

GUIDELINES FOR LECTORS IN TAUNTON CATHOLIC NORTH

OFFICIAL TEXTS ON THE LITURGY OF THE WORD AND LECTORS

1) The ambo is the symbol of the presence of the Word of God in the Church just as the altar is the symbol of the Sacrament of the Eucharist. The Liturgy of the Word takes place at the ambo. The ambo, therefore, should be permanent, solemn, dignified and prominent. Candles and other decorative elements may be placed around it. The ambo is to be used for the proclaimed Word, namely, the readings from Sacred Scripture, the Gospel, the homily and the intentions of the Prayers of the Faithful. The Responsorial Psalm is from the Sacred Scripture and ideally is chanted from the ambo. A lectern or cantor's stand is best used for song leading, announcements, etc. All readings take place at the one ambo: it is improper to have two ambos. (GIRM 58, 309, LM Intro 16)

2) When the Sacred Scriptures are read in the Church, God himself speaks to his people, and Christ, present in his word, proclaims the Gospel. Therefore, the readings from the Word of God are to be listened to reverently by everyone, for they are an element of the greatest importance in the Liturgy. (GIRM 29)

3) The proclamation of the Word of God is truly a service to the Church. Lectors bring the living Word of God to the liturgical assembly. The ministry of the Word should, therefore, be treated seriously and with great dignity. (GIRM 55)

4) In the absence of an instituted lector, other lay people may be deputed to proclaim the readings from sacred scripture, people who are truly suited to carrying out this function and carefully prepared, so that by their hearing the readings from the sacred texts the faithful may conceive in their hearts a sweet and living affection for sacred scripture (GIRM, 101)

QUALIFICATIONS TO SERVE AS A LECTOR

1) Lectors must be reverential and respectful of his/her faith, and of good moral character. If married, be in a valid marriage according to the law of the Catholic Church

2) Possessed of the necessary ability and talents to proclaim the Word of God in a clear, dignified, and effective manner.

3) The diocese is now require that all people involved in ministry on a regular basis participate in 3 aspects of safe environment training: Cori check, signing the Code of Conduct, and complete the video training

4) Pope Francis' Apostolic Letter has established that "the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time is to be devoted to the celebration, study and dissemination of the Word of God". This is a good day to bless & rededicate lectors to their ministry.

STYLE OF PROCLAMATION (from NYC Guidelines)

1) The Introduction to the Lectionary states in section 24 "a speaking style on the part of the reader that is audible, clear, and intelligent is the first means of transmitting the Word of God properly to the assembly"

2) An "audible, clear, and intelligent" proclamation of God's Word requires an appropriate use of inflection, pause, projection, phrasing, articulation, posture, and pace. In applying these techniques of proclamation, the lector should consider that his/her primary task is to present the Word of God in all of its richness and meaning. Hence, the lector should never proclaim God's Word in a dull or robotic manner, but should always work to accurately reflect the genre, tone, and style of the particular scriptural passage in one's own manner of proclamation. As well, a style of reading or the use of physical gestures that would turn the proclamation of scripture into a dramatic act directing the attention of the assembly from the Word of God to the reader should be strictly avoided.

3) Throughout their time of service, lectors should strive to develop the most effective manner of proclaiming God's Word, and pastors should regularly give feedback to lectors concerning their style of proclamation.

PREPARATION FOR THE MINISTRY

1) In texts that are to be pronounced in a loud and clear voice, whether by the Priest or the Deacon, or by a reader, or by everyone, the voice should correspond to the genre of the text itself, that is, depending upon whether it is a reading, a prayer, an explanatory comment, an acclamation, or a sung text; it should also be suited to the form of celebration and to the solemnity of the gathering. (GIRM, no. 38)

2) The Word of God is not merely read during the liturgy. It is proclaimed, yet not with theatrical show. Effective proclamation involves the delivery of the message with clarity, conviction and appropriate pace. It demands the ability to evoke faith in others by demonstrating one's own faith. Proclamation is a special ministry which presupposes faith. It also rouses faith in those who hear the Word proclaimed. (LM Intro 55)

3) Reading is an oral interpretation. Your understanding of the passage is reflected in your proclamation.

