

Lector Handbook



Some of Our St. Mary Lectors (Annual Meeting October 2014)

Church of Saint Mary

1300 Northern Blvd.
Manhasset, NY 11030
516-627-0385

St Mary's Website: www.stmary.ws

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, and 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. Experienced Jr. lectors serve in the Main Church; we attempt to have Jr. Lectors serve at Sun5pm Mass frequented by teens.
2. **Adult lectors (over 18):** need to complete the parish and diocesan volunteer registration and background check forms (available on the lector webpage).
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.
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.** 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 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 also be willing to rotate assignments through the entire Mass schedule. However, lectors can always 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 assigned lector remains responsible for being sure their assignment is covered.

YOUR PART: The ministry of Lector is an important role and an awesome task. Your external attitudes” and “appearances” are noted by the worshipping community. 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. This allows lectors to submit any special work/ school/ sports or vacation needs esp. during these holiday periods by each cut-off date. The Lector Coordinator will attempt to accommodate such special needs and Lectors can always switch/trade assignments with other lectors. Each lector remains responsible for covering their assignment.

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.

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. Here’s **How to best achieve a successful trade/switch:**

When sending an eMail:

- Use a **clear ‘subject’ line** such as: **Seek switch for (date) (mass time) lector # (1 or 2)**. This will:
 - ✓ Make it clearer which lector role (#1 or #2) the recipient will have; so they study the correct reading without needing to research the schedule to find which role you were assigned to.
 - ✓ Helps you get **faster successful** responses.
- It’s helpful to save a recent message from me (Rich B) that was sent to ALL lectors in your e-mailbox. Use that prior message with your email “Reply to All” button; **HOWEVER**, always **update the subject** to reflect your **current subject** and **erase the old message text** before you hit ‘send’. Otherwise your message confuses some recipients – or, they may not read your message at all.
- The Lector Contact list provides a column for **“Mass Typically Attends”**. This helps identify lectors who desire the particular mass time you need coverage for. If you are searching for someone to cover a 7:30am, contacting the lectors who list 7:30am as the Mass they typically attend simply gets better and faster coverage. The last column gives dates lectors are not available so you don’t waste time calling lectors who aren’t available on the date date you are seeking coverage for. .

Phone Calls:

- If you DON’T Receive any successful eMail replies in a reasonable time frame, **Phone Calls are necessary**. Only those lectors that have e-mail addresses are on the e-list; others need phone calls. While many lectors use and receive eMails on smartphones, **but not everyone on the eList reads their eMail every day**. Use the lector contact list and (1) call lectors with NO eAddress (blank) in eMail column, and (2) call those names highlighted in yellow who receive hard copy mailings.

Your Last Resort:

- Contact the other assigned lector at your Mass and ask them to do both roles.
- *It is almost time for the Mass to start and I can’t get to church/ my assignment . What should I do?* You can try calling the parish office **627-0385 sacristy Ext 1023. This is a Confidential #. It’s ONLY OK to call just BEFORE a Mass begins** while priest, altar servers and lectors are gathering in sacristy. This way someone may be able to solicit a volunteer lector from the congregation. Do NOT call this ext after a Mass time has already started.

We **rely on you making the effort to get coverage** whenever possible, and routine follow-ups are needed on missed assignments. Don’t worry-You’ll always be forgiven (practice what we preach, lol)! Kindly just let the Lector Coordinator know after-the-fact (so the coordinator doesn’t need to track down who missed the assignment).

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. You can be less concerned about how you are dressed; your offer to help will normally be welcomed. However, 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. The General Rule of Thumb - If you are dressed neatly, better for you to offer to volunteer. Any individual celebrant could potentially personally prefer that you not lector based upon how you’re dressed at the moment.

3. **LECTOR PREPARATION: Even the most well experienced lectors need to prepare!**

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 has links to helpful resources (readings, background of readings, & biblical term pronunciation guides).

- Visit: <http://stmary.ws/94-2/lectors/>
- Reading background is available on-line at www.lectorprep.org

Lectors can take home a copy of the Missalette; extra copies are usually available in the sacristy. They are especially helpful for 7:30am assignments to review Antiphons and the Responsorial Psalm Don’t take the whole hard cover & songbook home; just take the booklet with the readings.

