


Our Lady, Star of the Sea Catholic Church

General Guidelines for Lectors and Extraordinary Ministers of Communion:

To be called to ministry as a Lector or an Extraordinary Minister of Communion (EMC) is a privilege for which our Catholic faith, in the spirit of Vatican II, has the most considerate regard. Lectors and Extraordinary Ministers of Communion are fully initiated (have received the Sacrament of Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation) practicing Catholics who should avail themselves the Sacrament of Reconciliation on a regular basis. Ministers must be in a state of grace in order to serve at Mass. In addition, they must be single, or married through the Catholic Church, in order to serve.

1. Lectors are expected to be prepared for their ministry. Preparation should be spiritual, scriptural, and practical. Spiritual preparation involves prayer over the text and reflection on its message. Scriptural preparation involves understanding the text. Practical preparation involves mastering difficult words, learning the right pronunciations, and practicing delivery of the text aloud.
2. All ministers must dress modestly and decently. Women should be careful with the top of dresses/blouses and the length of dresses/skirts. Please do not wear stilettos, sandals, or flip-flops. Do not wear shorts. Men are encouraged to wear dress-shirt with dress-pants. It is preferable to avoid wearing tight jeans; slacks are more appropriate. Shoes are to be appropriate for the ministry. Overall, a neat and professional appearance is most desirable for all ministers.
3. Ministers must report to the sacristy no less than 15 minutes prior to start of Mass. Once they report to the Mass Coordinator, they may go and sit at the reserved pews. No ministers (aside from the Sacristan or other approved ministers) should stay in the sacristy. When anticipating an absence, it is the responsibility of the minister (not the Mass Coordinator) to find an eligible replacement with plenty of time before the assigned date and time of presentation. If you have not reported to the sacristy at least 15 minutes prior to Mass, the Mass Coordinator may replace you with another eligible minister. If you fail to report to scheduled service (or fail to send an eligible replacement on your behalf) 3 times, you may be removed from rotation.
4. As a sign of reverence, ministers should genuflect (one-knee) when walking in front of the Blessed Sacrament, or when crossing from one side of the chapel to the other. This is to be observed outside of Mass. If Mass has already begun then the ministers should bow (bending of upper body) when walking in front of the Altar, or when crossing from one side of the chapel to the other.
5. In a Mass without a deacon, the first lector takes part in the entrance procession, solemnly carrying the Book of Gospels slightly elevated, making a head-bow upon reaching the sanctuary, then proceeding to place the Book of the Gospels upon the altar. When placing

the book on the altar do not go around the altar, but rather approach the altar directly from the front. The Lector then proceeds to his/her seat (do not walk backwards!), making a profound bow to the Altar at the foot of the sanctuary. The Book of Gospels does not go out in recession.

6. The other Lectors process behind the Book of Gospels, and upon reaching the foot of the sanctuary, they make a profound bow, and proceed to their seats.
7. The First Lector goes to the ambo, and after finishing, meets the Psalmist/Second Lector at the foot of the sanctuary. Together, they make a profound bow, and then they proceed to their respective places (ambo or seat).
8. Lectors begin to read by saying, "A reading from the Book of Exodus (etc.)" as written in the Lectionary. It is inappropriate to add words such as "The first reading..."
9. If the Responsorial Psalm is recited, lectors should begin the recitation with the antiphon. Announcing "Responsorial Psalm" is unnecessary.
10. The title of the reading such as "A reading from the Book of Exodus" and the ending, "The Word of the Lord", should be distinguished from the reading itself. Lectors do this by observing a brief pause (about three seconds) after the former and before the latter phrase. The same tone of proclamation should be maintained for "The Word of The Lord".
11. Do not lift the Lectionary off the ambo while saying "The Word of the Lord". 
12. If you read the verse before the Gospel, and the second part of the Alleluia is being sung, leave the ambo quickly to allow the Priest time to access the space for the proclamation of the Gospel.
13. Immediately after finishing the Creed, the lector must access the ambo to read the Prayers of the Faithful in such a way that the end of the Creed will find him/her ready, with the book open at the right page.
14. At the Agnus Dei, the Extraordinary Ministers of Communion access the sanctuary, always anticipating the next parts of the Mass.
15. It would be most desirable to have a designated EMC to attend the sick, specifically. However, this is to be decided by the Celebrant before Mass.
16. When distributing Communion, the Minister looks to the eyes of the recipient, slightly elevates the Eucharist and says, "The Body of Christ" in an audible manner. Do not lift the Eucharist too high and do not raise your voice too loudly, to maintain focus on the Communion. Do not use people's names as you are offering Communion.
17. If there is an "accident" and the Body and/or Blood of Christ falls on the ground or on the communicant, please purify the area immediately with a purificator. If the Blood has been

spilled and it is too much to clean with a single purificator, the EMC must protect the area and call for assistance. It might be necessary to distribute the Precious Blood from a different place. Please act with prudence in such situations.

18. It would be desirable that the members of the Knights of Columbus serve, discretely, as “guards”. This is desired in order to watch and ensure that parishioners consume the Eucharist. The communicants should not proceed to their pews still carrying the Eucharist in their hands. They must consume the Eucharist before getting past the “guards”.
19. You may remind people of the proper way of receiving Communion: it is either on the tongue, or on the left hand on top of the right.
20. Avoid tracing the sign of the Cross with the finger on the forehead of the parishioners seeking a blessing. It is not sanitary to rub the finger on someone’s forehead and then using that same finger to touch and distribute the Eucharist. Just hold the hand closely to their head, or touch their head, very slightly, while saying, “may God bless you, in the name of the F, the S, and the HS. Amen.”
21. At the cleansing of the sacred vessels, the Celebrant remains at the altar, purifying the main chalice. EMCs could do the same in the sacristy, after proper training. Sacred vessels (chalices and ciboria) should be washed with clean water in the sacrarium, not in the sink (the Celebrant’s chalice should never be washed without the prior consent of the celebrant himself). Only then, can these be brought to the sink and washed with clean water and very mild soap. Be extremely careful not to commit any blasphemy there.
22. After purification and washing of the sacred vessels, the EMCs return to their seats in a discrete manner.

Communication is of essence. Please feel free to contact the Celebrant, the Mass Coordinator or the Sacristan if the need arises for further clarification of any of these guidelines.

Be reminded that we are all called to love God with all our being, and our neighbor as ourselves. In serving God and his Church, we accomplish both commands, while we also benefit from the fullness and beauty of the Liturgy.

Let us praise the Lord...and give him thanks!