



St. Michael

Poplar Springs, Roman Catholic Church

Lector's Prayer

*May the Lord be in our heart, on our mind,
and on our lips, that we may worthily
proclaim his Word.*

Jesus was a lector.
“He went into the synagogue,
according to his custom on the Sabbath day,
and he rose up to read.”
Luke 4:17

Were not our hearts burning within us on the
road while he opened the Scriptures to us?
Luke 24: 32

The lector is the storyteller of the community.
The story gives meaning to our lives. One who
truly proclaims the Scriptures in the midst of
the assembly is at home in the Scriptures, loves
them, prays with them.
Gabe Huck, 1984

The treasures of the Bible are to be opened up
more lavishly, so that a richer share in God's
Word may be provided for the faithful.
Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (CSL), 51

“When you answer the call to be a minister of the word (one who proclaims the Bible readings to the assembled faith community), you enter a deeper relationship with the word of God as revealed in sacred scripture. You take upon yourself the duty and privilege of bringing the printed word to life – making it flesh, so to speak. Your ministry as reader gives choice to God's healing and strengthening word as it goes forth irrevocable to the ends of the earth, achieving the purpose for which God sent it.”
- Aelred Rosser from “A Well Trained Tongue”

***Thank you for your stewardship of time
and talent.***

What kind of preparation should I do before the weekend?

- Be sure to obtain a copy of the Workbook for Lectors. This book has all the scripture readings for the entire liturgical year.
- At least once during the week, preferably several times, read through the Scripture readings a few times. Consider reading them aloud to yourself, or with other family members. Bringing the Holy Scriptures into your home is rewarding by itself.
- Need pronunciation help? Reflections? Consider one of these online resources:
 - <http://netministries.org/Bbasics/bwords.htm>
 - <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/060314.cfm>
 - <http://www.lectorresources.com/prep.html>
 - <http://www.graceonlinelibrary.org/blog/bible-names-pronunciation-tool/>
 - <http://www.lectorprep.org/>

What if I am unable to attend my scheduled Mass?

- It is very important that you try to get a substitute for your Mass. The email chain seems to be successful.

When do I arrive for Mass on my scheduled day?

- Be sure to arrive at church at least fifteen minutes early. As you arrive, be sure to sign in.
- Help keep the vesting area a place of prayer by minimizing idle discussions. The homilist is preparing to preach.

What kind of preparation should I do after signing in?

- Check the lectionary to ensure it is set for the correct day. Also check for page turns, be comfortable with the phrasing required to make a smooth page turn. The altar servers can place the lectionary on the stand when they light the candles.
- Look at the general intercessions. Read through them a couple times. Check for any names you cannot pronounce, and ask the priest or other person if you are unsure. If a deacon is present, the deacon will pray the intercessions.
- If only one lector is present, it's a good time to check the congregation for another lector. The fullest expression of proclaiming the Word is for there to be two lectors.
- This is also a time to check to be sure there are two altar servers. If not, please make an announcement. There may be trained servers in the congregation that could step forward.
- Five minutes before Mass starts, just after the parish bells ring, read the announcements from the choir area microphones.

Where should I be in the processional?

- Proceed in behind the altar servers.
- Line up in front of the altar to the left of center so the priest can be in the center.
- The lector holding the Book of Gospels does NOT bow at the altar but remains standing.
- Once the priest (and deacon) move up the stairs, the Book of Gospels is placed on the altar. Proceed to your seat.
- The lector that is NOT holding the Book of Gospels can wait for the other lector to come back down and then you can both go to your seats.

Proclaiming the Word

- After the priest recites the opening prayer, as the congregation is sitting down, start walking to the ambo. Do not rush, but do not go too slowly either. **Bow toward the altar** either while passing in front of it or before ascending the stairs to approach the ambo.
- As you approach the ambo, adjust the microphone slowly. After everyone has quieted down, looking out at the congregation, announce, “A reading from...” A short pause, and then continue. It might be helpful to have this introduction memorized.
- Remember to look up once in a while, and speak in a firm, clear, and loud voice.
- Believing in the truth of the scriptures you proclaimed helps make the scriptures “come alive” in the hearts of those listening.
- Be careful of your p’s into the microphone. After you finish the reading, pause, look up, and then say, “The Word of the Lord.”
- After the response, make any page turns necessary, take one step back, and reflect on the Word of God. You are a model for the congregation. Silence and reflection is integral in the liturgy.
- Wait until the cantor for the Psalm begins to approach and then return to your seat, bowing once again towards the altar
- The second lector takes the lectionary and places it on the shelf.

Prayer of the Faithful

- If there is a Deacon standing with the priest, he will pray the general intercessions. If there is no Deacon, then you will pray them.
- As the congregation nears the end of reciting the Profession of Faith, approach the altar, arriving at the ambo by the time the profession is completed.
- Remember you are leading the congregation in prayer – not reading a list. Pray out loud and with the feeling that comes from the Holy Spirit.
- Most intercessions are two parts – the object of our prayer followed by what we are praying for. Pause before praying “Let us pray to the Lord.” No hand or arm gestures are needed to invite the people to answer, “Lord, hear our prayer.”
- Pause after praying “For the sick”, allowing the congregation to call up in their minds those friends and family who are sick.
- Wait at the ambo until the priest concludes our prayers, and sit down when the congregation sits.

- **NOTE:** Periodically there will be an announcement after the general intercessions. If so, it will be noted at the bottom of the petitions sheet. This announcement should be made after the closing prayer. Wait until everyone is seated, make the announcement and then return to your place in the assembly.

Where should I be in the recessional?

- When the priest moves from the chair, proceed to the same spot in front of the altar as in the processional
- The Book of the Gospels remains at the ambo
- Bow with the priest and follow the altar servers out

What should I do after Mass?

- Return the lectionary and prayer of the faithful to the vesting area for the next Mass.

When we gather to celebrate the Mass, God is present in the assembly, the presider, the scriptures, and the form of the consecrated Eucharistic bread and wine. The first part of the Mass, the Liturgy of the Word, focuses on the scriptures. The lector is the minister who brings these to life for all to hear.

*by Edward Horodko in ***The Effective Lector****

To be able to do this, the lector must first understand the scripture passages and then successfully communicate them to the assembly.

The factors that work together to promote effective proclamation include:

- **Rate:** Speak at a pace that expresses the sense of the reading. Change pace as needed; not too fast or too slow.
- **Pauses:** Pause to amplify the meaning of the words.
- **Tone:** Use a tone of voice appropriate for the nature of the reading and the spirit of its message.
- **Using inflection and emphasis**
- **Body:** Hold your body straight but not rigid. Don't slouch. Look like you want to communicate. Have authority. Be genuine, be unpretentious.
- **Feet:** Keep your feet firmly planted while you speak.
- **Hands:** If your height and eye-tracking abilities allow, hold the book while you speak to provide a visual reminder of the source of the words. This is good but not essential.
- **The Eyes:** Have eye contact with people when you talk to them. But not at the expense of losing your place in the text. Have an awareness of all the people, but talk to them one-to-one.
- **Face:** Use it to convey meaning, but avoid all artificiality. Be yourself.