Some masses will have **multiple options for readings**. The Celebrant chooses which readings are to be read. A lector will not know which reading(s) will be read, so needs to be prepared for all of the optional readings. Arrive early to the sacristy on such days and 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. Where an option for Long or Short versions are available, always prepare for the **long version**. Some Celebrants might ask which reading YOU prefer, and allow you to read the one you desire. However, 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 simply 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. Make your proclamation a prayer. As you gain more confidence with experience, **make eye contact with the congregation**. Keeping one thumb on the lectionary margin as you read helps prevent you losing your place when raising your eyes. Having the microphone adjusted to your mouth level is important; it’s OK to adjust the mic as you speak if you realize your projection is weak.

Expression—All communication expresses subjectivity (emotion, sentiments, etc). In the liturgy we must distinguish between individual expression and symbolic representation of a situation. While the lector should become invisible to the Word, some individual expression is necessary to make the proclamation come alive. **This expression should never take precedence over the Word**; it’s not a theatrical performance. 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 [biblical word “Pronunciation Guide” \(link\)](#) is on the lector webpage with “audible” samples.
 - The lector workbook frequently gives specific difficult word pronunciation, and
 - Hard-copy Pronunciation booklet is usually available under the Lectionary in the sacristy.
 - You’ll occasionally find words with more than one acceptable pronunciation.
2. 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.
3. Examine the phrasing. The readings are written in sense lines which are an aide to good proclamation and stay in a comfortable rhythm.
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**.
2. Use **punctuation marks as natural points 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 (pace)**. Beginners often read much too fast. Speak slowly enough for clarity without being too slow (becomes boring if too slow).
5. **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. Stand with reverence and concentration, not leaning over the Ambo or the Lectionary.
 - b. Muscles need to be relaxed, without any tense-up in your upper body.
 - c. Feet should be firmly “planted” and slightly apart. Put all tension in your feet if you are nervous, but avoid nervous shaking of your foot (many congregants can see your feet; It’s distracting).

www.lectorprep.org has a good summary of reading background, pronunciation and proclamation tips that you can use instead of, or addition to, your Lector Workbook. It increases your confidence and in turn help you proclaim better – with confidence and more effectively.

GENERAL LITURGICAL GUIDELINES

1. **General Reading Duties.** The lector is a liturgical minister of the Mass and other sacraments whose 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 (When a Cantor is present, it is sung by the Cantor).
 - to read any Announcements.
2. **Arrive Early.** Arrive 10-15 minutes before mass. Sign in and check in with the Celebrant 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 them OFF before the start of the mass. Never answer a cell phone call or text while you are serving. If you carry a beeper, put it 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, the sacristan turns on and tests the microphone well in advance of the start of the first mass. The lighted microphone switch is on the wall just outside the SOUTH sacristy door; when its lighted, the mic's are ON..
5. **Lector Binder: Universal Prayers** (aka Prayer of the Faithful, or General Intercessions) are found in the lector book on the sacristy table when you arrive. Review the Intercessions before the Mass. Check with the Celebrant if any name appears difficult to pronounce. We try to include phonetic pronunciations, but sometimes it simply is not available and you need to do your best guess. **The last intercession 'for whom this Mass is offered' is important.** Each Mass has a different name(s). Parishioners sign up way in advance for specific Masses in remembrance of loved ones, and family members often travel from out of town for that specific Mass. If a lector reads the wrong names, as you might imagine, those family members will be upset.
Exception for Deacons: When a Deacon serving at your Mass, the Deacon will read the Universal Prayer. The deacon typically has a separate book for this purpose

FOR SUNDAY MASSES WITH MUSIC

6. **Lector Binder: Universal Prayers/Announcements:** 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 it is ready for the lector at the next Mass to read the correct name for the current Mass.
7. **Two Lectors.** At St. Mary's two lectors are assigned to each Masses with Music, subject to availability of have a sufficient number of lectors in the ministry. 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 increases the congregation's attention, and to add more solemnity to the celebration. It additionally provides more laity opportunity to be involved in the liturgy. There are times (such as weekday holydays) where there are not enough lectors available to cover two lectors at each Mass. In all such cases, one lector may need to perform both lector roles.

