

Lector Instructions

St. Isidore Catholic Church, 1/10/15

I thank you greatly for committing to serve God in the holy liturgy of the Mass. May He bless you abundantly through your contribution to our faith community.

Fr. Matt

"Servers, Lectors, Commentators and Members of the Choir exercise a genuine liturgical function. They ought to discharge their office, therefore, with the sincere devotion and decorum demanded by so exalted a ministry and rightly expected of them by God's people." Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy # 29

"Those who exercise the ministry of lectors, even if they have not received instruction must be truly qualified and carefully prepared in order that the faithful will develop a warm and lively love for Scripture from listening to the reading of the sacred texts." General Instruction on the Roman Missal #66

"A speaking style on the part of the lectors that is audible, clear and intelligent is the first means of transmitting the Word of God properly to the assembly." Lectionary for Mass Introduction #14

"Their preparation must above all be *spiritual*, but what may be called a *technical* preparation is also needed. The spiritual preparation presupposes at least a biblical and liturgical formation. The purpose of their biblical formation is to give readers the ability to understand the readings in context and to perceive by the light of faith the central point of the revealed message. The liturgical formation ought to equip the lector to have some grasp of the meaning and structure of the liturgy of the word and the significance of its connection with the liturgy of the Eucharist. The technical preparation should make the lector more skilled in the art of reading publicly, either with power of their own voice or with the help of sound equipment." Lectionary for Mass: Introduction # 55

In these words, the Church tells us how important it is that we be "truly qualified and carefully prepared" in order to serve God's people in our ministry of "transmitting the Word of God properly to the assembly."

Before you arrive

1. Read *all* of the readings of the day twice.
 - a. You can always find the readings in the Workbook for Lectors... or at the USCCB website: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/010715.cfm>
 - b. There is always a chance that the other lector will not show up and we may need you to read both readings, so be prepared.
 - c. We also may need you to lead the Responsorial Psalm if the choir doesn't show up.
 - d. If there is an option on the readings prepare to read either option and always check with the priest which option he has chosen for the given Mass before Mass.
2. Say a prayer to ask God for his help that you might proclaim his word well.
3. Use the Workbook for Lectors... to know the correct pronunciation of difficult words.

4. If the reading doesn't make logical sense, check it with someone else until it does (It is difficult to read something with correct inflections in the voice if it doesn't make logical sense).
5. Plan to arrive 15 minutes before Mass begins (the Mass Coordinator will find a replacement for you at 5 minutes before Mass if you or your replacement have not already signed in).
6. Please dress in nice attire commensurate with the dignity of the ministry. Avoid, if possible, sporting attire.

Upon Arrival

1. Go to the Vestibule of the church and on the *Minister Sign In Sheet* initial next to your name so that the Mass Coordinator knows you are there (the Mass Coordinator will find a replacement for you at 5 minutes before Mass if you or your replacement have not already signed in. Please do not depend on the Mass Coordinator to replace you. He or She will be finding someone who by chance is in the congregation in the instance of you or your replacement's absence).
2. Sit somewhere near the front (within a few rows).

First Reader (If your name is the first name listed)

3. Go and be seated near the Ambo (around 5 minutes before Mass starts). Do this by walking with your hands in the prayer position going first to the center/front of the sanctuary, in front of the altar, stop before the steps, make a bow, and enter.
4. From your seat in the sanctuary keep watch for the priest to look at you and give you a thumbs up (this will generally happen 1 minute before the beginning of Mass).
5. After the thumbs up immediately begin the Mass introduction as written. The introduction will be in the binder sitting on the bench. Place it on top of the lectionary (already placed on the Ambo) holding it in place while you read. Do not add anything to the introduction unless asked to do so by the priest.
6. Put the introduction binder on the shelf under the Ambo.
7. Go back to your seat (do this by first going to the center/front of the sanctuary, stopping just in front of the steps and making a bow).
8. After the opening prayer go back to the Ambo in the same manner as before and read the first reading.
 - a. Make sure the reading is correct.
 - b. Do not read any of the print above "A reading from the Book of the ..."
 - c. Adjust the microphone. Your mouth should be about 3 inches or so from the mic and it should be just under the height of your nose. Try not to have the mic right on your mouth because the blowing causes a popping sound. Make sure your volume is good. You should hear your self to be about the same level of sound as the priest. You can check with the priest after Mass to see if he thought your volume was right.

- d. Make sure your cadence is good. The pace should vary slightly throughout the reading. Generally people tend to read too fast but some too slow. Both extremes are problematic.
 - e. Stress certain words to help the reading make sense.
 - f. Make eye contact from time to time as is according to your ability.
 - g. Avoid making the reading sound like a dramatic performance (It is not).
 - h. Make a significant pause after the last word of the reading before the , “The word of the Lord.”
 - i. “blessed” is pronounced “bless’d” only if it is used as a verb (“He blessed them.”) It is pronounced “bles-id” if it is a noun or an adjective or adverb. (“Blessed are the poor...”) The same goes for beloved.
 - j. Avoid saying, “Excuse me,” or “Pardon me,” after coughing or making a mistake in the reading. Simply repeat the part in which you misspoke.
9. Only read the Responsorial Psalm if specifically asked by the priest. If a musician or someone else asks you, always check with the priest.
10. After you have finished reading, immediately go back to your seat going first to the center/front just at the bottom of the steps.
- a. Note: If the psalmist from the choir is coming up at the same time as you are leaving (or the second reader, which would be the case if you read the psalm), wait for the other person to stop in the parallel position and then bow with the other person). In that case you should be off to one side of center by a few feet.

Second Reader (If you are the second name listed)

11. Practice the announcements before Mass
12. After the psalm, go to the center/front and make a bow.
- a. Note: if the psalmist from the choir sang from the ambo or if the first reader read the psalm from the ambo, wait for the other person to stop in the parallel position and bow with the other person). In that case you should be off to one side of center by a few feet.
13. Go to the Ambo, turn the page if necessary, check that it is the correct reading, and read the second reading according to the same instructions above.
14. After the reading, if the book of the Gospels is to be used (you will know this because it will be on the altar), place the lectionary on the bench, otherwise leave it on the Ambo.
15. Return to your seat in the same manner as described above.
16. If there is no deacon, you should go to the Ambo in the same manner described above at the end of the end of the Creed and read the Prayers of the Faithful (Remember to only read your part, not the priest’s).

17. After the prayer after communion go to the Ambo in the same manner described above and read the announcements.
18. Always anticipate your action and move slightly before your time to read.

In General

19. Make sure you always know the schedule. It is always your responsibility to get a replacement if you are ever unable to serve according to the schedule. The replacement must be one of our trained lectors and he or she does not need to check with anyone, but just initial their own initials next to your name on the *Minister Sign In Sheet*.
20. Always read carefully the emails sent to all ministers for any updates on instructions or for particular notes about the way our ministry is currently being executed.
21. Please email Stacy Savoca (st.isidore.lectors@hotmail.com) or call her ((916)912-1989) for any questions or need of assistance.
22. Holy Days will always have empty *Minister Sign In Sheets*. Please come a little early on those days and sign your whole name in an open position.