



Ministry of the Word/Lectors-Weekends

ST CLARE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, ROSEVILLE, CA 95747

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Ministry Overview

What is a Lector? (This ministry may also be called “reader”, or “proclaimer of the Word”.)

A lector is the person who proclaims the first or second reading at Mass. This person also may lead the Prayers of the Faithful at Mass in absence of a Deacon. The duties would also include reading the pre-Mass introductory script and also the end of Mass announcements. A lector must have the qualifications listed in this booklet and have a desire to minister in this capacity at the Eucharistic liturgy. This ministry in the Church requires a person who is of excellent character, and serious about the practice of their faith. The lector must believe that Sacred Scripture is the Word of God and have a deep respect for God’s presence in that Word.

Theology

Our Christian lives begin with and thrive on the word of God. When we gather with other believers, we form the people of God. While we are there, gathered as one in this sacred place, we open our ears together so that God might speak to us. Most importantly, it is there at the Eucharist, in the presence of the community of believers, where we hear the word of God. “When the Sacred Scriptures are read in the Church, God himself speaks to his people, and Christ, present in his own word, proclaims the Gospel” GIRM#2

The lector has a tremendous responsibility. The lector’s voice needs to carry God’s voice and communicates a divine message.

Symbols in the Liturgy of the Word

- God speaks to the faith community at worship through persons, actions and objects.

To ensure the pastoral effectiveness of the Liturgy of the Word, it is important to pay full attention to the symbols of liturgy. Symbols that are integral to any celebration of the Word are the lector(s), the book(s), the ambo, and the processions. A brief word on each of these is in order.

- The lector ministers as one of the worshipping assembly and is expected to participate in the entire liturgy. Within the Mass, each lector must participate actively in the entire liturgy. It is inappropriate for a lector to participate actively only in the Liturgy of the Word. (GIRM91)
- The Word is contained in permanent, dignified and well-bound books: The Lectionary and the Book of Gospels. The readings are always proclaimed from these liturgical books. Nonbiblical readings are never to be substituted for the readings or Responsorial Psalm. (GIRM 57, 349, LM, Intro 12, 35, 36)

Symbols in the Liturgy of the Word – cont'd

The Word of God is not to be proclaimed from a missalette or participation aid, both of which are transitory and throw-away materials. (LM Intro 37)

- 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. All readings take place at the one ambo: it is improper to have two ambos. (GIRM 58, 309, LM Intro 16)

St. Clare Parish Mission Statement

We the parishioners of St. Clare Catholic Church are a joyful and welcoming Eucharistic Community, united by our faith in Jesus Christ. We are a people of many backgrounds who pray together and work together as Disciples of Christ. We use our time, talent and treasure in service to one another and all.

Ministry Member Requirements

The General Instruction of the Roman Missal states that lectors should be “truly suited to carrying out this function,” and that they should be “carefully prepared” (GIRM, 101). At St. Clare-Roseville and in the Diocese of Sacramento, for an individual to be regarded as “truly suited” for this role, it is required that the lector be:

- 14 years of age (exceptions will be made for 5 PM Sunday Youth Mass)
- A Catholic who has received first Holy Communion and Confirmation, as well as one who leads a life of faith in keeping with the function to be assumed;
- Free from any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared;
- Reverential, respectful of his/her faith, and good moral character;
- Possessed of the necessary ability and talents to proclaim the Word of God in a clear, dignified, and effective manner; and
- If married, be in a valid marriage according to the law of the Catholic Church

Ministry Structure

The structure of the Lector Ministry is composed of a Lector Ministry Chairperson/Cochairs and Lector Mass Leads. We also have a Liturgy Core Team consisting of Mass Coordinator Leads and then all the Lector volunteers.

- Lector Chairperson & Co Chair
 - The chairperson and co chair is the main point of contact for the ministry and for the Liturgy Coordinator. He/she attends liturgy committee meetings and provides leadership to the core team (holds regular meetings, manages communication, performs annual planning, budgeting, etc.) and receives input from lector Mass Leads.

Ministry Structure – cont'd

- Lectors
 - Are a member of the Lector Ministry core group and represents the needs of the volunteer lectors that serve at their Mass. Attends regular Lector team meetings and provides input into decision-making for the ministry. Promotes two-way communication between the volunteers and the chairperson.
- Mass Coordinator
 - Is the primary contact for the Lector at a specific liturgy. Provides onsite guidance to volunteers at their scheduled Mass. Ensures all assigned lectors are present and if there are no-shows, works to find a substitute or reassign readings. Also required to ensure/double check all material for the Mass are in place including Lectionary, Priests/Deacon/Commentator Binders are correct and in proper place. Ensures lectors have been logged into the MSP sign-in Kiosk. This is the responsibility of the Mass Coordinator but we can help to make sure everything is taken care of at the Mass for Lectors and Commentator.

