

About Lectoring

We are honored to be called as lectors because Jesus was a lector. “He went into the synagogue, according to his custom on the Sabbath day, and he rose up to read.” (*Luke 4:17*) At times we read the very words that Jesus proclaimed.

The lector is the storyteller of the community – one who tells a story of salvation, using the saving Word of God and brings it to life for the parish community today.

Scheduling

The Ministry Schedule for Sundays and Holy Days is prepared by dedicated volunteers every two months using Ministry Scheduler Pro (MSP) software. Lectors are reminded to log in to MSP before each scheduling period to set preferences (Mass times, frequency) and enter any dates they are unable to serve in the upcoming period. The schedule is then prepared, using the information provided so as to assign ministers according to their specified availability and preferences for Mass times and serving frequency. Ministers are strongly encouraged to update their availability in MSP to help reduce the number of sub requests.

Please request a sub using MSP as soon as you know you are unable to serve your assigned time. Please use MSP to accept another lector’s sub request. This makes it official and all can see the position is open and when it is filled. We are grateful for your flexibility in helping one another.

Presentation

- Please dress appropriately (no shorts, t-shirts, revealing hems, flip-flops, or spaghetti straps). At a minimum, business casual is the best standard. For greater feasts, more formal attire is appropriate.
- Check the lighting and the visibility of the book before you begin.
- Position the microphone to point at your chin. Speak up, close to the microphone. You will command more attention and your voice will have better tone.
- Stand up straight with both feet on the ground and wait until people are listening.
- Videos: <https://tinyurl.com/snsw-lector-training-082722> and <https://tinyurl.com/snsw-lectors-2017>

Preparing to Proclaim the Word

It is important to properly prepare through prayer and practice. Resources are available online and each year each Lector is provided a copy of the *Workbook for Lectors* (a copy is also kept in each Sacristy). The Workbook is especially useful for determining the essential meaning of the readings. It provides suggestions for which words to emphasize, as well as a pronunciation key. If you are unsure of how to pronounce Mass Intention names, please check with the parish office.

When the workbook lists more than one option for a Reading, always prepare all options in advance. Then, before Mass check with the Presider to find out which option they selected.

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An advance copy of the Universal Prayer, Mass Intentions (with pronunciations), and Announcements for the weekend are emailed to Lectors on Friday or Saturday each week so they may familiarize themselves with this material.

Lector Tips

- Prepare beforehand; Read your passage aloud in practice.
- The single most effective method of improving your delivery is to slow down and carefully enunciate. If you feel your pacing is okay, it is likely too fast. By slowing down, you are providing time for the assembly to hear and understand. It may help to follow your place in the book with your finger.
- Pause between different thoughts to give listeners a moment to absorb your words. Pause before or after an important word/phrase as you look up at the assembly.
- To learn the correct pronunciation of difficult names, visit the Daily Readings section of the USCCB.org website to listen to an audio recording of the Readings. Or, consult the pronunciation key in your workbook.
- Each part of the reading has a beginning and an end, and it is important to allow an appropriate pause between each part to give the assembly time to reflect before listening to the next part of the reading.
- Create an experience — an encounter with the Word. The readings are to be proclaimed—not simply read.
- Freely use variations in pitch, speed, cadence, emphasis, pauses, etc. to put life into the reading and help listeners understand the context. At the same time, variations should flow from the reading itself and be aligned with the meaning of the text. Emphasize key words and phrases. The Lector Workbook is a great guide for this.
- Take the voice of the author of the reading, as if you are speaking the words for the first time. Try to understand the feeling, purpose, and intention of the biblical author. The Lector Workbook is very helpful in this regard.
 - Why is he addressing the people?
 - What does he hope to accomplish with his words?
 - What has been his experience with the people?
 - How is he feeling? Frustrated? Grateful? Hoping to educate the Godless?
- Don't worry about using too much emotion...what the assembly receives is somewhat less intense than what the lector delivers. Match your style to the type of scripture: poetic, prophetic, or narrative. Your demeanor should reflect the type of reading as well: a joyful face for joyful text, a somber face for somber text.