

Readers

The reader proclaims the Sacred Scripture to those assembled at the Sacred Liturgy. The reader prepares for the proclamation of the reading throughout the week by reviewing and praying with the readings; using the practice of *Lectio Divina* is strongly encouraged. The reader possesses a deep love of Sacred Scripture.

General

- You may be scheduled for one or two readings, depending on the Mass time and location. Please check the on-line schedule regularly.
- Please review your reading(s) prior to your scheduled Mass. Readings for any day of the year can be found at <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings>.
- Readers should take care to dress in a manner befitting this ministry.
- Proclaim your reading in a clear, strong voice, taking care to read slowly. Reading should not be a performance, but a dignified liturgical act.
- As one who is strongly devoted to our Lord, it is encouraged that all readers spend a Holy Hour before the Blessed Sacrament once per week.

Before Mass

- Please arrive at least 15-minutes prior to Mass and sign-in.
- **Sit toward the front of the Church so you can enter the sanctuary promptly.**
- Spend time in prayer, asking the Lord to prepare you for the sacred duty of reading his Holy Word.

During Mass

- As soon as the priest-celebrant is seated after the Collect (Opening Prayer), IMMEDIATELY come forward and enter the sanctuary. It is appropriate to bow to the altar before you ascend the steps into the sanctuary. If there are two readers, they should bow and enter the sanctuary together.
- Proceed to the Ambo, adjust the microphone, and begin your reading with "A reading from the Book of..." or "A reading from the Letter of..." These words are clearly laid out in the Lectionary; no other words should be added.
- When the reading is over, pause briefly before saying "The Word of the Lord." There are NO bows to the lectionary or ambo prescribed by the rubrics.
- Be seated in the designated place during the Responsorial Psalm.
- For the second reading, follow the same procedures outlined above. If there are two readers, the first should remain in the sanctuary until the second reading is completed.
- When the second reading is completed, the reader should close the Lectionary and place it on the shelf in the ambo.
- Both readers should leave the sanctuary together, bowing to the altar at the bottom of the steps.

Further Reading

A Guide to *Lectio Divina*: <http://www.fisheaters.com/lectiodivina.html>

General Instruction of the Roman Missal

Relevant Sections for Readers

29. When the Sacred Scriptures are read in the Church, God himself speaks to his people, and Christ, present in his word, proclaims the Gospel. Therefore, the readings from the Word of God are to be listened to reverently by everyone, for they are an element of the greatest importance in the Liturgy. Although in the readings from Sacred Scripture the Word of God is addressed to all people of whatever era and is understandable to them, a fuller understanding and a greater efficaciousness of the word is nevertheless fostered by a living commentary on the word, that is, by the Homily, as part of the liturgical action.

38. In texts that are to be pronounced in a loud and clear voice, whether by the Priest or the Deacon, or by a reader, or by everyone, the voice should correspond to the genre of the text itself, that is, depending upon whether it is a reading, a prayer, an explanatory comment, an acclamation, or a sung text; it should also be suited to the form of celebration and to the solemnity of the gathering. Consideration should also be given to the characteristics of different languages and of the culture of different peoples.

101. In the absence of an instituted lector, other lay people may be deputed to proclaim the readings from Sacred Scripture, people who are truly suited to carrying out this function and carefully prepared, so that by their hearing the readings from the sacred texts the faithful may conceive in their hearts a sweet and living affection for Sacred Scripture.

128. After the Collect, all sit. The Priest may, very briefly, introduce the faithful to the Liturgy of the Word. Then the reader goes to the ambo and, from the Lectionary already placed there before Mass, proclaims the First Reading, to which all listen. At the end, the reader pronounces the acclamation The word of the Lord, and all reply, Thanks be to God. Then a few moments of silence may be observed, if appropriate, so that all may meditate on what they have heard.

129. Then the psalmist or the reader proclaims the verses of the Psalm and the people make the response as usual.

130. If there is to be a Second Reading before the Gospel, the reader proclaims it from the ambo. All listen and at the end reply to the acclamation, as noted above (no. 128). Then, if appropriate, a few moments of silence may be observed.

196. The reader reads from the ambo the readings that precede the Gospel. In the absence of a psalmist, the reader may also proclaim the Responsorial Psalm after the First Reading.

197. In the absence of a Deacon, the reader, after the introduction by the Priest, may announce the intentions of the Universal Prayer from the ambo.

349. Special care must be taken to ensure that the liturgical books, particularly the Book of the Gospels and the Lectionary, which are intended for the proclamation of the Word of God and hence receive special veneration, are to be in a liturgical action truly signs and symbols of higher realities and hence should be truly worthy, dignified, and beautiful.

356. In choosing texts for the different parts of the Mass, whether for the time of the year or for Saints, the norms that follow should be observed.

357. Sundays and Solemnities have assigned to them three readings, that is, from a Prophet, an Apostle, and a Gospel, by which the Christian people are instructed in the continuity of the work of salvation according to God's wonderful design. These readings should be followed strictly. In Easter Time, according to the tradition of the Church, instead of being from the Old Testament, the reading is taken from the Acts of the Apostles.

360. At times, a longer and shorter form of the same text is given. In choosing between these two forms, a pastoral criterion should be kept in mind. On such an occasion, attention should be paid to the capacity of the faithful to listen with fruit to a reading of greater or lesser length, and to their capacity to hear a more complete text, which is then explained in the Homily.