8. **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. Confirm with the other lector assigned 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 readings. It's also acceptable for the two lectors decide amongst each other before the start of the mass to change roles, such as when lector#2 may prefer to do the Universal Prayers because someone close to them is being prayed for.
9. **Processional:** In the entrance procession
- Altar servers lead.
 - Lectors follow after the Altar Servers, walking side by side. Lectors may carry a missalette in order to sing along with the congregation as they process, but should NOT carry the Lector Book.
 - A Deacon (if any) and then the Celebrant(s), follow the lectors.
 - 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.
 - Lectors bow together at bottom of Altar step, then can either:
 - Turn right** and follow the Altar Servers around the sanctuary to the lector chairs, **or**
 - Turn left** and walk around the east/ Convent side (this alcove is typically not in use), to the lector chairs. **While it is a shorter walk, it also has a step – be careful!**
- Exception:** Sunday 7:30am Mass (see Mass without Music protocol) :There is no processional. If one Lector, s/he walks to the cantor stand to announce/ recite the Entrance Antiphon. If two lectors present, Lector #2 walks to a lector chair before start of Mass. 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.
10. **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 when a reading is typed separately in a blessed binder (notable example is on Palm Sunday where the reading of the passion have binders noting individual parts of the narrator, voice, Jesus and Crowd).

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, where 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 and the celebrant will be the only ones who notice minor errors.

- a. **1st Reading:** The lector begins with “**A Reading from the Book...**” 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 walks to the Ambo. Wait until the assembly is seated/ settled down, ready to hear God’s Word. **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.** Begin with the standard “*A Reading from the...*”. **At the end, PAUSE (count to 5) before saying “The Word of the Lord”** After your reading, proceed directly from the Ambo to the lector chair (no bowing to the altar).

Exception: Sun Family Mass (9am). On most Sundays (as often as possible), a Childrens’ Liturgy is given in the chapel. The celebrant will call the children to assemble. While the children are walking to the Chapel, the lector proceeds to the Ambo, but **wait at the Ambo until all children have exited to the Chapel** before starting the 1st reading.

- b. **Responsorial Psalm:** Most Sunday Masses, this is sung by the Cantor at the Ambo. If the psalm is not sung (Masses without music) the lector should pause (count to 5) before starting the 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 antiphon is usually all that is needed to queue the assembly for their response.

Exception: 7:30am Mass (see Mass without Music protocol) -Lector #1 stays at the Ambo, **Pause at end of First Reading (count to 5)** then continues with reciting the Responsorial Psalm from the Ambo. If there is only one lector present, **Pause at end of Psalm (count to 5)** before starting the 2nd reading.

- c. **2nd Reading:** 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. **Do NOT say “The second reading is from...”** At the end, **PAUSE (count to 5)** before saying “*The Word of the Lord*” After your reading, proceed directly from the Ambo to the lector chair (no bowing to the altar).

Exceptions:

- If only ONE lector serves, the lector bows ONCE before walking to the Ambo for the 1st reading. When going to the Ambo again for the 2nd reading, go directly to the Ambo (no bow to Altar).
- 7:30am Mass (see Mass without Music protocol) When there is no music, Do NOT read the Gospel Acclamation. When not sung, the acclamation should not be used.

The pauses are necessary in order for the congregation to be able to absorb what has just been read, before beginning the next scripture. At Masses with music the changing of lectors and cantors provide a ‘natural pause’ for the congregation to absorb and reflect. When there is no music, these intentional additional pauses are needed.

11. **The Universal Prayer (sometimes called “Prayer of the Faithful” or “General Intercessions”):** While the congregation recites the Profession of Faith (the Nicene or Apostle’s 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 Celebrant 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 Celebrant finishes 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 Universal Prayer following the above protocol. Both lectors remain seated.

12. **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 “but deliver us from evil”.

13. **Sign of Peace:** At the Sign of Peace the Lectors normally exchange the sign with the fellow lector, Celebrant(s) and Cantor, or those directly behind you.

