

Lector Handbook



The St. Mary Lectors (Annual Meeting November 2009)

Church of Saint Mary

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St Mary's Website: www.stmary.ws

St Mary's Lector Webpage: <http://www.stmary.ws/ministries/lectors.htm>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>PAGE #</u>
INTRODUCTION	3
The Ministry Of Lector	3
Lector Qualifications	3
Your Part: Commitment Rotating Mass Assignments	4
Schedules & Tools to Help Lectors Trade Assignments	4
Dress Code	4
LECTOR PREPARATION	5
Spiritual Preparation	5
Text Preparation	5
Principles Of Proclamation	5
Additional Recommended Techniques	6
Preparing For The Text Itself	6
Preparing Yourself	6
LITURGICAL GUIDELINES FOR SUNDAY MASSES WITH MUSIC (A CANTOR)..	7
General Reading Duties	7
Arrive Early	7
Cell Phones/ Beepers	7
Adjusting The Microphone	7
Lector Book: Prayer Of The Faithful/ General Intercessions	7
Two Lectors	7
Lector 1 Vs Lector 2 Assignments	8
Processional	8
First Reading	8
Responsorial Psalm	8
Second Reading	8
Proclaiming The Word	8
The Prayer Of The Faithful	9
The “Our Father”	9
The Sign Of Peace	9
Eucharistic Prayer & Communion	9
Announcements	10
Recessional	10
Special Notes for Masses Without A Cantor (Music).....	10
Daily Masses	11
Lent & Advent Weekday Mass at Noon	11
CATECHETICAL BACKGROUND	11
The Liturgy of the Word: Structure and Nature	12
Terms Used	13
Frequently Asked Questions	14
Important Phone Numbers	14

Guidelines for St. Mary's Lectors

INTRODUCTION

THE MINISTRY OF LECTOR

Scripture itself tells us that God's word is "living and active." His Word is not primarily a written text that is fixed and codified, but a Word spoken and proclaimed in the midst of a community of faith. His Word brings forth creation and whenever it is spoken anew it recreates. It is by his Word that Israel was brought into being and continually challenged to renew its faithfulness to Him; it is by His Word that the Church was called into being and constantly challenged to renew and reform itself.

LECTOR QUALIFICATIONS

1. **Must have received the sacrament of Confirmation.** At St. Mary's, there is no definitive age, since maturity and talent is based on the individual, but lectors must have received the sacrament of Confirmation.
2. **Have Basic Public Speaking Abilities.** The mere wish or willingness to serve as Lector does not qualify one for the ministry. Basic abilities are required but it is not necessary that the Lector be highly gifted in communication techniques. What is important is that the Lector has the charism for the building up of the community. It also requires an adequate vocal instrument, self confidence, maturity, poise and sensitivity to the diversity of one's audience, and a love of Scripture as part of the requirement.
3. **Be an active parishioner.** This would involve many things. The minimum would be two precepts of the Church: You must be a regular contributor to the financial support of the parish and you must attend Mass weekly and not only be seen when you are scheduled to read.
4. **Be In Good Faith Standing.** Men and women who take on the ministry of Lector are presumed to be of good faith, eager to serve their fellow Christians and willing to engage in ongoing formation into effective service There should be no ecclesial impediments to your ability to serve (i.e.: being in an irregular marriage, living together without benefit of marriage, not having been baptized and confirmed in the Catholic faith and so on).
5. **Have a willingness to rotate mass assignments and Cover Your assignments.** Two lectors are assigned to each Mass and in general all lectors rotate through the whole Mass schedule, as well as alternative between serving as lector #1 and lector #2 positions. As with any ministry, it involves personal sacrifice. St. Mary's scheduling of lectors accommodates such needs as vacations or medical personnel on-call schedules when the lector advises the lector coordinator in advance of each quarterly schedule. Individual desires such as to not be assigned to a particular mass (such as "please don't assign me to the Sunday 7:30am Mass", or similar) may not be able to be accommodated; Fairness to all lectors is important. However, lectors can trade their assignments with other lectors. It is understood that unforeseen last minute needs do arise and therefore every lector is asked to be open to receiving requests for schedule changes from fellow lectors. When a schedule is disseminated, if a lector is assigned to a mass that they seek to revise, the lector must contact (telephone, e-mail) all other lectors to find a lector to switch assignments with. The lector assigned remains responsible for being sure their assignment is covered.

