



## **MINISTRY OF PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD**

*“Go ye into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.” Mark 16:15*



## Introduction:

“The celebration of Mass, as the action of Christ and of the People of God arrayed hierarchically, is the centre of the whole of Christian life for the Church both universal and local, as well as for each of the faithful individually” (*The General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (GIRM 16) . (GIRM 18) sets clearly before us the purpose of liturgy committees - participation in the liturgy by all the baptised.

*...with due regard for the nature and particular circumstances of each liturgical assembly the entire celebration is arranged in such a way that it leads to a conscious, active, and full participation of the faithful both in body and mind... to which the Christian people have a right and duty by reason of their Baptism.*

## The Role of Liturgical Ministers

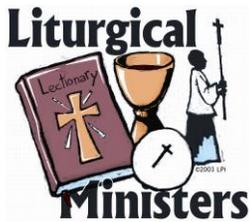
Liturgy is made up of several elements: gathering, remembering, sharing a meal, going forth. Each of these elements requires the service of individuals, in addition to the full participation of the whole assembly, to help make them happen. Certain members of the community share their gifts by serving in specific ministries. They do so for the sake of the community and to give glory to God.

Each of us is called to contribute to our common prayer. We respond to that call by truly celebrating the mass as part of the assembly. We respond as well by discerning our gifts and offering to serve as a liturgical minister.

### What are the general qualities of liturgical ministers?

First and foremost they are humble servants. They put their gifts at the disposal of others for the sake of the community and for the glory of God. They take their responsibility seriously. They know when they are scheduled and they arrive early on that day, or they find themselves a reliable replacement.

They learn how to perform their ministry, either by attending a training session or by careful study of their written instruction. They are open to positive feedback about how they perform their task, and they adapt easily when instructions change. They are eager to learn more about their ministry and willing to take part in ongoing training. They are careful in their ministry never to attract undue attention to themselves. *All liturgical ministers understand their role as members of the gathered assembly. They are models of good participation and communicate an attitude of prayer throughout the liturgy.*



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## **Ministry of Proclamation of the Word (Readers or Lectors)**

The Lector is instituted to proclaim the readings from the Sacred Scripture, with the exception of the Gospel. He may also announce the intentions for the Universal Prayer and, in the absence of a psalmist, recite the Psalm between the readings.

In the celebration of the Eucharist, the lector has his own proper function which he himself must carry out. (GIRM 99)

The proclamation of the Word of God is truly a ministry in the Church. Lectors bring the living Word of God to the liturgical assembly. In and through them God speaks to the gathered faithful. The ministry of the Word, therefore, is treated seriously and with great dignity.

Proclaimers of the Word are competent readers who love the Word of God and make it come alive in the liturgy. They know that the assembly come to the Eucharist to hear sacred scripture and to be inspired by it. They are aware that they must proclaim effectively if God's Word is to be heard and if people are to understand the homily. Above all they know it is God himself who speaks when they proclaim.

Ministers of proclamation take every opportunity to increase their knowledge of the Bible. They try to make the reading of scripture a part of their own lives. They continue learning about their ministry by attending workshops.

Proclaimers of the Word strive constantly for authenticity in their proclamation. They seek to become transparent so that we remember the Word and not the minister. They pray and prepare well so as to understand the meaning of the text for themselves. They then can proclaim it with conviction for the assembly.

This page was taken from the Archdiocese of St. Boniface Liturgy resources.

*In the beginning, God spoke - and the universe was created!*

*God's word came to Abraham and formed the people of God.*

*God's word came to Moses through the burning bush,  
and the Israelites were liberated from slavery.*

*God's word came to prophets through the ages who spoke in God's name  
and called people back to faithfulness.*

*In the fullness of time, God spoke through Jesus Christ,  
the Word made flesh.*

*After the death and resurrection of Jesus,  
the word of God was spread throughout the world,  
first by the apostles and then by Christian witnesses.*

*Now the word of God is entrusted to us.*

*By baptism we are called to share this word with others.*

*Commissioned to proclaim this word in our church's worship,  
we endeavor to strengthen the faith of believers  
and enable them to spread the word of God more effectively  
wherever they live, work and play.*

*Our calling is an exalted one.  
With this in mind, we pray, read and explore  
the meaning of the words we read during the liturgy  
so that we may proclaim more effectively  
to our community, the people of God.*

*We are Lectors.*





The following tips are taken from Denise C. Thompson's *Liturgy of the Word*  
Lector Training & Development <http://www.greatlectors.com/proclaimingtips.html>

## LECTOR TIPS

### Mindset

In order to put yourself in the perfect frame of mind, you should arrive at the church early and leave the entire outside world behind you. Your cares, your problems, aspirations, anxieties, plans, hobbies, hopes, and what's for dinner - all must stay outside. Find a quiet spot and sit or kneel and pray to the Lord whatever is in your heart. You might ask that He make you a worthy vessel for proclaiming His message and that His people hear His voice and not yours. Ask the Holy Spirit to be with you, that His flame be bright in your heart as you joyfully proclaim His Word.