Ministry Etiquette

No special liturgical vesture is necessary for the lector; however, lectors should be dressed in a modest manner which reflects the dignity of the Word of God. Athletic wear is not appropriate, as lectors are expected to wear their “Sunday best” when serving in the role. Please avoid sleeveless tops, t-shirts, shorts, sneakers, jeans and flip-flops. Business casual attire is appropriate.

MSP – Ministry Scheduling Pro

Ministry Scheduling Pro (MSP) is the application St. Clare uses to manage and schedule all liturgy volunteers. Every volunteer is entered into the MSP database and volunteers are expected to keep their profile information current (contact information, service preferences, unavailable to serve times, etc.).

Schedules are created with proper lead time, and volunteers are required to review their schedule and if they have a conflict, request a substitute in a timely manner. This ensures other volunteers have adequate time to sign up for the unfilled position. Reports are run to track volunteers who fail to show up at their scheduled time. If a volunteer has a pattern of no-shows, the ministry lead will have a discussion with the volunteer to gain a better understanding of the situation. If the volunteer continues to miss their scheduled service times, they may be asked to leave the ministry. MSP training is available online, and volunteers can request additional training as necessary through their Ministry Lead.

Ministry Procedures

Day of the Mass

When you enter the vestibule, be sure to sign-in the book and acknowledge (check in) in the iPad next to your name on the stand to the right of the main entrance to the church (see figure 2)



- On the day of the Mass all Lectors are responsible to make sure the other two lectors are present at the Mass. If at 10 minutes before Mass no lector has arrived, then a person should be selected from the congregation to fill the position.

Ministry Procedures

Day of the Mass

- Reader 1
 - In the absence of a Deacon, Reader 1 will process holding the Book of the Gospels. Reader 1 will read from the Old Testament shortly after the Gloria proclamation/Collect Prayer. If no cantor, then Reader 1 will also read the Responsorial Psalm.
- Reader 2
 - After the Responsorial Psalm either by a cantor or Reader 1, Reader 2 will read from the New Testament.
- Commentator
 - The commentator reads the opening script and the announcements at the end of Mass from the stand located in the choir area. If no Deacon The Prayers of the Faithful is read from Ambo.
- Lead Reader/Commentator
 - The Lead/(Commentator) is responsible for making sure the other readers are present at a particular Mass. If one or more readers are absent, it is up to the reader(s) present to either find a replacement lector from the congregation or decide which additional readings they will take on that day. All readers are responsible for bringing back the books to the sacristy at the end of the 5 p.m. Saturday Mass, 11:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. Sunday Masses.

Ministry Procedures

Day of the Mass - Choreography

Before the start of Mass, all Lectors (commentator) is responsible for checking all appropriate books at the altar and ambo. Reader 1 and 2 will remain in the vestibule to join in the pre-mass ministry prayer. The commentator will be waiting by the stand near the choir area and will proceed to read the opening script 5 minutes before start of Mass.. Reader 1 and Reader 2 will join in the procession at the beginning of Mass. As customary, these readers will walk in at the end of the procession, one on each side of the font after the altar servers and EMHC but before the Deacon/Clergy. Hands should be in a prayerful position in procession to the altar. All readers are encouraged to sit in the first two pews directly next to the ambo (left side when facing the altar). When Deacon Carl or Marinko are serving, the Book of Gospels will NOT be processed in.

- Opening Script or Introduction:
 - The opening script, Prayer for Vocations and/or any special prayer for the day will be in a special binder that also contains the Prayers of the Faithful and announcements. This script should be read clearly and with enthusiasm, proudly welcoming the St. Clare community and its visitors. Under no circumstances are you to change the written script unless instructed by a Priest, Deacon or Mass Coordinator. Failure to not follow the written script could result in suspension as a member of the lector ministry.

Lector Ministry Procedures – cont'd

Day of the Mass - Choreography

- First Reading:
 - Reader 1 should meet with the cantor of the Responsorial psalm at the bottom of the steps leading to the ambo and gently bow in unison toward the altar. If the cantor is still with the choir when time comes for the first reading, Reader 1 should not wait for the cantor and delay the Mass; instead, Reader 1 should proceed to the ambo and begin the reading. At the conclusion of the reading, Reader 1 will turn the page to the Second Reading and then the Lectionary needs to be closed and removed for the cantor before leaving the ambo. After closing the book, Lector 1 will place the Lectionary on the side of the ambo.

The cantor will sing the responsorial psalm and depart from the ambo.

- Second Reading:
 - Reader 2 will meet Reader 1 at the foot of the steps to the ambo at the conclusion of the first reading. Both will gently bow toward the Altar and Reader 2 will proceed to the chair directly behind the ambo and wait for the cantor to complete the Psalm. At the end of the Responsorial Psalm, Reader 2 immediately proceeds to the ambo and will place the Lectionary on the ambo and open and proceed to proclaim the 2nd reading. At the conclusion of the reading Reader 2 will close the Book of the Word and place it in the designated slot below the Ambo platform.

