

Lector

Preparation

- *Ideally*, there will be two Lectors reading at our Masses; one Lector for the First Reading and the other Lector for the Second Reading. It is acceptable for there to be only one, however.
- Preparation and rehearsal are critical. Remember, we are proclaiming the Word, not just reading it. Prepare for both readings, in case the other scheduled Lector is not present. Please note that there are online resources available at the end of these guidelines to assist you in preparing for being a Lector at Mass.
- Arrive 10-15 minutes before Mass begins to review the Readings and to communicate with Father about questions, if necessary.
- Before Mass begins, the Lector for the 1st Reading (or the solo Lector) should proceed to the Ambo (or the sacristy if the Lectionary has not yet been set out) and find the readings in the lectionary book and mark them with the ribbon, if that has not been done already (though it will usually be done by Father as part of his preparation for Mass).
- Review the Musician Planning Sheet to know if you will need to lead the Responsorial Psalm. Father usually keeps this sheet with him. Consult him if you can't find the sheet.
- Ensure that the book stand is placed at the center, front portion of the Altar. Check to make sure that there is enough room to reach the altar from the front since sometimes there may be decorations in front of the altar that may make it difficult to reach the book stand on the altar.
- Before Mass begins, the Lector should carry the Book of the Gospels and proceed to the back of the Church to gather with the Priest and the Altar Servers for the opening processional.

Processional

1. The Lector will carry the Book of the Gospels as part of the Opening Processional. You should situate yourself behind the cross-bearer/Altar Servers and directly in front of the Priest during the opening processional.
2. You should carry the Book of the Gospels with two hands out in front of you at a comfortable height for you. Preferably, the bottom of the Book will be raised slightly higher than your eyes (so you can clearly see as you process). The front cover of the Book (ornate side) should be facing away from you.
3. The procession should proceed directly to the steps in front of the altar where it will pause for the Priest and Altar Servers to genuflect. The Lector should not bow while holding the Book of the Gospels but proceed directly to the front of the Altar. If at all possible, do not go around to the back side of the altar. Place the Book of the Gospels in the book stand on the altar with the front cover (ornate side) facing the congregation. You'll need to turn the book around in order to do this.
4. Once you have placed the Book of the Gospels on the altar, step down from the front of the altar, pausing to briefly bow towards the altar, and then return to your pew.

Readings

1. After the Priest has read the opening prayer (this is the prayer after the singing of the Gloria) and the congregation begins to sit down, the first Lector proceeds up the center aisle towards the Ambo, pausing to briefly bow before the altar.
2. Announce "A Reading from ..." then pause *briefly* before beginning the actual reading. Do not announce anything other than "A Reading from..."

3. After you have completed the reading, pause momentarily, look at the Assembly and announce, “The Word of the Lord.” Do NOT pick up the lectionary as you do this.
- 4A. If the Musician Planning Sheet instructs that the **Psalm will not be sung, read the Psalm**. Remember to look up and raise the arm and hand that is on the same side as the majority of the assembly so they know when to respond. (*If there are two Lectors, turn to the Second Reading, leave the Ambo, do a slight bow towards the Altar, and return to your pew. If there is only one Lector, continue to the Second Reading once you have completed reading the Psalm*).
- 4B. If the Musician Planning Sheet instructs that the **Psalm will be sung**, step back from the Ambo and look at the musicians so they know you are aware they will be singing the Psalm. (*If there are two Lectors, the first Lector leaves now, doing a slight bow towards the Altar, and return to your pew. If there is only one Lector, continue to the Second Reading once the musicians have completed the Psalm*).
5. The Lector now reads the Second Reading. Announce, “A Reading from...” Pause *briefly* before beginning the actual reading.
6. After you have completed the reading, pause momentarily, look at the Assembly and announce, “The Word of the Lord.” Do NOT pick up the lectionary as you do this.
7. As a courtesy, please close the lectionary and place it on the shelf in the Ambo so the Priest has room for the Book of the Gospels on the Ambo. Please make sure that the Intercessions sheet remains on top of the lectionary for the commentator to read.
8. Once you have placed the lectionary on the shelf, leave the Ambo, do a slight bow toward the Altar, and return to your pew.

Resources:

<http://www.usccb.org/bible/> Provides the readings for any given day’s Mass. Make sure you choose the Sunday Mass readings for most weekends.

<http://www.lectorprep.org/> (provides a variety of preparation materials for the readings)

<http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings-audio.cfm> (provides a podcast of the reading – you can listen to someone else do the reading)