### Body Language

The moment you step forward you are sending signals to your listeners. Are you reverent, dignified and sincere or hurried and anxious or cavalier? These signals come from how you carry yourself and what you wear.

You should adopt a good posture, if physically able to do so, and walk with hands folded or kept naturally at your side. Walk at a reverent pace, slower than usual. Do not bounce, swagger or sashay and above all, do not run or appear hurried. One can usually tell how a reading will go based on the lector's approach to the ambo (lectern). Those who race to the ambo will generally race through their reading. On the other hand, those who approach in a focused, deliberate manner will also proclaim that way.

### Posture

Upon reaching the ambo stand squarely behind it. Stand on two feet, not one. Place your hands lightly on the lectionary or ambo or you may hold the book if you feel comfortable doing so. Most lectors prefer to keep the lectionary on the ambo when proclaiming but it makes a lovely presentation when held. It is as if you are caressing and embracing God's Word just as He caresses and embraces us continually throughout scripture.

Again, always strive to appear dignified, not nervous or casual. Do not put your hands anywhere other than on the lectionary or ambo or comfortably at your sides. Do not put your hands in your pockets, on your hips, behind your back or in folded arms. These gestures are cavalier, uninviting and distracting. Above all, do not use your hands at any point during the reading. It is theatrical, inappropriate and will annoy your listeners.

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## **Announcement Line**

The lead-in or announcement line tells the listeners from whom or from where the reading comes, i.e. the prophet Isaiah or the Book of Psalms. Proclaim the announcement line loudly and clearly. You will get the assembly's attention if you start out in a positive, determined manner. Also, make sure your mind is one step ahead of your mouth. Flub the announcement line and you're likely to mentally kick yourself throughout the rest of the reading. Why? Because quite often as goes the beginning, so goes the rest of the reading.

And always pause for a few healthy seconds after the line is read. This will give the assembly a chance to place the prophet, era or Biblical location in their minds and ready them to actively listen to the passage.

## **Eye Contact**

You may be doing everything else right - proper pace, effective pausing, speaking in a clear, engaging manner and so on, but if you do not look at your listeners, you will not connect with them. Anyone can stick his nose in a book and read, knees knocking together or not, but only those with the ability to look their assembly right in the eye will exude confidence and win credibility for the message they so urgently wish to embed.

Now let's consider some of the best times to look directly at your assembly:

- when you first get to the ambo
- when you proclaim the announcement line
- at the end of a sentence
- during key words or phrases
- when changing gears (e.g. changes in mood, time, place, character, relationship, etc.)
- just before the closing line (i.e. "The Word of the Lord" or "The Gospel of the Lord")
- during and after the closing line.

## **Pronunciation**

There are basic pronunciation guides available that phonetically spell out the pronunciations of the Biblical names of people and places. For instance, Barrabus may be listed as buh-RAB-us or Capernaum as kuh-PER-num. If your parish does not have a pronunciation guide, contact Liturgy Training Publications in Chicago, IL.

Also, the lector workbook provides guidelines for pronunciation for many, though not all, historical names and places in the readings. Please consult at least one of these sources as you prepare your reading and practice so you feel comfortable with the pronunciation. The congregation will appreciate your smooth handling of difficult words. On the other hand, lack of preparation is never as obvious as the lector who comes to a difficult word, stops and then stumbles through it. This can be easily avoided with careful attention to detail in advance and practice!

## **Enunciation**

Enunciation is different from pronunciation. The latter involves using the tongue, lips and teeth to phonetically make the correct sounds of a word. Enunciation means that the speaker clearly articulates all the sounds that make up the word. For instance, a common mistake in enunciation is to drop the "d" or "t" sound from the end of a word. This is a dangerous practice in proclaiming because very often, it is precisely the inclusion of the "d" or "t" that separates one word from another. For instance, "mend" has a totally different meaning than "men". Likewise "sent" without a clearly enunciated "t" might be interpreted by listeners as "sin".

