

# Lector Handbook



Some of our St. Mary Lectors (taken at Annual Meeting October 2015)

## **Church of Saint Mary**

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St Mary's Lector Webpage: <http://stmary.ws/94-2/lectors/>

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# 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. Jr. lectors (under 18 years old) will be screened by the parish office. Those under 16 begin serving at Children's Liturgies at 9am Family Mass on 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays. Experienced Jr. lectors serve in the Main Church; we attempt to have Jr. Lectors serve at the Sun5pm Mass that has many teens; Youth Group often meets immediately following the Sun5pm Mass.
2. **Adult lectors (over 18):** need to complete:
  - a. The parish and diocesan volunteer registration and background check forms (links on lector webpage),
  - b. Attend a [Virtus Training session](#) (Protecting Gods Children) link is on the lector webpage. Sessions are held throughout the year at many diocesan parishes. You register for an upcoming session by following the "registration" menu, then view available sessions by selecting "Rockville Ctr, NY" and identify a convenient location and time for you. Local parish sessions may be a few months away.
  - c. Be installed (receive a blessing) by the pastor.
3. **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 charisma 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. The lector coordinator reviews your skill at an orientation, and provides helpful guidance as needed.
4. **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.
5. **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).
6. **Have a willingness to rotate mass assignments and Cover Your assignments.** Two lectors are assigned to each Mass (one lector at 7:30am) and in general all lectors rotate through the whole Mass schedule, as well as alternating 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 work, vacations or medical personnel on-call schedules, and other commitments 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 always be able to be accommodated; Fairness to all lectors is important. We try to assign Jr. Lectors to the Sun5pm Mass, but Jr's must be willing to also rotate assignments through the entire Mass schedule as needed. However, **lectors can trade their assignments with other 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. Unforeseen last minute needs DO arise and therefore every lector is asked to be open to receiving requests for schedule changes from fellow lectors. Emergencies happen where a lector becomes unavailable. If you arrive at a Mass and see there is no lector, be willing to offer assistance to the celebrant even though you were unable to prepare in advance. 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 and if possible, you are asked to contact the second lector assigned to your mass, so they are prepared to do all readings at that mass.

**Tools to Help Lector Trade Assignments:** The lector coordinator distributes a lector contact list with each new quarterly schedule noting the phone and e-mail contact information. The lector e-mail list is a helpful tool in lector assignment switches. Be sure your message ‘SUBJECT’ line is clear such as:

“Need switch for (date) (mass time) as 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 and remove the original text 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, and some don’t read their eMail every day. 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 contact list has a column for “Mass Typically Attends” to help find lectors for a particular mass time.

2. **Dress Code: Dress Appropriately-** People do talk. Therefore, men are to be attired in jacket and tie. 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:** A modest dress, skirt or pant suit. The congregation must not be able to see any midsection skin. Covered shoulders, Skirts at least knee-length, 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 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 your 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:** Take time in silent reflection and prayer time as you prepare; Engage yourself in the process. 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 Sunday and weekday Masses, background of readings, & biblical term pronunciation guides, etc.). <http://stmary.ws/94-2/lectors/>

Reading background is available on-line at [www.lectorprep.org](http://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. Lector at 7:30am can also read the antiphons and to know the associated missalette page number.

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. Prepare yourself spiritually beforehand; spend some undistracted ‘quite time’ reflecting on your reading(s).
2. Learn to breathe from your diaphragm for greater control and volume. Use punctuation marks as point to pause and/or take a breath.
3. Learn to articulate all the sounds in each word you speak, so that you can project your voice.
4. 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).
5. Body language communicates many things without us saying a word. Practice reading in a mirror.
  - Good posture is necessary. Don’t Slouch; Stand straight – don’t lean on the book or Ambo.
  - Muscles need to be relaxed.
  - Feet should be firmly “planted” and slightly apart; relaxed. 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](http://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.

