

THE BASILICA OF SAINTS PETER AND PAUL
OFFICE OF THE RECTOR

January 21, 2018

Dear Warren,

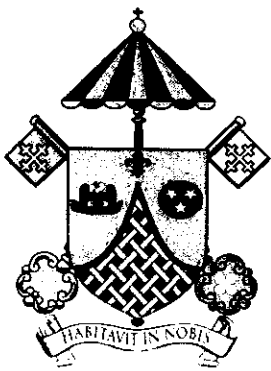
The General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #101, instructs us as follows:

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.

These are challenging words and a lofty task. However, the proclamation of the Word of God is one of the primary functions of the parish. You have been invited to share in this most important function of proclaiming the Word of God at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass; it is not to be taken lightly. The reader at Mass must be able to articulate well the sacred Scriptures of our faith in a manner in which the People of God may readily and intelligibly access the Good News being proclaimed. This means it must be loud, clear, bold, and emphatic in its proclamation. It must be read as if it were the prophet or God Himself speaking, not read as a textbook or mere prose. It is an art that must be practiced and expressed, not merely a function to be performed. It requires a certain input on the emotional level, as well as a deep understanding of what is being proclaimed. The proclamation of the Word must be the first preaching that takes place to the extent that the preacher of the Word should not have to overcome but rather merely follow up to the Word having been proclaimed.

Your job is not to appear humble or meek. Your job is to embody the boldness of the Word of God. When the Scriptures are bold, you must be bold. When the Scriptures are gentle, you must be gentle. Your job is to channel the Holy Spirit of God manifested in the inspired scriptures in the way in which they were intended to be read and heard.

Concerning amplification: If you can't be heard without using the microphone, you ought not be reading. One must learn to speak in a large space, as it is not a natural talent given to many. Ours is a unique space that is not like every other auditorium. It requires speaking skills that are developed. Don't be afraid that you haven't developed them yet. Rather, apply yourself to the training that is offered periodically, as well as your own research. It will mean using your outdoor voice even though you're indoors. It means going slowly, but not painfully slow. It is not a race. The words are



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meant to be savored, and they can't be savored if you are going too fast. The amplification of the microphone is meant to extend your projection and to make it audible to the people in the back at a comfortable level. It should never replace the volume of your voice. Amplification can only amplify something that already exists but cannot substitute for it. As you're reading you must also be listening. You must be comfortable enough with your reading that you can also listen to how the sound is coming out, and if you notice that the sound is not coming out strongly, do something about it, like move the microphone or raise your volume. Be proactive. If you don't hear yourself coming through the speakers, you are not coming through the speakers.

I look forward to working with you at the upcoming lector workshop on February 27 from 6-8pm. At this workshop, all lectors will have the opportunity to practice proclaiming the Word of God and to receive feedback on how to improve their delivery. This audition will give me an opportunity, as pastor, to formally depute you as a lector at the Basilica for the coming year. If you would like to continue serving as lector and cannot make it on February 27, we will be offering an alternate date of March 6 from 6-8pm. Please contact Cynthia Jones to arrange the time you will attend.

Thank you again for your contribution to a well celebrated and reverent liturgy here at the Basilica of Sts. Peter and Paul. I am grateful for the sacrifice of time and talent that you make for the beauty of our worship.

May God bless you.

Sincerely,

Rev. J. David Carter, JCL
Pastor and Rector

cc: Cynthia Jones, Lector Ministry Coordinator