## **Rate**

What do you think are the two biggest complaints about lectors' performance? You probably guessed at least one of them if not both. One is rate and the other is volume, i.e. "They read too fast" and "I can't hear them."

Rate refers to how quickly or slowly one speaks. (It does not mean how much time one takes between thoughts or phrases; that's pausing.)

The best rate for a particular passage depends on the content of the reading but as a general rule, lectors should proclaim at one-half their normal speaking voice. That's right, one-half.

Slowing down accomplishes several things. First of all, people do not listen as fast as you may speak. People need time to digest what you are saying to them. Unless you slow down, they may not be able to keep up and will simply tune out. At that point, you've lost them and all that practice and preparation would have been for naught.

Secondly, slowing down helps achieve clearer pronunciation and enunciation.

Very importantly, slowing down brings an added dimension of power to the reading. Try it and see the difference for yourself.

## **Volume**

The other of the two most common criticisms that listeners have of lectors is they cannot be heard. (The other one is reading too fast.) Sometimes, the problem is equipment-related but more often than not, it has to do with the lector's ability to project, voice quality and/or their use of the microphone. Aim to be heard by those at the back.

Not all lectors or aspiring proclaimers have the ability to create effective volume. Some have small or naturally soft voices; others do not breathe correctly and still others may not realize that the volume they hear in their own voice at the ambo is not nearly as loud beyond the first few pews as they may think.

In addition, elements throughout the worship space will absorb sound from carpeting to winter coats.

The key to projecting effectively is

1. proper breathing
2. a natural gift of volume
3. correct microphone usage
4. confidence

Suggestion: if you are not sure about your volume you may want to pre-arrange with someone who can give you a cue/signal if you are not speaking loud enough so that you can make necessary adjustments to your voice volume or microphone.

## **Microphone Usage**

St. Emile microphone works well within 6" window in front of the lector. It is crucial to find just the right spot or zone that will enable you to maximize your volume without creating explosive or popping sounds. These distracting and unwelcome noises occur most often on "p" and "t" sounds and are created by speaking too closely to the head of the microphone. The rush of air that comes from your mouth on these consonants (and others as well) generates a strong force of air that is magnified unpleasantly through the sensitive head of the microphone.

This can be easily avoided by positioning the microphone head a little below (chin level) so the rush of air goes above the head. You can also stand just to the right or left of the head or stand a little back but not too far or your voice may fade out.

Chin level is preferred to nose level because the microphone may block the view of your face and facial expressions are an important component of proclaiming, but ultimately, you have to go with the mike position that best projects your voice.

Try to direct the microphone away from the speaker high up behind you if you get feedback. Most often, it is feedback coming from the choir side so do not panic.

## **Pausing**

Silence is golden, at least in the right spots, and the proper use of pausing is essential to effective proclaiming. This is the one tool that eludes many a lector.

Let's consider some obvious places to use the pause:

- to provide a segue when the reading is changing direction
- to allow listeners to absorb an important point
- to provide space between multiple thoughts in the same sentence

- to take a breath
- before and after quotes to offset the quote from the character or narrator
- after the announcement line "A Reading from."
- before the closing line, "The Word of the Lord"

Please keep in mind that pauses used too frequently within a sentence or paragraph will create a choppy effect. Strive for smoothness and fluidity. Pauses that interrupt a phrase or grouping of words in the wrong places can change the meaning or intended feeling.

### ***"The Word of the Lord"***

The closing line is actually the most important line in every reading because it reminds us that God is speaking directly to us. He may be using a human voice but the words and the message are His. Take care with this line. Speak it loudly and clearly. Please do not hurry through it or mutter it as an afterthought. As with the announcement line, separate it from the body of the reading with a strong, healthy pause. three to four seconds. Look the assembly in the eye when you proclaim the ending; do not rush away. Give its significance time to sink in. After all, this message that you proclaimed is directly from God. It should leave them with a sense of awe.

### **Lector Dress**

Ask yourself this question and be honest. How should you dress in the house of the King of Kings?

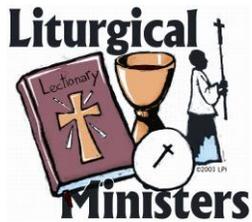
If you went to Buckingham Palace or the White House, what would you wear? Why should you dress with any less respect for the only King that matters?

