

Guide For Lectors at Sunday Mass



September 2023



*“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly,
as in all wisdom you teach
and admonish one another,
singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs
with gratitude in your hearts to God.”*



ST. GEORGE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Dear Lectors,

Thank you for your generous service to the church as proclaimers of God's Holy Word. I am grateful for your ministry and your dedication to the parish.

I have updated this guide for you so that you will be comfortable and well prepared for this ministry. Please be assured of our continued support and prayers as you undertake the ministry which is yours through baptism.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Joseph Smaldino
Director of Liturgy and Music

Preparation

Each year, the annual resource *Workbook for Lectors, Gospel Readers and Proclaimers of the Word* is given to each lector.

The workbook included many helpful tools in the margins and footnotes for each reading. Each lector should spend time during the week preparing the Sunday readings so that they are familiar with uncommon names and the general flow of the readings.

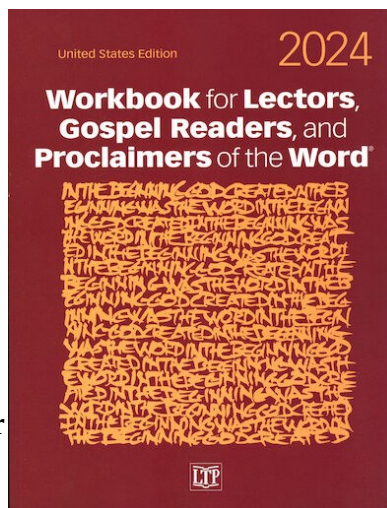
There are several online resources that are also very helpful:

www.lectorprep.org

www.netministries.org/bbasics

www.usccb.org/nab

The Prayer of the Faithful and any additional notes as needed will be e-mailed on Thursdays to those who are scheduled.



Dress

The Eucharist is a sacred and special meal. When we come to Mass, the way we dress should show that we are the Body of Christ and that we are going to a special banquet.

Liturgical ministers play a public role at Mass and should set an example to the rest of the parishioners. All liturgical ministers are asked to dress accordingly whenever they come to Mass, particularly when they are assigned to serve. As a rule of thumb, men should wear dress slacks, shirt with a tie and a jacket. For ladies, a dress with sleeves, a blouse with sleeves and knee length skirt or dress slacks, or a pants suit are appropriate. Dress shoes should be worn by both ladies and men, however, ladies may wear dress sandals are in the summer months.

Scheduling

Scheduling is handled using a software system entitled Ministry Schedule Pro. Ministers using this scheduling website can directly input their unavailable dates, update their Mass preferences, and keep their contact



MINISTRY SCHEDULER PRO
Volunteer Scheduling and Service Planning

information current. The address of the website is:

<https://secure.rotundasoftware.com/29/msp/web-terminal/home?user=SGCC>

It is accessible through the scheduling website as well as St. George's website: www.st-george.org under the "Liturgy" tab on the homepage. Ministers may also download the MSP mobile app. The app is compatible for an iOS (Apple product) or Android device. After downloading, you'll need the following Organization ID to sign in: **SGCC**, as well as your username and password. The schedule, once finalized, will be emailed out. It is important to keep your information as up-to-date as possible so there are no errors in scheduling. Reminder e-mails are sent out two-three days before the assigned Mass.

Keeping Assignments

Once the liturgical ministers' schedule is completed and posted, it is the minister's responsibility to contact and secure a substitute if there is a scheduling conflict. This can be done by doing a "sub request" through the scheduling website. Each lector is responsible to follow up to make sure someone has volunteered. If a lector has an emergency and cannot get a replacement, he/she should call the other assigned lector to let them know.

Only if a substitute cannot be found should the same lector proclaim both readings. Lectors should always be prepared to serve at a liturgy if help is needed at the last minute.

Lectors who did not sign in or who missed an assignment will probably receive a friendly phone call or e-mail from the parish office. If anyone misses an assignment, it would be very helpful if they called the office or e-mailed first thing Monday morning. That would eliminate someone from the parish office having to call you.

Mistakes That May Occur

We are human beings and mistakes do happen. If a word or phrase is mispronounced or stumbled on, the situation should be handled with reverence and common sense. The lector should never apologize or say, "I'm sorry" at the microphone as doing so will draw attention to the fact that a mistake was made.

Before Mass Begins

Lectors should arrive at least fifteen minutes before the scheduled start of Mass to sign the sign-in book in the Ministers' Sacristy, to go over your reading in the Lectionary and that the Lectionary is marked to the readings for the Mass of the day, and review the Prayer of the Faithful. Once preparation are complete, place the Lectionary and binder on the ambo. Coats and purses should be left with family members or locked in the trunk of the car. Join the other ministers back in the Ministers' Sacristy for a prayer before Mass. All then will go to their places; lectors will line up as part of the Opening Procession.



Who Carries the Book of the Gospels?

It is the function of the deacon to carry the Book of the Gospels in procession. In his absence, Lector 1 generally carries the book. If Lector 1 is not able to carry the book, then Lector 2 may carry it in.