YOUR PART Because the ministry of Lector is such an important office or better still such an awesome task, your external “attitudes” and “appearances” are noted by the worshipping community. Because as a Lector you bring the printed Word to life—making it flesh—you give voice to God’s healing and strengthening Word as it goes out to the people. It is important, therefore that you be at one with the parish priests as an active builder of unity within the parish.

1. **Commitment / Assignment Schedules.** Assignments are scheduled in advance. There are four quarterly assignments plus two special holiday assignments which are published (one for the Christmas/New Years, and one for Palm Sunday/Easter Sunday). The publication schedule is established at the start of each new calendar year. It is important that you know the publication schedule and contact the Lector Coordinator by each cut-off date if you have special work/school/sports or vacation needs esp. during these holiday periods. The lector Coordinator will attempt to accommodate such special needs. Each lector remains responsible for covering their assignment- Lector can always switch/trade assignments with other lectors.

Exception:The **ONLY** situation for not fulfilling your obligation would be an unexpected last minute illness or true emergency. In such cases, you are asked to contact the second lector assigned to your mass, so they are prepared to do all readings at that mass.

- a. **Tools to Help Lector Trade Assignments:** At St. Mary’s, the lector coordinator distributes a lector contact list with each new quarterly schedule noting the phone and e-mail contact information for all lectors. A lector e-mail list has been established. A helpful tool in advertising lector assignment switches. Be sure your message ‘subject’ line is clear such as “Need switch for (date) (mass time) lector #1 or 2”. It’s helpful to save a recent message from the lector coordinator in your e-mailbox so that you can use that prior message with a “reply to all” feature; just **update the subject** to reflect your message subject before you hit ‘send’. A clear subject helps you get faster e-mail responses. However, realize only those lectors that have e-mail addresses are on the e-list, so if you don’t get a successful trade from the e-mail method, you may need to make phone calls to those lectors not on the e-list. The lector contact list also provides a column for “Mass Typically Attends” which also helps lectors find another lector to switch with for a particular mass time.
2. **Dress Code: Dress Appropriately-** People do talk. Therefore, men are to be attired in jacket and tie; Women in a modest dress, skirt or pant suit. No short skirts, sleeveless tops, or flip flop sandals. Flashy colors also detract from the Word. **The key is to become “transparent” so that the Word itself, not the reader, is placed in the foreground.** Some clarifications might help: **No Jeans-** Some jeans today are more expensive than a suit, and yes they are cool – with your friends and at a club...but we’re not looking for a cool look on the altar; you need to be in respectful attire. **No sneakers** (unless the sneakers really do look like a pair of shoes).

For the Men: A jacket and tie is required, and it shouldn’t look like you took those khaki’s or shirt out of the hamper to wear them to Mass.

For the Women: The congregation should not be able to see any midsection skin. No flip flops (the shoe’s heel should not make any noise when walking).

Why? Quite simply- Because if you do wear something inappropriate, unfortunately but true, some congregants are going to spend more time looking and focusing on you and your attire instead of listening to the Word you are proclaiming.

The ONLY Exception is if you are at a Mass and there is no lector, and you volunteer at the last minute to fill in. While if you’re wearing a ripped or Led Zeppelin T-Shirt or it looks like you’re on the way to/from the beach, you will be better off not volunteering. In general you can be less concerned about how you are dressed; your offer to help will normally be welcomed. However,

any individual celebrant could potentially personally prefer that you not lector based upon how you're dressed at the moment. General Rule of Thumb - If you are dressed neatly, better for you to offer to volunteer.

LECTOR PREPARATION

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION: Lectors should be encouraged to ground their lives in the Word of God. They are encouraged to read the scriptures often. Prayer based on the Gospels and psalms will help lectors to become more aware of their spiritual responsibility to live what they proclaim and to prepare seriously for reading God's word to his people.

TEXT PREPARATION: All lectors should "study" the texts during the week before they are assigned to read. Studying does not refer to intellectual examination and analysis only. Rather it means reading over the texts and praying with them to understand their meaning in the context of faith. Lectors are provided with a Lector Workbook each November that covers the Church's Liturgical Year (starts with the 1st Sunday of Advent, and ends with the Feast of Christ the King) The Lector Workbook is an excellent tool for preparation. Lectors should make good use of the workbook as part of their preparation.

If you can't find your lector workbook, the St. Mary's lector webpage also has links helpful resources (readings for wSunday and weekday Masses, background of readings, & biblical term pronunciation guides, etc.). <http://www.stmary.ws/ministries/lectors.htm>
Reading background is available on-line at www.lectorprep.org

Lectors can also take home a copy of the Missalette; extra copies are usually available in the sacristy. Don't take the whole hard cover & songbook; just take the booklet with the readings.