Also, what you wear sends signals to the assembly about how seriously you take your ministry. Dress how you proclaim - with dignity and respect. Never wear anything that will detract from the scripture. The focus must always be on the reading, not the reader.

### **Action Words**

When proclaiming, it should always be your goal to bring the Word to life. In order to do this, you should among other things, take advantage of action words. Action words have inherent life because people can generally envision the actions indicated. However, action words will remain dormant if you gloss over them, mumble or rush past them. Let's give them the attention they deserve.

Some words may require increased energy or force, others gentility or quietness; some may be drawn out, others hastened. Remember, action words are verbs (but not all verbs are action words and not all verbs are worthy of emphasis). Try to find those words that will help paint a picture for your readers. Underline the key words and consider how you might emphasize them to help bring the passage to life. Be careful though not to overreach in your attempt to add color. Otherwise, you may appear theatrical or insincere and that would be



distracting for the listener. Also, be selective in what you emphasize; if you choose everything to stress, the result is that nothing is stressed.

## **Listener Appreciation**

Do not underestimate the congregation's appreciation of the lector who thoroughly and meticulously prepares his or her reading. They know that you have done this for them and they will be glad in their hearts though they may not actually tell you or thank you personally. The Lord knows, however, and He will smile down upon you.

### **Additional Resource:**

Canadian Edition: "Workbook for Lectors, Gospel Readers, and Proclaimers of the Word", published yearly by LTP (Liturgy Training Publications).

<http://nlo.cccb.ca/index.php/documents/eucharist>

*PRAYER*

*Dear Lord,*

*Make me an instrument of your peace*

*Through my tongue, heart, and love for your word*

*Help me to convey your word*

*so that your message can be heard*

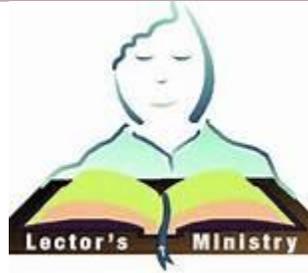
*and felt by your people.*

*Help me to do your will*

*through the gift of speech*

*that you have given me.*





**SCHEDULING:**

- The schedule for all ministries will be posted on the bulletin board at the entrance of the church covering two months. This will be sent out to you by e-mail if you have an e-mail. We encourage you to write down your schedule if possible to reduce our printing costs. \*\*For the Lectors, please advise the Liturgical Ministries Co- Chairs (Zorina at 431-997-3882 or [zpm\\_chang@yahoo.com](mailto:zpm_chang@yahoo.com) OR Joan Hutlet 204-261-1374 or joanhh@mymts.net) if you are also willing to do the bread and/or wine.

In the Schedule: You will continue to see the following titles:

Lector 1: The Lector who will do the First Reading and Psalm (if no Music Ministry).

Lector 2: The Lector who will do the Second Reading. Will also do the General Intercession if no Deacon present.

Bread 1 and Bread 2 = Eucharistic Ministers for the Body of Christ

Cup 1 and Cup 2 = Eucharistic Ministers for the Blood of Christ

- 5 weeks before the start of two month schedule, an e-mail will be sent out to ask for any dates you are not available. There will be an individual responsible for scheduling for each Mass.

The following people have volunteered to do the scheduling  
Saturday 5 pm

Nora Kalaw  
norakalaw@gmail.com phone: 204-254-2180

Sunday 9 am and 11 am Mass-

Zorina Marzan Chang  
zpm\_chang@yahoo.com phone: 431-997-3882

- **IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER** about scheduling:
  - Deadline for notifying your respective schedulers are due no later than the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of the month before the two month schedule.
  - Notify appropriate schedulers for the mass you attend- ie. If you attend more than one mass, specify which one.
  - Cc your email to Zorina ([zpm\\_chang@yahoo.com](mailto:zpm_chang@yahoo.com))- who does the final review of all schedules to minimize last minute changes once schedule is distributed.
  - It is your responsibility to find a replacement if you cannot make your scheduled time. A list of Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers, and phone numbers will be provided (again by e-mail or hard copy for those who do not have an e-mail will be made available)



- Please notify the two (2) aforementioned schedulers (Nora and Zorina) of any switches, replacements if there is time. It is advisable to make the appropriate changes in the master schedule that is posted on the bulletin board. Volunteer replacement's name should be written on the schedule to avoid confusion.
- Combined Schedule with Liturgical Hosting is posted on the bulletin 2 weeks in advance as well as on the Bulletin board.
- A sign-up sheet for the special masses will be placed at the entrance, as well as an e-mail or phone call will be made for lectors for the special days, ie. Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Christmas...etc.