4) This means that you must prepare in advance by reading, studying, and praying over the scriptures.

5) Immediate preparation is also expected of all lectors. This requires arriving in ample time before the liturgy, locating the readings in the Lectionary, arranging the microphone, making sure that the sound system is properly functioning.

6) Odds and ends

-Lector's guide are available in print or on-line. Save them.

-Record and listen to yourself.

-Please get your own replacement.

FUNCTION OF THE LECTOR (from USSB Web site)

1) In the procession to the altar, in the absence of a Deacon, the reader, wearing approved attire [see GIRM, no. 339], may carry the Book of the Gospels, slightly elevated. In that case, the reader walks in front of the Priest but otherwise walks along with the other ministers. Upon reaching the altar, the reader makes a profound bow with the others [see also GIRM, no. 274]. If he is carrying the Book of the Gospels, he approaches the altar and places the Book of the Gospels upon it. Then the reader takes his own place in the sanctuary with the other ministers. (GIRM, nos. 194-195)

2) The reader reads from the ambo the readings that precede the Gospel. In the absence of a psalmist, the reader may also proclaim the Responsorial Psalm after the First Reading.

3) In the absence of a Deacon, the reader, after the introduction by the Priest, may announce the intentions of the Universal Prayer from the ambo.

4) If there is no singing at the Entrance or at Communion and the antiphons given in the Missal are not recited by the faithful, the reader may read them at an appropriate time (cf. nos. 48, 87). (GIRM, nos. 196-198)

5) At the conclusion of the Mass, the lector does not process with the Book of the Gospels. The Lectionary is never carried in procession. The lector may join in the procession at the end of Mass in the same order as in the procession to the altar.

6) An integral part of the celebration of the Word of God is the Responsorial Psalm and the Gospel Acclamation (Alleluia). Psalmody is designed to be sung: it loses much of its power when it is recited. Since the Responsorial Psalm at Mass is part of the Liturgy of the Word, it is appropriate that it be sung/read from the ambo. The psalm

can be sung in a variety of ways—responsorial, antiphonally, part sung/part recited—lectors should check with the musicians beforehand as to whether anything is expected of them. (GIRM 61, LM Intro 20) The Gospel Acclamation is an acclamation and it is always to be sung. If it is not sung it is omitted. (GIRM 63c)

7) In order to enable the assembly to ponder and reflect on the Word proclaimed, “haste that hinders recollection” is to be avoided. A pause should be made after stating “A reading from...” and before “The Word of the Lord”. Another period of silence should be observed after each reading before the lector moves away from the ambo; also, a brief period of silence should be allowed after the Responsorial Psalm. Catechesis on the purpose and use of silence should be given. (GIRM 56, LM Intro 28)

7) Odds & Ends

-I think that lectors should sit in the sanctuary after the entrance procession, but then sit with their family for the rest of the Mass. If you are alone at Mass, you can remain in the sanctuary.

-In most cases the psalm will be sung in its entirety which is proper. You can have a seat in the sanctuary as it is being sung.

GENERAL THOUGHTS

1) Don't add words such as: “The first reading...” or “the responsorial Psalm is”.

2) Ministers of the Word should not add or change any words of the texts.

3) The lector should never do anything to draw attention to her/himself at any time. Avoid anything that might distract from the proclaimed Word.

4) Clothing should be appropriate for the occasion, modest and in keeping with the dignity of the ministry.

5) The Word should not to be proclaimed from a missalette or participation aid (LM Intro 37)

6) The use of two lectors -one for each reading- is encouraged, (GIRM 109, LM Intro 52)

7) The Sunday lectionary is on a 3 year cycle

8) The first reading and the Psalm are chosen to be thematic with the gospel. The second reading is on its own cycle from a particular book of the New Testament outside of the gospels or Acts.

9) The first reading except during the Easter Season is always from the Old Testament. During the Easter Season the first reading is from the Acts of the Apostles.