In the Lector workbook, you will occasionally find some masses which have multiple options for readings. It is the Celebrant who gets to choose which readings are to be read. It is especially important to arrive early on such days as often a lector will not know which reading to study in advance. Therefore you need to prepare yourself for all of the optional readings, then ask the Celebrant in the sacristy before mass which reading is desired. The Missalette often helps in determining the 'most likely' reading(s) that a Celebrant will choose. The Celebrant sometimes simply asks which reading YOU prefer, and allow you to read the one you desire. However, each Celebrant is different and you need to be prepared for, and open to, whatever determination the Celebrant makes.

PRINCIPLES OF PROCLAMATION: The art of proclaiming Scriptures differs from speech-making and theatrics. Even though the vocal techniques may be fundamentally the same, their use and expression differ greatly. For in proclamation the text must be primary. The lector is only a messenger of the word of God. He or she does not read stories, but rather proclaims the mystery of salvation.

Contact with the assembly—contact is achieved not simply by words, but especially through one's manner of speaking. This in turn is realized through physical attitude, inflection and a sense of dialogue with one's listeners. The Lector should not lean all over the pulpit, but stand with reverence and concentration. **Make eye contact if possible.** Make your proclamation a prayer.

Expression—All communication expresses subjectivity (emotion, sentiments, etc) In the liturgy we must distinguish between individual expression and symbolic representation of a situation. As stated before the lector should become invisible yet a certain amount of individual expression is necessary to make the proclamation come alive. This expression should never take precedence over the Word. Proclaiming the Scriptures at the liturgy is a symbolic act and we must remember that it is Christ who is present in His word.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED TECHNIQUES

Preparing for the Text Itself:

1. Make sure you know the meaning of what you read. Look up unfamiliar words in the dictionary.
 - a. A biblical word “Pronunciation Guide’ is available on the lector web-page,
 - b. the lector workbook frequently gives specific difficult word pronunciation, and
 - c. Hard-copy Pronunciation booklet is usually available under the Lectionary in the sacristy.
2. Examine the phrasing. The readings are written in sense lines which are an aide to good proclamation
3. Key words—each phrase is dominated by a key word whose emphasis carries the primary meaning of the phrase. The workbook prints these key words in italics. These words should be emphasized vocally through pitch, pause, duration or the sound of the word.
4. Rhythm—Each selection and each part of the selection has its own rate and rhythm. Be careful to note these differences in the selection and be ready to speak them accordingly—Avoid being “sing-songy.”
5. Painting verbal “pictures” - be conscious that words put together can provide us with ideas and images. When you prepare a reading, form physical details of the situation in your mind and in your heart. This will make the event you are reading more believable to you. And the more believable it is to you, the more you know it through feeling and love—the more believable and loveable it will be to the assembly.

Preparing Yourself:

1. Learn to breathe from your diaphragm for greater control and volume. Use punctuation marks as point to pause and/or take a breath.
2. Learn to articulate all the sounds in each word you speak, so that you can project your voice.
3. Learn to control the rate of your speech—beginners often read much too fast. Speak slowly enough for clarity without being too slow (can become boring if too slow).
4. Body language communicates many things without us saying a word. Practice reading in a mirror.
 - a. Good posture is necessary. Don’t Slouch; Stand straight.
 - b. Muscles need to be relaxed.
 - c. Feet should be firmly “planted” and slightly apart. Put all tension in your feet if you are nervous, but avoid shaking your foot. Don’t tense your upper body.

If you have access to the internet, check out www.lectorprep.org . It has a good summary of reading background and pronunciation guide that you can use instead of, or addition to, your Lector Workbook.