### **PREPARATION:**

- Please refer to this handout, and the Workbook for all other information on being a lector. A "Workbook for Lectors, Gospel Readers, and Proclaimers of the Word" will be available to each lector only one week before their scheduled service. We have only 6 Workbooks to share. Thus, 2 Workbooks to be shared for each Mass (Saturday 5 pm, Sunday 9 am, and Sunday 11 am), one for 1<sup>st</sup> Lector and one for 2<sup>nd</sup> Lector. The books will be placed in the Sacristy. (the room beside the Sanctuary). A sign out and in sheet will be available for the workbooks. Please make sure that the sheet is signed each time the book is removed and returned.
- The workbooks need to be returned in the Sacristy after your scheduled Mass to be available for the one scheduled to read the following week.

### **Preparation for Reading**

The Word of God is not merely read during the liturgy. It is proclaimed. Proclaiming the Word of God can be a powerfully prayerful experience for you — one that you share with the entire assembly. The key to effective proclamation lies in understanding the meaning, the lesson, which is contained within the words you are about to read.

Spend some time in prayer and contemplation during the week before you will be reading. Familiarize yourself with all three readings, so that you understand the tone and the flow of the entire Liturgy of the Word for that Sunday. Review the commentaries in the "Workbook for Lectors, Gospel Readers, and Proclaimers of the Word" which will help you understand something about the purpose of the author and the historical setting out of which the passage arises.

Once you have an understanding of the content of the reading, begin to consider the tone and the pace at which it should be read. Read through the reading several times aloud. Review any words that you find difficult to pronounce. The "Workbook for Lectors, Gospel Readers, and Proclaimers of the Word", include pronunciation guide. Become so familiar with the reading that it would appear you know it almost by heart. This will let you feel comfortable enough to make eye contact with the assembly.



## Before Mass

- Please plan to arrive at least 10 minutes early in order to prepare yourself and check to see if there are any changes or special circumstances.
- All Ministers are to put a check (✓) mark beside their name on the schedule on bulletin board when they arrive. This will help identify if there is need for replacement Ministers before the start of mass.
- **Everyone is to meet in the Sacristy (the room beside the Sanctuary).**
- If both Lectors are the same height, you may choose to adjust the microphone at the ambo.
- Sunday Missal or “Workbook for Lectors” will help identify what the readings are (good to know just in case the ribbon marker is not at the right place). This is also why it is important to arrive early- to make sure that you will be reading the right passages
- If there are multiple options for the readings check with the celebrant to see if he has a preference as to which readings should be used or if a shorter or longer form should be proclaimed.

## NOTE:

- **“The Book of Gospel”** will be located in the Sacristy.
- **The Lectionary** will be kept inside the Sacristy (beside the copies of “Workbook for Lectors”).

## INTRODUCTORY RITES

- **Entrance Procession:** Will always start from the Sacristy

**According to the 2002 GIRM, the Book of the Gospels is carried in procession, but not the lectionary. It is to be at the ambo at the start of Mass.**

- **If there is a deacon** he should carry the Book of the Gospels. This is clear from the 2002 General Introduction to the Roman Missal (GIRM) which can be accessed from [romanrite.com/girm.html](http://romanrite.com/girm.html) 10 :
- GIRM #194-195: Provides that Lectors may carry the Book of Gospels in the procession and place it on the altar when no deacon is present. In coming to the altar, when no deacon is present, the lector, wearing approved attire, may carry the *Book of the Gospels*, which is to be slightly elevated. In that case, the lector walks in front of the priest but otherwise along with the other ministers.
- **Upon reaching the altar**, the lector makes a profound bow with the others. If the lector is carrying the Book of the Gospels, the lector does not bow but goes around to the back of the altar and places the Book of the Gospels on the center of the altar.

**Seat:** Left, first pew facing the altar (along the centre aisle, unless someone is already seated there. Then select a seat closest and easiest to get to and from the front for the Readings.)

**NOTE:**

**Bowing:**

- The one carrying “The Book of Gospel” do not have to bow during Entrance Procession.
- Bow before the Altar before going up (always go up through the centre) for the readings and after going back down centre.
- **General RULE**-Bow before the Altar whenever you go by the centre such as when you are seated along the centre aisle. **Always go up and down the centre regardless of where you sit (i.e. even if you sit along the side aisle, always make your way to the centre).**

NOTE: No longer need to bow at the ambo before and after reading passage.