## **GENERAL 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 Universal Prayer (when a Deacon is not present)
  - to read the Responsorial Psalm at Masses without Music; Whenever a Cantor is present, it is sung by the Cantor.
2. **Arrive Early.** Arrive 10-15 minutes before mass. Sign in and check in with the Celebrant in the sacristy; Determine if a Deacon will also be serving (protocol changes). The Lector book and an exact copy of the Lectionary are on the sacristy table. Before Mass starts, go to the Ambo and confirm that the correct Lectionary is there – and opened to the assigned reading of that Sunday. Place a ribbon bookmark on the page(s). Normally the sacristan performs this role, but it's always best to check. Be especially mindful at 5pm Masses, where there may have been an earlier wedding, funeral, or ceremony - Be sure the RED Sunday Mass Lectionary is on the Ambo (there is a separate GREEN lectionary book for Weekday Daily Mass).
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.** As you approach the microphone, make sure it is adjusted to be at the level of your mouth while reading. You should not need to bend forward, down, or stretch upwards to the microphone while reading. Adjust the microphone 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 As this can too easily damage the unit; It's 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 before the start of the first mass). The lighted microphone switch is on the wall just outside the SOUTH sacristy door.
5. **Lector Binder: Universal Prayer** (aka: Prayer of the Faithful/ General Intercessions). The lector book is normally on the sacristy table when you arrive. Review the Intercessions before the Mass. Check with the Celebrant 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. Some name pronunciations may be unclear or awkward and if the correct pronunciation is unknown, you need to simply use your best guess/ judgment.

**Exception for Deacons:** If serving, the Deacon reads the Universal Prayer and typically has a separate book.

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. 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.** St. Mary's has two lectors assigned to each Mass with Music. It's NOT so that one lector can be absent and still have a lector to do both roles, but rather to vary the voices which helps increase the congregation's attention, adds increased solemnity to the celebration, and provides for additional lay parishioner participation.  
**Lector #1:** Reads the First Reading and the Universal Prayer (Deacon, if serving, reads the Universal Prayer);  
**Lector #2:** Carries the Gospel Book in the Processional, reads the Second Reading, and the Announcements.
  - Confirm with the other lector assigned just to make sure you both know which readings you are doing.
  - If a lector does not show (for any unforeseen circumstance), be prepared to do both roles.
  - It's also acceptable for the two lectors to decide amongst each other before the start of the mass, which lector will carry the Gospel Book in the Processional, or to read the Universal Prayer/ announcements.

7. **Processional:** In the entrance Procession, Lector#2 will carry the Gospel Book and lay the Book on the Altar Table. However, if lector #2 has any difficulty carrying the book, the lectors can discuss amongst themselves who is best suited to carry the Gospel Book.
- Lector (without the Gospel Book) follows the Altar Servers, followed by
  - Lector carrying the Gospel Book (see exception below if a Deacon is present), followed by
  - Celebrant.

The Altar Servers walk up the aisle to the bottom of the Altar steps then turn right and walk around the sanctuary (on the West-sacristy side) to their respective chairs.

**Lector #1 (no Book)** will follow the Altar Servers, stops and bows at the bottom step of the Altar, then follows the Altar servers walking around the Altar to their lector chair. If the east (Convent side) alcove is not in use, it is acceptable for lectors to turn left at the Altar and walk to chairs on the east side of the sanctuary; While it is a shorter walk, it also has a step – be careful!

**Lector #2 (with Book)** walks in processional following (behind) the lector#1.

- The Gospel Book is held with both hands near your forehead, high enough so that the top of Book is above your head yet allowing your eyes to still safely see where you're walking, with the front cover of Gospel Book facing the Altar as you walk in the Processional.
- At the bottom step of the Altar, bow to the Altar. Since you are carrying the Book, it can be a modified (slight) head bow.
- Walk up the Altar steps to the left and walk around the Altar table to the south (parking lot side) center edge of the Altar table. Place the Gospel Book in the center of the Altar table, and closer to the front edge (ie: the North/ Northern Blvd) of the Altar table. The result is that the book lays flat on the table closer to and facing the front edge of the Altar table. This way, the Book does not interfere with the Celebrant's space to kiss Altar, and it's ready for Celebrant to pick it up & carry to Ambo to read the Gospel. The lector turns and walks to their lector chair.