The Opening Procession

In the opening procession, the lector who carries the Book of the Gospels (held high, above the head if possible), walks alone. The other lector walks before the one with the Book of the Gospels. If the deacon carries the book, then the two lectors walk side by side. Anyone not carrying the Book of the Gospels should carry a hymnal and should participate in the singing during Mass. At the foot of the Sanctuary, the Lectors move to the right of the center aisle, facing the Altar. When the presider arrives, all bow toward the altar, except for the Book of the Gospels bearer. He/she, if no deacon present, immediately goes up the steps, places the Book of the Gospels in the front/center of the altar with the binding of the book on the left. Then the lector steps back, makes a profound bow to the altar and then goes to his/her seat. If the two lectors are walking side by side, they make a profound bow upon reaching the sanctuary steps and then move to their places. Both lectors sit directly next to the ambo in the first pew which is reserved for lectors only.

The First Reading

After the Opening Prayer is completed and everyone sits, Lector 1 comes to the ambo to proclaim the first reading, slowly and carefully. Lector 1 should bow to the altar prior to approaching the ambo. At the end, the lector pauses briefly and makes the acclamation, "The Word of the Lord" with all responding, "Thanks be to God." The lector should not move back to his/her seat until the assembly makes the response.

The Responsorial Psalm

After a brief period of silence, the cantor goes to the ambo to proclaim the responsorial psalm.

The Second Reading

Following a brief pause after the responsorial psalm, Lector 2 comes to the ambo for the second reading in the same manor as Lector 1. At the end, the lector pauses briefly and makes the acclamation, "The Word of the Lord" with all responding, "Thanks be to God." After the assembly makes the response, the lector then closes the Lectionary and places it on the bottom shelf of the ambo and then returns to his/her seat.

The Prayer of the Faithful

It is the function of the deacon to announce the Prayer of the Faithful. In his absence, Lector 2 announces them. Lector 2 should approach the ambo near the end of the Creed (Profession of Faith). Start moving at the words "holy, catholic, and apostolic Church." The colored folder with the petitions is generally left on top of the ambo, however sometimes the homilist moves it to the shelf underneath. After the intercessions, the lector turns to face the presider, waits for the presider to read the concluding prayer and then returns to his/her seat. The lector does not move back to his/her seat until after the presider is finished with the concluding prayer. Please note, at some Masses, the Profession of Faith will be omitted because of particular rites and Lectors will be given advance notice prior to Mass.

The Rest of the Mass

Both lectors should remain in their seats in the front row until Mass is finished. Lectors should not move to sit with their families but should stay and participate fully in the

hymns and prayers of Mass. Lectors receive communion with the rest of the assembly and do not process out with the other ministers.

Guide to Better Proclaiming

Conviction.

- Have a good attack – begin boldly, don’t creep into it.
- You must read clearly and loudly enough to be heard easily (the microphone won’t do all the work).
- Breathe deeply so that you have breath to support your voice.
- Avoid fading out at the end of the sentence.

Using the microphone.

- Adjust the position of the microphone CAREFULLY so that your face can be seen. DO NOT MANHANDLE THE MIC!
- Find out how close you must be and be sure to project your voice.
- Speak directly into the microphone.

Watch pace and inflection.

- Read slowly – just a little slower than you think you should (large areas demand slower speaking).
- Change the pace to fit the sense of the passage.

Articulate clearly and pronounce correctly.

- Don’t swallow syllables, especially at the end of words.
- Check on pronunciation of strange names, words.
- Make your reading pleasing to hear.
- Run your finger along the text so as not to lose your place.

Keep the assembly in mind.

- Know the text well enough to look at the congregation sometimes. The center of the church is the best place to focus on; do not “scan the crowd.”

Self Reflection and Improvement

- Understand the passage yourself. For this you must read it beforehand.
- Try to get across the mood of the text: joyful, sorrowful, ordinary, exciting, dramatic, etc.
- Arrange to have yourself recorded (at an actual Mass if possible) at least once. Listen for a natural tone quality and all of the other items listed above.
- Ask someone in the congregation to give you feedback on all of the points above.
- Make adjustments for the future.

Be aware of your non-verbal language.

- Stand and move reverently.
- Carry the Book of Gospels with respect.
- Check your posture.
- Make proper eye contact.

Last, but not least, Express your faith.

- Proclamation involves interpretations with enthusiasm and a conviction which invites a true celebration of the Eucharist.
- Read as though you believe the words of scripture.
- Read so as to encourage the assembly to listen and absorb the words you are proclaiming.
- Conclude with “The word of the Lord” as an expression of your personal faith.

Who to contact for assistance:

Joe Smaldino, Director of Liturgy and Music
(225) 293-2212, ext. 211
josephs@st-george.org

Ashley Fabre, Coordinator for Lectors
(225) 333-2181
ashley.fabre@gmail.com

Prayer of Preparation for Lectors

Lord, invest me with Your Power
as I prepare to proclaim the marvel of Your Message.
I have prepared my reading,
I have tried to take within me the meaning
of what I am about to read:
help me, I ask, to read not just with my lips
but with my whole heart and soul.
Lord, make me a hollow reed so that Your Voice
will be heard by all who hear me.
Free me of excessive concern over my performance,
over the impression I create in this Sacred Action.
Convert my feelings of nervousness,
turn all my apprehensions into an energy for
proclaiming
Your Word with power and authority.
May Your Spirit fill me as it fills the Holy Words
that I am about to proclaim. Amen.

- From the lectors of Our Lady, Star of the Sea Parish, Singapore



