate thought, feeling, and emphasis
- If you would like to hear an audio of your reading of your reading or any other daily reading, these are available on the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops website: this can act as a guide for inflection, tone and pronunciation

www.usccb.org/bible/readings-audio.cfm

APPEARANCE

- Men: shirt and tie are encouraged, dress slacks and button down shirts are acceptable
- Women: dress, skirt and blouse, slacks and blouse are acceptable
- Dressing appropriately whenever you come to church is encouraged as you never know when your help will be needed and will be asked to fill in as a substitute

ASSIGNED DAY

- PLEASE ARRIVE AT LEAST 15 MINUTES BEFORE MASS
- Check off your name on the list in the Minster's Room

- Check in with the Mass Captains if possible
- Take another look at the readings: the Lectionary will be on the counter
- Review the introduction, petitions and pronunciations of the names- if you have any questions ask the Mass Captain
- Watch for your partner and discuss which readings you will each do
- If your partner is a no show, be prepared to do the introduction, both reading and petitions unless there is another lector available
- Lectors will sit on the piano/music side of the church

5 MINUTES BEFORE LITURGY

- Place binder with introduction and intercessions on the lectern and USE BOTH HANDS to adjust microphone
- Place lectionary on the Ambo open with ribbon visible and USE BOTH HANDS to adjust microphone
- Stand at the lectern at the time that mass is to begin and look for Father's signal to begin the introduction

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

IF YOU WILL BE READING THE INTRODUCTION

- Speak directly to the people, making eye contact as appropriate
- After "Good Morning" or "Good Evening" pause to let the assembly respond
- SPEAK SLOWLY
- After the introduction return to your place in the assembly

WHEN PROCLAIMING THE FIRST READING

- After the opening prayer is complete, approach the Ambo once the congregation is being seated
- If there is a baptism, approach the Ambo after the family has returned to their seats after the baby has been anointed and Father is sitting down
- Approach the Ambo, but DO NOT BOW (See Addendum on Page 5)
- At the Ambo, find your place and compose yourself as people settle
- Scan the assembly, making eye contact as you wait for all to be attentive
- Announce, "A reading from..." (Remember "A" rhymes with "The")
- Pause again and make eye contact before reading the scripture passage
- Read directly to the people, meeting their eyes frequently
- Communicate both thought and feeling, emphasizing what is important
- Make a pronounced pause and look directly at the people before saying "The Word of the Lord"
- Turn the page if necessary to make the second reading visible

- Step away from the microphone and take a reflective posture for 5 to 10 seconds and return to your place in the assembly

WHEN PROCLAIMING THE SECOND READING

- When the psalm is completed, wait for the cantor to return to their place before approaching the Ambo
- Follow the same procedures as for the first reading
- After saying “The Word of The Lord” turn the page so that the Gospel is visible to Father, then take a reflective pause for 5-10 seconds
- During Easter, the Lectionary is then placed on the lecture shelf as the Gospel is read from a different Lectionary
- Return to your place and stand in anticipation of the Gospel acclamation

IF YOU READ GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

- Approach the lectern at “one holy, catholic and apostolic church” as we are finishing the Creed; if there is a baptism, approach when Father is finished and begin the intercessions
- Turn toward Father before his prayer before intercessions, then turn to lectern to begin reading
- SPEAK SLOWLY
- Make eye contact, especially during “Let us Pray to the Lord.”
- During Father’s concluding prayer turn to face Father
- After concluding prayer return to your seat

AFTER THE FINAL SONG

- Wait until all verses or the recessionals are complete
- Return the lectionary and the Binder to the Minster’s Room

***CLARIFICATION ON BOWING

- When liturgical ministers are in the opening procession and they reach the top of the aisle, they bow to the altar. If they are carrying something they bow their head. If the tabernacle is in the sanctuary (not in our case) they genuflect

The GIRM is careful to regulate what goes on DURING mass. When a lector stands to read he/she simply “goes to the ambo (Girm 128).” Since the focus is on the holy word they are about to proclaim, there is no sign or reverence to the altar, tabernacle or priest. It is best that all readers sit in an area of the church where they can approach the ambo directly and with ease (no need to cross over the main aisle or travel great distances) Likewise, ministers do not genuflect or bow to the tabernacle DURING mass

Thank you for your service on your parish commission and for your attention to reverence!

Blessings,
Rita A Thiron, MA
Executive Director
Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions

Helpful Hints on Practicing Your Readings:

These suggestions come from one of our seasoned readers, Richard Grzeskowiak

It is fine to silently read the readings to get a feel for what is being said. It is NOT fine to practice the readings silently because part of the “practice” is training the mouth, lips and tongue to move with the words.

Practice aloud. Whispering doesn't count. Practice aloud once as fast as you can read. Stumbling on words or phrases indicates those need work by themselves in isolation. Once the problem words or phrases are dealt with, then practice at normal speed aloud.

Notice when to pause, when to slow the pace, when to raise or lower your voice, when to use modulation and intonation. All these help get the meaning across to the Assembly.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact Chris Olenech at 734.255.3520 or colenehdpm@yahoo.com