LITURGICAL GUIDELINES FOR SUNDAY MASSES WITH MUSIC

1. **General Reading Duties.** The lector is a liturgical minister of the Mass and other sacraments. His or her functions are
 - to proclaim the scripture readings (except the Gospel)
 - to announce the intentions of the General Intercessions (when a Deacon is not present)
 - to read the Responsorial psalm, unless this is song by a Cantor.
2. **Arrive Early.** Arrive 10-15 minutes before mass. Sign in and check in with the Presider in the sacristy. The Lector book and an exact copy of the Lectionary are on the sacristy table. Check the readings in the Lectionary on the Ambo to be sure they are opened to the assigned reading of that Sunday. Place a ribbon bookmark on the page(s).
3. **Cell Phones/ Beepers.** Turn Off your cell phone before the start of the mass. Never answer a cell phone call while you are serving. If you carry a beeper, put the beeper in vibrate mode and if it should activate during mass, wait until the end of the mass to return the call. Better yet, leave them on the sacristy table until Mass is over.
4. **Adjusting the Microphone.** When you approach the microphone, make sure it is adjusted to be at the level of your mouth while reading. You should not have to bend forward, bend down, or stretch upwards to the microphone during your readings. Adjust the microphone before you start reading and do so from the STEM (the bendable rod below the head of the microphone); NOT from the head of the microphone itself. Never touch or tap the head of the microphone. Touching the head itself can too easily damage the unit as it is extremely sensitive and expensive equipment. At the Sat 5pm, Sun 7:30am and Sun 5pm Mass, ask the sacristan before the start of Mass whether they have turned on and tested the microphone (usually done by the sacristan well in advance of the start of the first mass). The lighted microphone switch is on the wall just outside the SOUTH sacristy door.
5. **Lector Binder: Prayer of the Faithful/ General Intercessions.** These are found in the lector book on the sacristy table when you arrive. Review the Intercessions before the Mass. Check with the Presider if any name appears difficult to pronounce. Pay particular attention to the last intercession 'for whom this Mass is offered'. Each Mass has a different name(s). Each year, parishioners sign up way in advance for specific Masses in remembrance of loved ones. Family members often travel from out of town for that specific Mass. So if you're the lector and you read the wrong names, as you might imagine... those family members will be upset.
Exception for Deacons: If there is a Deacon serving at your Mass, the Deacon will read the General Intercessions. The deacon typically has a separate book for this purpose

Place the Lector book on one of the lector chairs (or in the book holder of the chair) in front of the first pew on the south/convent side BEFORE the Mass begins. Do Not carry the Lector Binder in the Processional. **Never place the Lector Binder on the floor!** After each Mass, retrieve the lector book from the lector chair and place it back in on the sacristy table (ready for the next lector). To help avoid errors, each lector should cross out the names from Mass(es) that have already past, so the sheet is ready for the lector at the next Mass to read the correct name for the current Mass.

6. **Two Lectors.** At St. Mary's two lectors are assigned to each Mass. The reason is NOT so that one lector can be absent and we will still have another. The reason IS to vary the voices, which increase congregation's attention, and to add more solemnity to the celebration.

7. **Lector 1 vs. Lector 2 Assignments.** Lector #1 reads the First Reading and the Prayer of the Faithful/ Gen Intercessions (Deacon, if serving, reads the Intercessions); Lector #2 reads the Second Reading and Announcements. If unsure, check with the other lector assigned to make sure you both know which readings you are doing. If the other lector does not show (for any unforeseen circumstance), be prepared to do his or her readings as well. If they desire, the two lectors can decide amongst each other before the start of the mass, who will read the intercessions/ announcements.
8. **Processional:** In the entrance procession the lectors process in side by side after the altar servers and before the Celebrant (and Deacon if serving). Lectors may wish to carry a missalette in order to sing along with the congregation as they proceed. The altar servers walk up the aisle to the bottom of the Altar steps then turn right and walk around the sanctuary (on the sacristy side) to their respective chairs. The deacon follows and the celebrant processes last.
- Exceptions:**
- Sunday Family Mass (9am) may have a processional family. The family follows the Altar Servers. Lectors proceed (side by side) after the family and before the Celebrant. A Deacon, if serving, proceeds after the Lectors and before Celebrant.
 - Sunday 7:30am Mass: Lector #1 goes to the cantor stand to announce/ recite the Entrance Antiphon. Lector #2 joins the processional. The procession leaves directly from the sacristy along the front aisle (in front the first pew) on the north side of the altar to the center aisle, then turn right and proceed up the steps to the altar.
9. **First Reading (more detailed under “Proclaiming the Word”)**. After the celebrant says the Opening Prayer, and the congregation begins to sit, Lector #1 walks from the lector chair to the center of the Altar, bows to the Altar table, then proceed to the Ambo. Wait until the assembly has been seated and has settled down, ready to hear God’s Word. After your reading, proceed directly from the Ambo to the lector chair (no bowing to the altar).
- Exception: Sun Family Mass (9am.)**, when there is a Children’s’ Liturgy in the chapel, wait at the Ambo until all children have exited to the Chapel, then begin your reading.
10. **Responsorial Psalm:** Most Sunday Masses, this is sung by the Cantor at the Ambo.
- Exception:** 7:30am Mass -Lector #1 stays at the Ambo, Pause at end of First Reading (count to 10) then continues with reading the Responsorial Psalm from the Ambo. If there is only one lector present, Pause at end of Psalm (count to 10) before starting the 2nd reading.
11. **Second Reading (more detailed under “Proclaiming the Word”)**: As the Cantor leaves the Ambo, lector#2 walks from the lector chair to the center of the Altar, bows to the Altar table, then proceeds to the Ambo. After your reading, proceed directly from the Ambo to the lector chair (no bowing to the altar).**Note:** If only ONE lector serves, the lector bows ONCE before walking to the Ambo for the 1st reading. When going to the Ambo again, go directly to the Ambo (no bow to Altar).
12. **Proclaiming the Word.** The scriptures are to be read/ proclaimed only from the Lectionary. They may NOT be read from a missalette, hand-missal or copied or typed sheets. The readings must always be from the scriptures and may never be taken from non-biblical sources. The only exception may be during special ceremonies such as Palm Sunday where the reading of the passion is typed separately in a blessed binder for individual parts of the narrator, etc...
- No lector may change the wording of scripture.** The translation in the Lectionary is the only approved translation for use at Mass. You can not take it upon yourself to use more inclusive language for example or to leave out any words. However, it is understandable that mistakes can occur and if you loose your place during a reading, you may inadvertently leave out or add unintentional words. While you are to make every effort to avoid such mistakes by studying the