14. **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 lectors should sit.

After the priests have received communion, lectors proceed to the step of the sanctuary to receive, then return to their seat. Remain near that altar step to receive communion, then return to lector chair.

Note for 10:30am Mass: The 10:30 Mass typically offers both host and precious blood Eucharist, and the front aisle can become crowded. Try to alleviate crowding by moving to a less crowded area. If there is space available in the east alcove (convent side), the lector should sit or stand there. Use same discretion during holidays.

15. **Announcements:** The announcements (if any) are read by Lector #2 after the celebrant reads the Prayer After Communion. A lector **should not be walking/ moving while the Celebrant prays the Prayer After Communion**. Following communion, many celebrants sit for a brief period of reflection (optional, depends on Celebrant). The Celebrant then stands to begin the Prayer After Communion. As soon as the celebrant stands, **Lector #2 walks from the lector chair to the edge of the Altar step, near the Cantor Stand. As soon as the Celebrant finishes the Prayer after Communion, the lector steps up to the Cantor Stand (not the Ambo) to begin the Announcements**. Most celebrants do give an “eye signal” to the lector to begin.
16. **Recessional:** After the announcements, and the celebrant says “The Mass has ended..”, the Altar Servers and lectors walk around the sanctuary (on the side of the sacristy). As soon as Altar Servers begin to assemble, lectors should begin walking.
- It is acceptable for lectors to take the “shorter walk” around the east (Convent side) to front of Altar.
 - wait until congregation begins to sing the Recessional song to walk to the front center aisle
 - It is acceptable for any lector having difficulty walking to NOT participate in the Processional or Recessional. (ie: sit at Lector chair prior to start of Mass, stay at lector chair during Recessional)
- As the recessional hymn begins**, walk to the front of Altar (north side) and line up at bottom of the Altar steps, facing the Altar. Altar servers are in center, with one lector at each end (‘the bookends). If one lector is serving, it doesn’t matter which end the lector stands at.
- When the Celebrant and Deacon bow to the Altar**, lectors and Altar Servers all bow to the Altar simultaneously. As the celebrant turns 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 to the exit.
- Exception:** At Masses without music (Sun7:30am), lectors walk directly from the lector chairs to the sacristy.
17. After Exiting, lector and Altar Servers typically return directly to the sacristy (the Celebrant usually continues to the exit to greet parishioners). A Lector needs to retrieve the Lector book from the lector chair and return it to the table in the sacristy. **Cross out names in the Universal Prayer for the mass(es) which have PAST** so that the next lectors read the correct names for the following Mass.

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

Lector Duties at 7:30am Mass are Different than other Masses. Use the basic Liturgical Guidelines, with the following exceptions: Arrive early, Sign in (inadditional to Universal Prayers, announcements, also **read the Antiphons in the missalette**). In general, there will be only one lector assigned who will perform both lector roles. However, if there are two lectors serving, then:

- **Lector #1** reads the Entrance Antiphon, First Reading, the Responsorial Psalm, & Communion Antiphon.
 - **Lector #2** reads the Second reading, the General Intercessions (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.

1. **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. 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.
 - **If there is a second lector, Lector #2:** When celebrant is ready to leave the sacristy, Lector#2 simply 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. Remember to cross out names in the general intercession for the mass(es) which have PAST.

DAILY MASS (Weekday 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 Weekday Mass at Noon, the Parish sometimes adds a weekday 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.
- 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 (from 7&9am Masses).
- Give at least a 5 second pause between the end of the 1st reading and starting the Responsorial Psalm..
- There is no recited Gospel Acclamation
- 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 (the lector chairs are not typically used since 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 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 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:*

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 (aka General Intercessions—Prayers 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 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 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 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 Prayers of the Faithful and Announcements. It is marked PRESIDER on the front.

????? FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS?????

What time should I arrive?

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 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 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://stmary.ws/94-2/lectors/>
The Lector Schedule is posted on the St. Mary's website. Hard copy is posted in the sacristy with copies under the sacristy lectionary. You can also 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. This allows others present to share their ministry. However, when there is a need, a lector may serve in another additional capacity (EM or usher for collections).