**Exceptions:**

- **A Deacon, if serving, carries the Gospel Book. Both lectors walk side by side after the Altar Servers.** Deacon proceeds after the Lectors and before Celebrant.
  - **Sunday 7:30am Mass:** There is no processional; The Gospel Book is placed on the Altar BEFORE Mass begins. Lector walks to the cantor stand to make opening welcome comments and recite the Entrance Antiphon. The celebrant leaves directly from the sacristy along the north side front aisle (in front the first pew) to the center aisle, then turns right and proceeds up the steps to the altar.
8. **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 Ambo (no bowing to the Altar). Wait until the assembly has been seated and has settled down, ready to hear God’s Word. Pause at the end of reading (count to 5) before saying “The Word of the Lord”. WAIT UNTIL the Congregation responds “Thanks be to God”, then walk directly from the Ambo to the lector chair.
- **Exception:** Sun 9am Family Mass when there is a Children’s’ Liturgy in the chapel, Lector #1 waits at the Ambo until all children have exited to the Chapel, then begin your reading.
9. **Responsorial Psalm:** Most Sunday Masses, this is sung by the Cantor at the Ambo.
- **Exception:** 7:30am Mass (Mass without Music). Lector stays at the Ambo, Pause at end of First Reading (count to 10) then continues with reciting the Responsorial Psalm from the Ambo. Pause at end of Psalm (count to 10) before starting the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading.
10. **Second Reading (more detailed under “Proclaiming the Word”):** As the Cantor leaves the Ambo, lector#2 walks from the lector chair to the Ambo (no bow to the Altar). Pause at the end of the reading (count to 5) before saying “The Word of the Lord”. Close (be sure a ribbon is on the correct page) and move the Lectionary to the side. This makes space for the Celebrant to place the Gospel Book at the Ambo. WAIT UNTIL the Congregation responds “Thanks be to God”, then walk directly from the Ambo to the lector chair.

11. **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 if you lose your place during a reading, that you might 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.
  - The correct conclusion to the reading is a definitive pause (count to 5), then **“The Word of the Lord.”** The previous wording “(This is) the Word of the Lord, ” 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. **The Lector must wait until the congregation responds “Thanks be to God” before the lector leaves the Ambo.**
  - If the psalm is not sung (Masses without music) the lector should give long pause (count to 10) for a period of meditation after the first reading before going on to the Responsorial Psalm. 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 response is all that is needed to queue the congregation for their response.
  - The second reading begins and ends the same way as the first. **Do NOT start with other words such as** “The second reading is from...” At the end of the reading, move the lectionary to the side of the Ambo (to make space for Celebrant to Place the Gospel Book). **The Lector must wait until the congregation responds “Thanks be to God” before the lector leaves the Ambo** and walks directly back to the lector chair.
  - Never READ the Gospel Acclamation. If it is not sung, the acclamation is omitted.
12. **The Universal Prayer** (aka Prayer of the Faithful, General Intercessions): While the congregation recites the Profession of Faith (the Nicene or Apostle’s Creed), Lector #1 starts walking when the congregation begins the final paragraph of the Creed; proceed directly to the Ambo. Lector remains silent until the Celebrant reads the Opening Prayer, then 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 at the Ambo until the Celebrant says the Concluding Prayer.** Then, return/ walk directly to your seat, 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 Intercessions following the above protocol; Both lectors remain seated.
13. **The Our Father:** Stand and recite with the congregation. Everyone has the personal preference option of reciting with arms outstretched with palm of hands facing up until “but deliver us from evil”, as well as the personal preference of remaining with arms outstretched until after “For the Kingdom, the power and...”.
14. **Sign of Peace:** At the Sign of Peace the Lectors normally exchange the sign with the fellow lector, Celebrant(s), Cantor, and/or with those in pew behind lector chairs.

15. **Eucharistic Prayer & Communion:** The Lector kneels on the step of the sanctuary during the Eucharistic Prayer, unless kneeling is medically difficult in which case it is then permissible to sit at your chair. Discuss with your fellow lector in advance so that the two lectors do the same protocol; If one lector needs to sit, both lectors should sit.

After the priests have received communion, lectors stand at the step of the sanctuary to receive, then return to their seat. Lectors may sit at their chairs or sit/ stand in the side alcove (if available), especially helpful during holidays or whenever crowding occurs near the lector chairs during communion.

16. **Announcements:** The announcements (if any) are read by Lector #2 after the celebrant reads the Prayer After Communion. Lector #2 should stand at the edge of the Altar near the Cantor Stand, so that when the priest finishes the Prayer, the lector then steps up to the Canton Stand (not the Ambo) to begin the Announcements. Most celebrants do give a brief eye contact to signal the lector to begin reading the announcements.