readings in advance, you need not be worried if such an error occurs. Often you will be the only person who notices such minor errors.

The lector begins with “**A Reading from the Book.....**” No additional introduction is permissible. **Do not** read the brief one line summary that is printed in red ink on the lectionary book for that passage.

- a. The correct conclusion to the reading is “**The Word of the Lord.**” It previously used to be “This is the Word of the Lord, ” but that was dropped several years ago for two reasons. The first being that “The Word of the Lord” is a more literal translation of the Latin *Verbum Domini*. The second reason is that once the Word is proclaimed it is no longer contained in the Lectionary but in the hearts of the assembly. By saying “This is...” you are putting emphasis on the book instead of the proclaimed Word.
- b. If the psalm is not sung (masses without music) the lector should pause briefly for a period of meditation after the first reading before going on to the Responsorial Psalm, usually count to 10. The lector begins the psalm by simply reciting the antiphon. Do not say “The Responsorial Psalm is...” or any other words. It is not necessary to make any hand gestures after each verse. Looking up and starting the antiphon is all that is needed to cue the assembly for their response.
- c. The second reading begins and ends the same way as the first. **Do NOT say** “The second reading is from...” When the reading is ended go back to your seat. Do not say the Gospel Acclamation. If it is not sung, the acclamation should not be used.

13. **The Prayer of the Faithful/ General Intercessions:** While the congregation recites the Profession of Faith (the Nicene Creed), lector #1 should proceed directly to the Ambo and recite the Creed with the congregation. **Don’t bow** to the altar before going up to the Ambo. After the Presider reads the opening prayer, the lector begins by saying “Our response is _____ “(as per the lector book, but usually it is “Lord Hear Our Prayer”). Read the Intercessions from the Lector Book. Do not bring loose papers up with you. **Remain in the Ambo until the Presider says the concluding prayer.** Return directly to your seat without bowing, and place the lector book on a chair or in the book holder... **never on the floor!**

Exception: If a Deacon is serving, then the deacon will read the General Intercessions following the above protocol. Both lectors remain seated.

14. **The Our Father:** Stand and recite with the congregation. You have the personal preference option of reciting with arms outstretched with palm of hands facing up until “and at the hour of our death” .

15. **Sign of Peace:** At the Sign of Peace the Lectors normally exchange the sign with the fellow lector, Presider and Cantor.

16. **Eucharistic Prayer & Communion:** The Lector kneels on the step of the sanctuary during the Eucharistic prayer unless kneeling is medically difficult. It is then permissible to sit at your chair. Discuss with your fellow lector in advance so that the two lectors do the same- if one needs to sit, both should sit.

After the priests have received communion, lectors proceed to the step of the sanctuary to receive, then return to their seat. At the 10:30 Mass do not stand near the EM’s as they await to receive the Precious Blood, but remain near the altar step. If there is no choir at the side of the altar, the lector may sit on the side chairs until the end of mass. The side area is especially helpful during holidays or whenever crowding occurs at the lector chairs during communion.