Ministry Procedures – cont'd

Day of the Mass - Choreography

- Announcements:
 - When all the Eucharistic Ministers have come down from the altar at the conclusion of the distribution of the Cup and Host and Deacon goes to the Tabernacle, the commentator should then proceed to the microphone stand located near the choir, opens the binder to the announcement page and waits and faces the tabernacle. The presiding priest should signal the commentator when it is appropriate to begin reading the announcements after distribution/blessing to the Ministers of Holy Communion to the homebound.
- Concluding rites:
 - At the conclusion of Mass, the Lectors should join the procession but remember to return to remove the books as instructed below. In this case, Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers proceed to each side in front of the Altar. The Celebrant and Deacon will come to the foot of the Altar, where the ministers all bow together with the Celebrant, and process out before him (GIRM, 169). The Book of the Gospels is not carried during the recessional. After the 5PM Saturday, 11:30 and 5PM Sunday one or two lector should be assigned to bring the Lectionary, Sacramentary and Books back to the Vestry.

Ministry Procedures – cont'd

Day of the Mass – Cancellations and Special Considerations

In the event of a personal scheduling conflict, Ministers of the Word are responsible to initiate a “sub-request” on MSP to find a replacement as soon as possible if they cannot make an assigned Mass. IN the absence of a deacon or Commentator, Reader 1 or Reader 2 is responsible for reading the Prayers of the Faithful at any Mass.

- Proclaiming the Word:
 - The Word of God should be delivered in a loud and clear voice with the tone of voice corresponding to the genre of the text; that is, accordingly as it is a reading, a prayer, an instruction, an acclamation, or a liturgical song. Proclamation of the First and Second Readings should be read exactly how it is written in the Book of the Word: “A reading from the book of ...” A “four-finger length” distance from one’s mouth to the microphone is encouraged. The microphone should be pointed at one’s eyes, not one’s mouth or chin, to avoid popping the P’s and distortion of “B” and “S” sounds. The tone should also be suited to the form of celebration and to the solemnity of the gathering. An appropriate 3 second pause for reflection should be implemented after proclaiming “A reading from...” and immediately before “The Word of the Lord”. The “Workbook for Lectors” is provided to all Lectors and provides instruction for appropriate points and forms of emphasis within a reading. It should be reviewed during the week before a lector is schedule to read. Preparation is Key! Any theatrical hand gestures while proclaiming the Word of God is forbidden.

Ministry Procedures – cont'd

Training

- What is required for formation?
 - All new candidates for Lector must receive training, either from their Lector Lead or a Mass Lead. ***No person, no matter how well educated or trained, may be excused from formation for the Ministry of Lector.***
 - The instruction must include the following:
 - Scriptural Spirituality for Ministers of the Word,
 - Preparing the Scriptures prayerfully,
 - Instruction in Liturgy of the Word,
 - Proclaiming the Word: practicum and formation in public speaking

Ministry Procedures – cont'd

Training

- What happens upon completion of training?
 - New Lectors should be commissioned for publicly proclaiming the Word by their pastors. The “order for Blessing of Readers (Book of Blessings #1831ff) may be used
 - Lectors should consider advanced training to continue their spiritual and technical growth
 - We will have occasional training refreshers that would require attendance. Repeated missing of training refreshers could result in removal from the ministry
 - Lectors should consider attending a retreat or time of directed Spiritual reflection once a year. This may be a diocesan, parish, or private directed reflection/retreat

Ministry Procedures – cont'd

Recruiting

- Various time throughout the year at St. Clare we will make announcements that we are looking for new Lectors and have a system in place for interested candidates can register. After the close of registration, the Lector Co Chair will contact each candidate, and a Volunteer Agreement Form will be needed to be filled out by each candidate and returned to the parish office for review. After review of their application, we will then schedule training sessions to instruct all the candidates on the procedures of being Lector. Once the new Lector has been declared ready to start reading at the Mass, they will be setup in MSP and be schedule for their preferred Mass time.

Conflict Resolution

- If a member of the ministry has an issues or concern, they should discuss it with the Lector Co Chair. If the issue cannot be resolved, it should be brought to the Liturgy Coordinator and discussed jointly with the Co Chair and volunteer. If the issues is still not resolved, a meeting may be scheduled with the Parish Director and possibly the Pastor for final resolution. Decisions will be made with the context of Diocesan and Parish policies and guidelines, as well as Liturgical guidelines, such as those found in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM).

Ministry Procedures – cont'd

Note for Commentators

- Usually on Friday or by noon on Saturday the Commentators script will be available on the St Clare website at [St. Clare Parish | Roseville, CA \(stclareroseville.org\)](http://stclareroseville.org) on the tab Liturgy and Ministry of the Word.

This will give you a chance to review the opening script, Prayers of the Faithful (if no Deacon) and the announcements after Communion.

Pray this (Prayer of a Minister of the Word) before Mass

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 with me the meaning of what I am about to proclaim.
Help me to proclaim, 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. Convert any feeling of nervousness
for proclaiming your word with power and authority.
May your Spirit live in me and fill the holy words that I proclaim. Amen