17. **Recessional:** After the announcements, and the celebrant says “The Mass has ended..”, the Altar Servers and lectors walk around the sanctuary (vestibule passageway on the west side of the sacristy). Lectors may at their own discretion use the east side vestibule passageway (a shorter distance, but does include a step!). As the recessional hymn begins, walk to the front (north side) of the Altar steps. Leave space for Celebrant and Deacon in center, with Altar Servers on both sides, and lectors at both ends (lectors are ‘the bookends’; If only 1 lector, can line up at either end). When the Celebrant and Deacon bow to the Altar, Lectors and Altar Servers all bow simultaneously. As the celebrant turns to face the exit, the Altar Servers and lectors turn around and all recess in the same order as processional, lectors follow behind the altar servers down the center aisle. At Masses without music (Sun7:30am), lector walks directly from the lector chairs to the sacristy.

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) DETAILS**

**Lector Duties at 7:30am Mass are Different than other Masses.** Use the basic Liturgical Guidelines, with the following exceptions: Arrive early, **Sign in**, and **read the Antiphons** in the missalette, check to be certain the lectionary is on the Ambo with ribbon on correct starting page of readings, check that the microphone switch is ON, and Gospel Book is on the Altar Table before Mass begins (normally done by sacristan, but check to be sure it done).

Normally there is only ONE lector assigned, but **if two lectors are serving**,

Lector #1 reads the Welcoming comment, Entrance Antiphon, First Reading, the Responsorial Psalm, & Communion Antiphon.

Lector #2 reads the Second reading, the Universal Prayer (unless a Deacon is serving), & Announcements.

Note: It's OK to switch duties as needed, such as if lector#1 is needed to also assist as an EM.

- 1. Processional.** There is no formal Processional -the lector simply proceeds from Sacristy to the Cantor Stand.
  - **Lector # 1.** When the Celebrant is ready to leave the sacristy, **Lector # 1 proceeds to the lectern, also called the Cantor's Stand (NOT to the Ambo/Pulpit) and welcomes the congregation.** Typically the lector says: "**Welcome to St Mary's on this (name of the Sunday; Example: First Sunday in Ordinary Time). Please turn off all electronic devices. Add any script provided that may include announcing the name(s) of whom this Mass is being offered for. End with: Father/Msgr (say his name) is our Celebrant. Please STAND and join me in reciting 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 Celebrant bows to the Altar, Lector #1 returns to lector chair.
  - **Lector #2:** **IF** there is a 2<sup>nd</sup> lector, When celebrant is ready to leave the sacristy, Lector#2\_walks to (and stands at) the lector chair before Mass starts.
- 2. Communion Antiphon** After the priest has received communion, Lector #2 goes to the lectern/cantor stand to request the assembly to join in praying: "**Please join me in reciting the Communion Antiphon on page \_\_\_ of the missalette**". Give the assembly time to find the page before you lead the reciting of the Antiphon. After reading the Antiphon, return to your lector chair.
- 3. Recessional.** There is no formal Recessional. After the final blessing the Lector(s) walk directly to the sacristy after the final blessing. Return the Lector book to the sacristy table and 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 Celebrant. 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 Additional Weekday Mass at Noon:** the Parish sometimes adds a Noon Mass. **Protocol:**

- The lector reads one reading and the Responsorial Psalm. Readings are available online at: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/index.cfm>
- Check in at Sacristy before Mass begins just in case Celebrant has *any* reading or protocol changes.
- Typically, 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.
- 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 walks directly from the Ambo to the 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 (it's 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, 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 now. 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 or Apostle’s 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

**Universal Prayer** (also called General Intercessions and/or Prayer of the Faithful): In this prayer the people exercise their priestly function by interceding for all people. The Celebrant opens/leads the invitation to prayer. The lector reads the petitions and the congregation responds to each prayer, and then the Celebrant 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”): 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 Universal Prayer.

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

**LECTOR BOOK**: A special binder that is used to hold the Universal Prayer and Announcements. 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 Universal Prayer and Announcements. It is marked PRESIDER 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 for any unanticipated last minute change that may occur. At Holidays, at least 15 minutes early since there are often 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 Celebrant so that he knows you are there. If the Lector Book is not there you may have to walk 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?*

If you know who the second lector is, contact them if they have listed their cell # on the lector contact sheet. You can call the parish office or 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://stmary.ws/94-2/lectors/>*

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?*

It is preferred that each individual exercise only one ministry at each liturgy to allow other more congregants to serve in their ministries. However, on occasions when there is a need and you are requested, it is acceptable that a lector serves in another additional capacity (Altar Server, EM and/or Usher for collections).