17. **Announcements:** The announcements are read by Lector #2 after the celebrant reads the Prayer After Communion. The priest normally gives an eye signal to the lector to begin. If there are any special announcements such to announce the start of a second (special) collection, it will be clearly noted in the lector book for that mass.
18. **Recessional:** After the announcements the Altar Servers and lectors walk around the sanctuary (on the side of the sacristy) to the front (north side) of the Altar steps. When the Celebrant and Deacon turn to face the exit, the Altar Servers and lectors turn around and recess in the same order as processional (lectors follow behind the altar servers down the center aisle). After mass, retrieve the Lector book from the lector chair and return it to the table in the sacristy. Remember to cross out names in the general intercession for the mass(es) which have PAST.

MASSES WITHOUT MUSIC (such as 7:30am Sunday)

Lector Duties at 7:30am Mass are Different than other Masses. Use the basic Liturgical Guidelines printed above, with the following exceptions:

1. **Processional.**

Lector # 1 does not walk in the Procession. When the Presider is ready to leave the sacristy—Lector # 1 proceeds to the lectern, also called the cantor's stand - (NOT to the Ambo/Pulpit) to welcome the assembly. Typically the lector says: "Welcome to St Mary's on this (*name of the Sunday*; Example: *First Sunday in Ordinary Time*). Father (*say his name*) is our presider. Please STAND and join me in saying the Entrance Antiphon found on page ____ of the missalette". Give the assembly time a few seconds to find the page before you start reciting the Antiphon. After the Presider bows to the Altar, Lector #1 returns to your seat.

Lector #2 walks in the Processional. Altar Servers proceed first, then lector, then deacon (if present), with celebrant last. The procession leaves directly from the sacristy along the front aisle (in front the first pew) on the north side of the altar to the center aisle, then turn right and proceed up the steps to the Altar table. The Altar Servers continue walking around the Altar to their chairs. Lector #2 walks to the top of the Altar steps, bows to the Altar table, then continues to walk around the Altar table to the lector chair.

2. **Lector #1 vs. Lector #2 Duties at 7:30am Mass are Different than other Masses!**

Lector #1 reads the Entrance Antiphon, First Reading and the Responsorial Psalm.

Lector #2 reads the Second reading, the General Intercessions (unless a Deacon is serving), & Communion Antiphon, and Announcements

3. **Communion Antiphon** After the priest has received communion, Lector #2 goes to the lectern/cantor stand to request the assembly to join in praying “the Communion Antiphon is found on page ____ of the missalette”. Give the assembly time to find the page before you lead the reciting of the Antiphon.

4. **Recessional.** After the final blessing the Altar Servers and lectors walk to the front of the Altar in the following order: Priest (and Deacon if serving) in center, lectors at both sides of the priest/deacon, and Altar servers at both ends. Genuflect or bow together (follow the lead of whatever the priest does). Turn and recess down the steps in same order as processional: Altar Servers first, then lectors, then deacon (if serving), then Celebrant. After mass, retrieve the Lector book from the lector chair and return it to the table in the sacristy. Remember to cross out names in the general intercession for the mass(es) which have PAST.

DAILY MASS (Weekdays 7 and 9 am)

There are normally a group of parishioners who regularly attend daily masses and perform lector duties for weekday masses. They arrive a few minutes early to check the readings with the Presider. Sometimes the readings are different from those listed in the missalette. The Celebrant has more options on a weekday Mass. Weekday readers usually decide among themselves what day they will read. If you are at daily mass and are interested in reading on a regular basis simply go to the sacristy and talk to one of the lectors before or after mass. Some daily mass lectors choose to become Lectors at Sunday Masses, and some new lectors start with a few weekday Mass readings to become comfortable in the lector role.

Lent and Advent Weekday Mass at Noon, the Parish normally adds a Noon Mass. Protocol:

- The lector reads one reading and the Responsorial Psalm. Readings are available online at: <http://www.usccb.org/nab/index.shtml>
- Check in at Sacristy before Mass begins just in case Celebrant has *any* reading or protocol changes.
- Only the North side of the Church is used,
- There is no Procession; Lector sits with the congregation on North/ Northern Blvd side (usually within 1st few pews, adjacent to aisle for easy in/out).
- The congregation does recite the opening antiphon and the communion antiphon, but do so on their own. Entrance Antiphon is recited while priest walks to Altar; Communion Antiphon right after priest consumes the Eucharist/ Host. but typically *the lector does not* lead the antiphons.
- At 1st reading time, the lector proceeds and bows to the altar (center of altar), then walks to Ambo. The microphone is normally already in the plug position facing the North side, and the GREEN weekday lectionary is usually already on the Ambo (from 7&9am Masses).
- Give a 10 second pause between the end of the 1st reading and starting the Responsorial Psalm. It is acceptable (but not required) to open with "The Responsorial Psalm begins on page ____ of the missalette".
- After the Responsorial Psalm, the lector returns to pew.