**Pauses:**

- After arriving at the ambo, the lector should wait for stillness before announcing the passage and pause slightly before the passage is proclaimed.
- When the passage is completed, pause again and make eye contact before announcing “The Word of the Lord”.
- If Responsorial Psalm is led by the Lector following the First Reading, pause for about 10 seconds before starting the Psalm.

**First reading Lector:**

- Before mass starts, make sure that the Lectionary is on the ambo- open at appropriate reading for the mass. NOTE: **No longer carried at the Entrance Procession.**
- Also check to see if there is Music Ministry for the Mass. If there is none, the Responsorial Psalm will be read by the First Lector .
- If there is NO Deacon, The Book of Gospel is carried by Lector 1 (unless not able), walks before the Priest, when reaches the altar does not bow, goes around the back of the altar and places the book of Gospels on the centre of the altar.
- If Deacon is present, walks alongside other minister before the Deacon, when reaches the altar makes a profound bow with the other ministers.
- Does First Reading. NOTE: Do not say “The first reading”...you start by saying, “A Reading from/according to....”
- If doing the Responsorial Psalm, start by saying: “response is”, and each time response is indicated, raise right hand as cue for congregation to respond.
- After doing the reading, place the ribbon marker over the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading. Go down the centre then bow before the altar. If doing the Psalm, go down the centre, then bow together with Lector 2.

NOTE: “The Book of Gospel” nor Lectionary is not carried in the recessional.

- Following the Blessing and Dismissal, walks the recessional beside Lector 2

**Second Reading Lector:**

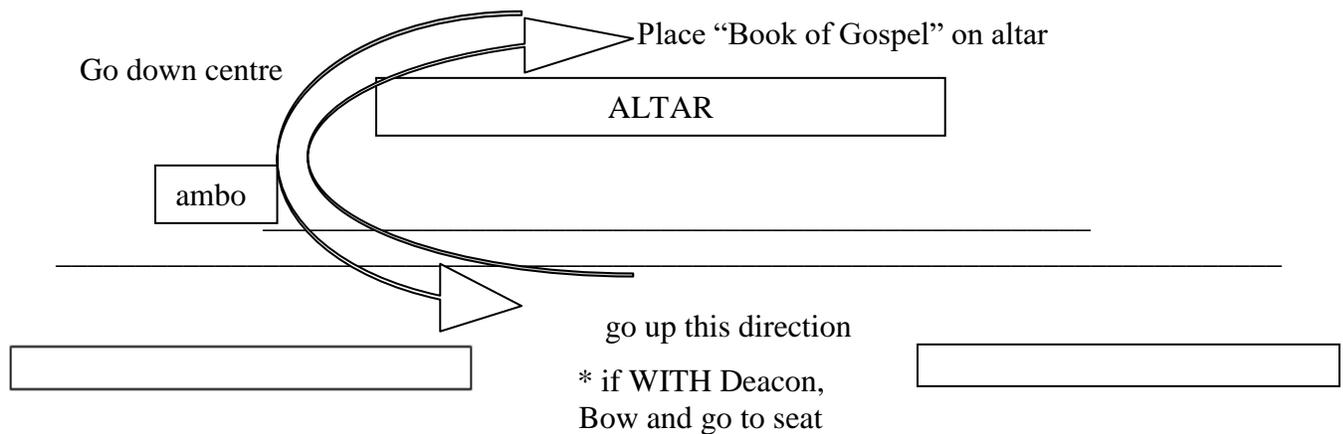
- An extra copy of the Intentions for “The Prayer of the Faithful” will be found in the Sacristy with the Lectionary. The Second Reader needs to make sure that there is a copy on the ambo before mass.