## **IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS**

### Moderator

Rev. Fr. Bob Romeo  
Parish Office: 627-0385 Ext. 1004  
e-mail: [pastor@stmary.ws](mailto:pastor@stmary.ws)

### Lector Coordinator /Scheduling:

Rich Bentley  
Cell: 917-751-1399; Home- 627-2695;  
work (M-F, 9am-5pm) 718-270-2186  
e-mail: [Rbentley@downstate.edu](mailto:Rbentley@downstate.edu) (preferred contact method)

**Sacristy:** 627-0385 Ext1023 (Use extreme discretion)

## Sunday Masses- Quick Reference Sheet- Sunday Masses Tips to Avoid Most Common Mistakes: Jan 2016

**Dress Appropriately** for the Altar. Tie/Jacket for men; No short skirts or low neckline for women. No Jeans, sneakers or Flip/flops.

Every lector makes an occasional mistake – RELAX: most are unnoticeable to the congregation. Below are tips to help you avoid common mistakes:

**BEFORE THE MASS:** Basic priorities: **Practice your reading**, read the background in the lector workbook (or use [www.lectorprep.org](http://www.lectorprep.org)). When you understand what you're reading, you will read it with more confidence. Use the punctuation marks (commas, periods) as a guideline for your breathing and pace as you proclaim.

**Arrive in the sacristy at least 10 mins before your Mass.** SIGN IN (if covering for another lector, note whom you are covering for). Check the Lectionary Book on the Sacristy Table for your reading. Walk to the Ambo and be sure the Lectionary Book on Ambo has a bookmark ribbon on the same page. **Lector#1-** ask if a deacon is serving. If yes, Deacon reads the Universal Prayer. If no Deacon, review the Universal Prayer in the lector book and be sure the last intercession ("for whom this mass is offered") has already been crossed out for those Masses that has already past. This GREATLY HELPS YOU avoid reading the wrong name(s) at your Mass. Family members and friends of the person(s) being named have sometimes traveled from afar to attend this Mass and will be upset if you get it wrong! **Lector#2-** Review the Announcements in lector book. Don't carry the lector book in the procession. **Before Mass starts, place the lector book on a lector chair – NEVER ON THE FLOOR!**

**Processional:** The 7:30am (Mass without Music) protocols are different - refer to the Lector Handbook for more details. In the entrance Procession, Lector#2 will carry the Gospel Book and lay the Book on the Altar Table. However, if lector #2 has any difficulty carrying the book, the lectors can discuss amongst themselves who is best suited to carry the Gospel Book.

- Lector (no Book) follows the Altar Servers, followed by
- Lector with Gospel Book, followed by  
[When Deacon is present, two lectors walk side by side, followed by Deacon carrying Gospel Book, followed by]
- Celebrant.

**Lector #1 (no Book)** stops and bows at the bottom step of the Altar, then follows the Altar Servers walking around the Altar to their chairs. (ok for lectors to turn left at the Altar and walk to chairs on the east (convent) side of the sanctuary.

**Lector #2 (with Book)** follows lector#1. At the bottom step of the Altar, bow to the Altar. Walk up the Altar steps then to the left around the Altar table to the south (parking lot side) center edge of the Altar table. Place the Gospel Book in the center of the Altar table, then turn and walk to the lector chair.

**Approaching the Altar for Readings:** The lector **walks directly to the Ambo** (no longer bows to the Altar). **ADJUST THE MIC!** Begin with "A Reading from the..." After the last line of each reading, **give a pause (count to 5) before saying "The Word of the Lord"**. Stay at Ambo until the Congregation finishes the response "Thanks Be to God"; Then leave the Ambo; walk to chair.

Note: Sun9am Mass when there is a Children's Liturgy of the Word (CLOW), Celebrant says a brief prayer and children are escorted into the side Chapel. Lector #1 simply waits at the Ambo until children have exited the room before starting the first reading.

**Universal Prayers**, also called General Intercessions/ Prayer of the Faithful: [If a Deacon is serving, Deacons reads this] Lector#1 proceeds with the lector book directly to the Ambo (pulpit) while the congregation is saying the Creed (no bow to the altar). The deacon or lector needs to already be at the Ambo microphone before the congregation gets to the end of the Creed.

- Be sure you read the correct names for that specific Mass (special intentions).
- **Remain at the Ambo until the priest has finished the Closing Prayer** before returning directly to your chair.

**Announcements:** When the priest stands after communion, Lector#2 walks to the edge of Altar near Cantor Stand with the lector book. **After the priest finishes the Prayer after Communion, step up to the Cantor Stand** (not the Ambo), **ADJUST THE MIC!** and read the announcements. The celebrant normally gives an eye signal to lector when to start reading the announcements.