Upon check in at the sacristy, you can ask the Celebrant whether he prefers Antiphons to be lead/read by lector; Normally not. If you are going to lead the Antiphons, you can sit in the normal; lector chair area instead of a pew (its simply a darker area with the south side lights dim/off).

CATECHETICAL BACKGROUND

Scripture itself tells us that God's word is "living and active." His Word is not primarily a written text but a Word spoken and proclaimed in the midst of a community of faith. His Word brings forth creation and whenever it is spoken anew it recreates. It is by His Word that Israel was brought into being and continually called to renew its faithfulness to Him; it is by His Word that the Church was called into being and constantly challenged to renew and reform itself.

God's Word, therefore, is a Word with a power beyond all other words. He speaks this Word to reveal Himself to us but also to reveal to us our own deepest nature. It is this Word which tells us that we are His people, that our destiny is intrinsically interwoven with His life. And, more than this, it is by this Word that He makes Himself present to us. For this reason, the Church has never known a sacramental celebration apart from the proclamation of God's Word. Indeed such a celebration could not be a sacrament. God establishes his presence by his Word and the power of that presence once again calls a community into being to receive God's work and to graciously respond.

The real presence of another speaking to us demands a response. And so too, the Word of God. He calls us by this Word so that we can live by this Word. As we understand the Word more and more deeply, we come to recognize that we must change—thus, the fruit of God's Word truly heard and

attended to always produced renewal, a renewal that has at its heart a recognition of our origins as his people.

God has spoken his definitive Word to us in Jesus Christ. It is He who is the living and effective Word of God in the worshipping community. The ultimate purpose, therefore, of celebrating God's Word is not to read biblical texts but to **encounter Jesus** in a manner that elicits from us a unified response of living fidelity. Our celebration of the Word in the Eucharistic celebration is above all else a celebration of the presence of Jesus.

A sacramental celebration of the Word of God is never mere reading of texts. It is the public proclamation in the midst of the assembled faithful of who God is, where God can be found and how God works through us. It is a sacramental event. When the Word is truly proclaimed and heard—things happen. It becomes the experience of the power and presence of the living God in this community, here and new. It is the discovery that the great works of God are not simply history but are enacted anew in our own community as we gather to worship.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD: STRUCTURE AND NATURE

The Mass has two parts: the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Readings from scripture and the chants between the readings form the main part of the Liturgy of the Word. The homily, profession of faith, and general intercessions or Prayer of the Faithful develop and complete it. In the readings, explained by the homily, God speaks to his people of redemption and salvation and nourishes their spirit; Christ is present among the faithful through His Word. Through the chants the people make God's word their own and express their adherence to it through the profession of faith. Finally, moved by this onward, they pray in the general intercessions for the needs of the Church and for the world's salvation (*General Introduction to the Roman Missal, 33*)

Outline of the Liturgy of the Word:

First Reading - A proclamation from the Hebrew scriptures (or Acts during the Easter season), that ends with "The Word of the Lord."

Congregation responds— "Thanks be to God."

Responsorial Hymn— taken from the Psalms -sung or recited

Congregation responds—singing or reciting the refrain—the refrain picks out an important aspect of the liturgy of the day or season.

Second reading—a proclamation from the New Testament (Acts of the Apostles, Paul or other Epistles), ending with "The Word of the Lord."

Congregation responds— "Thanks be to God."

Gospel Acclamation: According to the season of the year, the Gospel is preceded by the Alleluia or other chant (during Lent). Its purpose is to solemnize the proclamation of the Gospel and prepare for it. It should always be sung and is usually omitted when not sung.

Gospel Reading—A proclamation taken from one of the four gospels—central part of the Liturgy of the Word—by standing for the acclamation and gospel text, all show their reverence, the people recognize and acknowledge that Christ is present and speaking to them.