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Moderator

Msgr McCann

Parish Office: 627-0385 ext. 1004

e-mail: pastor@stmary.ws

Sacristy: 627-0385 Ext1023 (Use Discretion)

Lector Coordinator /Scheduling:

Rich Bentley

Home- 627-2695

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

e-mail: Rbentley@downstate.edu (preferred method)

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). 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 GUniversal Prayers. If no deacon, review the Universal Prayers in the lector book and be sure the last intercession ("for whom this mass is offered") has already been crossed out for any Mass 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: Proceed: Altar Servers FIRST, then **Lectors (if 2, side by side)**, then Deacon (if serving), then Priest.

- Altar servers proceed to the base of Altar step, turn right and walk around sanctuary (sacristy side) to their chairs.
- **Lectors: at base of Altar steps, bow together to the Altar; turn right & follow Altar Servers around sanctuary to lector chairs.** Its also OK to turn left and walk the convent (east) side to lector chairs when that vestibule is not in use.
- The priest walks up the steps to the altar alone (or with deacon side by side).
- The 7:30am (Mass without Music) & 9am Family Mass protocols are different - refer to the Lector Handbook for details.

Approaching the Altar for Readings: The **first time** each lector approaches for their reading, the lector walks to the center (aligned with the overhead cross) faces and BOWS to the altar, then walks to the Ambo. **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".**

Universal Prayers (aka General Intercessions/ Prayer of the Faithful): [If a Deacon is serving, he reads this; lector#1 remains seated.]

- 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 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 will normal eye signal to lector when you can start.

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. Altar Servers in center. One lector on far left end; One lector at far right end ("the bookends"), with Priest (and Deacon, if serving) in center at top of Altar steps.

- 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. Also – please refrain from simply calling the other lector assigned to your Mass to ask them to do both readings (that option is for **LAST MINUTE TRUE EMERGENCIES ONLY**). Tools to make that an easier process: use the lector e-mail list; make telephone calls to lectors that have no e-mail address, and contact lectors that normally attend the mass you are seeking a replacement for (see the "Norm Attends Mass" column on the contact list). I remain available to help lectors with any **TRUE EMERGENCY** or if you want me to post an e-mail message for you to all lectors on our Lector e-list, but please realize that I am not responsible for covering your assignment for you.

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, with the following exceptions:

- review the antiphons in missalette,
- Typically, **ONE will serve and perform all lector roles.** Only if two lectors are present, then:
Lector #1 reads the Entrance Antiphon, 1st Reading, the Responsorial Psalm, & Communion Antiphon.
Lector #2 reads the 2nd 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.

1. **ProceSSIONal.** There is no formal ProceSSIONal. When the Celebrant is ready to leave the sacristy, **Lector proceeds to the Cantor Stand (NOT to the Ambo) ADJUST THE MIC! 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. 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 (only if there is a second lector): When celebrant is ready to leave the sacristy, Lector#2_walks to (and stands at) the lector chair before Mass starts.

2. **Readings and Responsorial Psalm:** Lector bows to Altar, walk to Ambo (**ADJUST THE MIC!**) and begin the 1st Reading with *only "A reading from the"*. After last line, **pause (count to 5) before saying "the Word of the Lord"**. Give a long pause (count to 8), before starting the Responsorial Psalm; Start reading the responsorial (**no intro words**). After last line, give a long **pause (count to 8)** before starting the 2nd reading. **After last line, pause (count to 5) before saying "The Word of the Lord"**. Lector then returns to lector chair.
3. **Universal Prayer:** Lector proceeds with the lector book directly to the Ambo (pulpit) while the congregation is saying the Creed (**no** bow to the altar). 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 Mass** (special intentions).
 - **Remain at the Ambo until the priest has finished the Closing Prayer** before returning directly to your chair.
4. **Communion Antiphon** After the priest has received communion, Lector 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.
5. **Announcements:** When the priest stands after communion, Lector 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 will normal eye signal to lector when you can start.
6. **Recessional.** There is no formal Recessional. After the Priest says "The Mass has ended..", the Lectors 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.