**Recessional:** Following the Concluding Prayer walk to sacristy alcove behind Altar Servers OR, walk to the eastern/convent side alcove. When the Recessional Hymn begins, the Altar Servers & Lectors walk to line up in a row at bottom of north Altar steps. Celebrant (and Deacon, if serving) in center, Altar Servers on each side, and lectors at far ends ("the bookends"),

- Altar Servers and Lectors BOW simultaneously with Priest, then ALL turn around and recess down the main aisle in same order as the processional; Altar servers FIRST, Lectors side by side, then Deacon (if serving), then Priest.

**After the Recessional but before you leave**, go back and retrieve the lector book from the lector chair and bring it back to the sacristy table and CROSS OUT the special intention for the Mass you just read. This GREATLY HELPS the next lector avoid reading the wrong name(s) at the following Mass.

**YOUR Assignments:** It's **YOUR** ministry obligation **for finding a replacement lector** or switching assignments with another lector when you can't make your assignment. You need to make the effort of calling and/or e-mailing other lectors to cover your assignment and kindly refrain from simply calling the other lector assigned to your Mass to ask them to do both readings; That's the LAST option. Use the lector e-mail list and/or make telephone calls to lectors that have no e-mail address. If you've already tried on your own and haven't had success, do contact me for assistance.

## Quick Reference Sheet: MASSES WITHOUT MUSIC (such as 7:30am Sunday)

**Lector Duties at 7:30am Mass are Different than other Masses.** Use the basic Liturgical Guidelines, Sign in upon arrival to the sacristy, review the antiphons in missalette, with the following exceptions:

Generally, only 1 lector is assigned and does both roles, but **IF** a 2<sup>nd</sup> lector is present, then:

- **Lector #1** reads the Welcome and Entrance Antiphon, First Reading, the Responsorial Psalm, & Communion Antiphon.
- **Lector #2** reads the Second Reading, the Universal Prayer (unless a Deacon is serving), & the Announcements.

Note: It's OK to switch duties as needed, such as if lector#1 needs to also assist as an EM – just be sure to clearly communicate in advance with each other to avoid confusion.

1. **Processional.** There is no formal Processional.

- **Lector #1.** When the Celebrant is ready to leave the sacristy, **Lector #1 proceeds to the Altar, bows to the Altar** as you pass the Altar, **and proceed directly to the lectern** (also called the cantor's stand); **NOT** to the Ambo/Pulpit, **and welcomes the congregation.** Typically the lector says:  
*"Welcome to St Mary's on this (name of the Sunday; Example: First Sunday in Ordinary Time). Please turn off or silence all electronic devices.*
  - **Add any script provided for the Mass** – Typically includes the name(s) of person(s) whom the bread and wine offerings may be in remembrance of.
  - End with *"Father/Msgr (say his name) is our Celebrant. Please STAND and join me in reciting 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 Celebrant bows to the Altar, Lector returns to lector chair.

- **Lector #2** (if serving): When celebrant is ready to leave the sacristy, Lector#2 walks to (and stands at) the lector chair before Mass starts, bowing to Altar as you pass the Altar.
2. **Readings and Responsorial Psalm:** Lector #1 reads the first reading, then gives a 10 second pause (count to 10), then proceeds with reading (not sung) the Responsorial Psalm. If 1 lector, then give another longer pause (count to 10) before starting the Second Reading. If 2 lectors, then lector#1 returns to lector chair after completing the Responsorial Psalm while at same time, lector #2 walks to Ambo.
3. **Communion Antiphon** After the priest has received communion, Lector #2 walks to the lectern/cantor stand and says (or similar): *"Please join me in reciting the Communion Antiphon on page \_\_\_ of the missalette"*. Give the assembly a few seconds (count to 5) to find the page before you begin reciting the Antiphon. After reading the Antiphon, return to your lector chair.
4. **Announcements:** When the priest stands after communion, Lector#2 walks to the edge of Altar near Cantor Stand with the lector book. After the priest finishes the Prayer after Communion, step up to the Cantor Stand (not the Ambo), and read the announcements. The celebrant will normal eye signal to lector when you can start.
5. **Recessional.** There is no formal Recessional. After the Priest says "The Mass has ended..", the Lector(s) walk directly from their chairs to the sacristy. Carry the Lector Book & return it to the sacristy table. Remember to cross out names in the general intercession for the Mass(es) which have PAST.