Homily— integral part of the liturgy—given on Sundays and on all Holydays of Obligation; recommended on weekdays whenever possible because it is a necessary source of nourishment of the Christian life because it is the living interpretation of God’s Word for today and encourages members of the community to praise God and ask his help in this Eucharist, living during the week what they celebrate on Sunday.

Profession of Faith—Nicene Creed—the community responds and assents to the Word of God which it has heard proclaimed and interpreted; it also calls to mind the essential teaching of the Church before the celebration of the Eucharist

General Intercessions—Prayers of the Faithful—in this prayer the people exercise their priestly function by interceding for all people. The Presider opens/leads the invitation to prayer. The lector reads the petitions, and then the Presider concludes with a prayer to the Father.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist then begins with the procession of gifts at the Offertory.

TERMS USED

LECTIONARY— The liturgical book containing the biblical texts used in the Eucharist and Sacraments. The Lectionary is published in four volumes.

VOLUME I—Contains the Sunday readings arranged according to the liturgical year from Advent to the Solemnity of Christ the King, in three cycles, A,B,C. Cycle A focuses on the Gospel of Matthew; Cycle B on Mark and Cycle C on Luke. The Gospel of John is read on the last three Sundays’ of Lent, the Sundays of Easter, and from the 17th to the 21st Sundays of Ordinary time in Cycle B and on other important solemnities of the Church year.

VOLUME II— Year I—Weekday readings arranged according to the liturgical year - Includes readings for COMMONS or readings for celebrations of Mary and the saints.

VOLUME III—Year II—Weekday readings arranged according to the liturgical year - Includes COMMONS for celebrations of Mary and the saints.

VOLUME IV— RITUAL MASSES— readings for various rituals (weddings, baptisms, confirmation, funerals, etc) or for various occasions: for the Church, for civil needs, for various public needs, for particular needs.

AMBO: or pulpit is the place from which the Word of God is proclaimed and explained. Lector and priest should use it for all scripture readings, including the psalm whether recited or sung, and the Prayer of the Faithful.

LECTERN (Cantor Stand): A less conspicuous stand for a commentator or leader of song.

LECTOR BOOK: A special binder that is used to hold the Prayer of the Faithful. It is marked LECTOR on the front.

PRESIDER BOOK: A special binder that is used by the Celebrant and contains the Penitential Rite and other prayers, the Prayers of the Faithful and the announcements. It is marked PRESIDERS on the front.

???? FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS????

What time should I arrive?

You should arrive at Mass at least 10 minutes early to review the readings and petitions and to prepare if any unanticipated last minute change that may occur. 20 minutes early at holidays since special ceremonies or processions are organized differently than a normal Mass.

What if I am at a Mass and there is no lector?

If you are aware before Mass that there seems to be no lectors, then by all means go into the sacristy and offer your services. If you notice during the procession that there is no lector then you can move up to one of the lector chairs and sit. Try to make eye contact with the Presider so that he knows you are there. If the Lector Book is not there you may have to slip into the sacristy to get it. You can be less concerned about how you are dressed, but it needs to be respectful; Your help will generally be welcomed. If you make it a habit of always reading the upcoming Sunday readings in advance, you will be prepared to serve as lector at any Sunday Mass.

It is almost time for the Mass to start and I can't get to church for a serious reason. What should I do?

You can call the rectory and let someone know that you can't make it. **627-0385 sacristy Ext 1023. This # is Confidential-ok to call this # ONLY just BEFORE a Mass begins.** This way the priest might be able to find a volunteer lector from the congregation.

I can't find my schedule. Is there anywhere else to get one? <http://www.stmary.ws/ministries/lectors.htm>

The Lector Schedule is posted on the St. Mary's website. A hard copy is in the sacristy and in the Parish Office. If you have no access to the internet, the best thing to do would be to call another lector to find out when you are scheduled or call the parish office during regular office hours.

May I serve two ministries at the same mass?

The Church does not wish to blur the identity of the various ministries. It is preferred that each individual exercise only one ministry at each liturgy. This allows others present to share their ministry. However, on rare occasions when there is a need and you are requested, a lector may serve in another additional capacity (EM or usher for collections).

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Pastoral Associate

Jo-Ann Metzdorff

Parish Office: 627-0385 ext. 1010

e-mail - JoAnnM@stmary.ws

Sacristy: 627-0385 Ext1023 (Use Discretion)

Lector Coordinator /Scheduling:

Rich Bentley

Home- 627-2695

work (M-F, 9am-5pm) 718-270-2186

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