- If there is no Deacon, the Intentions for “The Prayer of the Faithful” is read by the second Lector.
- If no Deacon, carries (holding up) “The Book of Gospel” during the Entrance Procession only if Lector 1 not able.
- If Deacon present, and not carrying “The Book of Gospel” walks side by side with Lector 1.
- Proceed to designated seat for Lectors- left, first pew facing the altar.
- Go up to the ambo for Second Reading following Responsorial Psalm. If Lector 1 does the Psalm, stand up to the centre aisle as Lector 1 descend from the Sanctuary. Wait until Lector 1 is beside you and then bow together before going up the centre.
- Deos 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: NOTE: Do not say “The 2<sup>nd</sup> reading”...you start by saying, “A Reading from/according to...”
- After doing the reading close the Lectionary and move to the side of the ambo allowing space for “The Book of Gospel” placement. Go down the centre then bow before the altar.
- If no Deacon, will go up the ambo for General Intercession following “Profession of Faith”.
- Following “General Intercession” stay by the ambo until the Celebrant is done with the closing prayer. Go down the centre then bow before the altar.

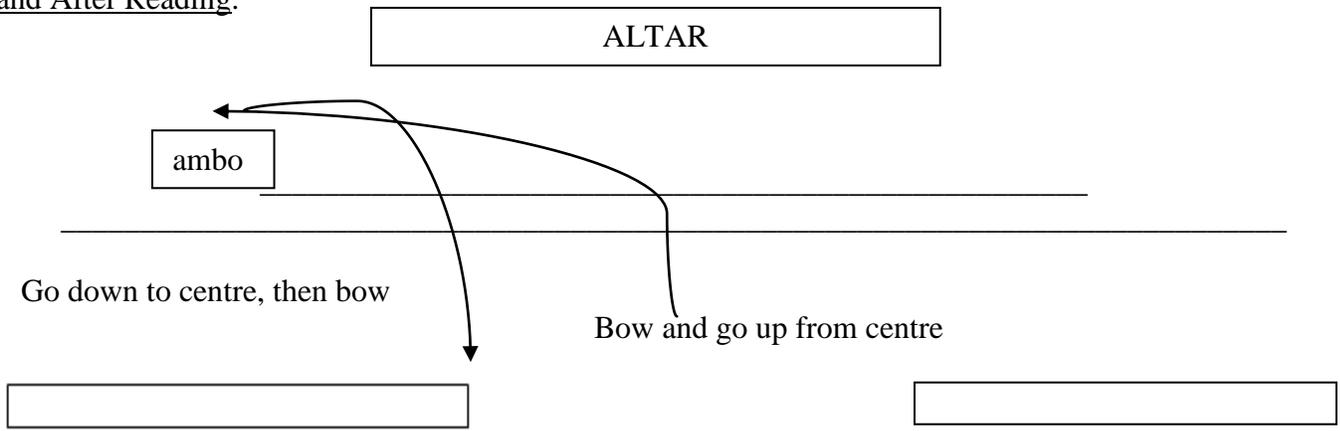
**NOTE: “The Book of Gospel” nor Lectionary is not carried in the recessional.**

- Following the Blessing and Dismissal, walks the recessional beside Lector 1

Entrance Procession:

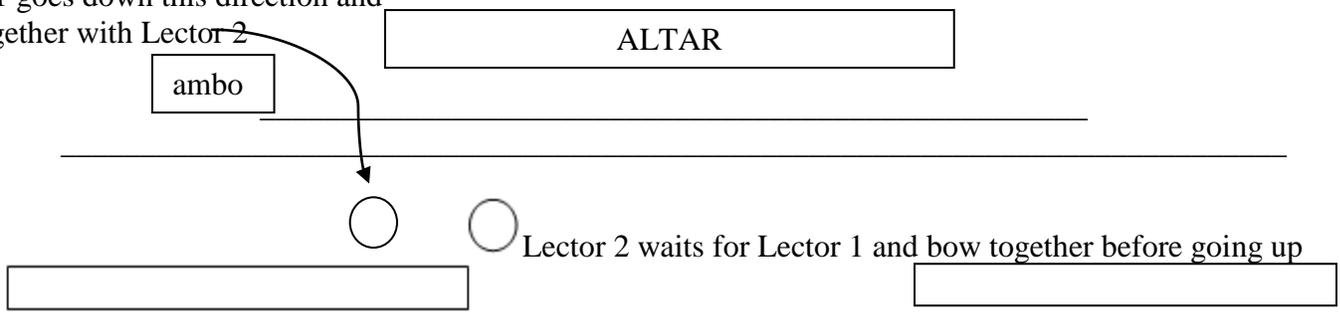


Before and After Reading:



Lector 1 and 2 after Lector 1 does the Psalm

Lector 1 goes down this direction and bow together with Lector 2



NOTE: If only one Lector available- the Lector will do both readings.

*Thank you, for choosing to share your gifts with your parish community of St. Emile.*