

## **St. Ambrose Lector Procedures**

- Be sure to project your voice to the congregation to the best of your ability. Read as if you have no microphone and are speaking to the people in the fifth row. The primary issue with new readers is they tend to want to get through the reading as quickly as possible. Read as slowly and clearly as possible, being sure to enunciate your words very distinctly. It is next to impossible to read too slowly. When in doubt, practice by reading to your spouse or a friend.

We must always be aware that it is an honor to proclaim the Word of God. We owe it to Him and the congregation to be as diligent in our preparation as humanly possible.

- Lectors should dress appropriately. Men should wear a suit or jacket with a clean shirt and tie. Women should wear a dress or a nice outfit suitable for mass.
- Try and be in the Sacristy at least 15 minutes prior to the beginning of Mass to meet with your partner and to review your assigned readings. The Lectionary containing the Epistles will be on the center counter in the Sacristy, and should be opened to the Sunday readings.
- Lectors are free to sit with their family wherever you choose, but try and sit in the front half of the church and at the end of the pew for quick and easy access to and from the sanctuary.
- The first lector is responsible for the weekly announcements. The announcements are in the front of the white binder containing the Prayers of the Faithful.

Approximately one minute prior to the beginning of mass, as the servers and clergy line up at the front entrance of the center aisle, the first reader will carry the Lectionary and the binder down the left center aisle to the left side of the sanctuary. Bow and then proceed up the steps to the ambo. Place the Lectionary on the altar and ensure it is turned to the first reading. You will then proceed to read the announcements.

Once the announcements are complete, place the binder under the ambo and walk back to your seat. Be sure to bow toward the sanctuary when leaving the altar.

- Since lectors are an integral part of the Mass celebration, the second reader will participate in the opening procession. If there is a deacon, the second lector will process in with a missalette, and the deacon will carry the Book of Gospels. If there is no deacon, the lector will carry the Book of Gospels in the procession. The lector always follows the servers in the procession. Try and stay 10 feet behind the servers, and carry the Book at chest level. Walk at a slow but steady pace.

When carrying the Book, go directly up the center steps to the front of the altar (do not stop or bow), and then take the Book around the right side of the altar to the back-center. You will now be facing the congregation. Place the Book, front cover facing up, on the center of the altar, turn right, and proceed back down the middle steps. Turn toward the sanctuary, bow, and then proceed directly to your seat.

Note: If there is a deacon, you will not go up the steps to the altar. Instead, bow at the bottom of the steps, and then return directly to your seat either down the left-center or right-center aisle.

- Once the priest finishes the opening prayer following the Gloria, the first lector should immediately proceed to the front of the center aisle at the bottom of the steps leading to the sanctuary. Bow, proceed up the steps, and walk directly to the ambo. At the conclusion of the reading, be sure to pause for 3 seconds before proclaiming "The Word of the Lord". You should then depart from the ambo down the front-center steps, turn and bow facing the altar, and return to your seat.

- The second lector will wait until the cantor leaves the sanctuary after the singing of the Psalms, and then proceed to the ambo per the previous instructions for the second reading. Since the priest or deacon will be using the Book of Gospels for the gospel reading, place the Lectionary Book inside the ambo once the second reading is completed. Depart in the same manner as indicated for the first lector.
- The second lector is also responsible for reading the Prayers of the Faithful if there is no deacon. The prayers will be inside the ambo in the same white binder containing the weekly announcements. The lector should be at the ambo prior to the end of the Creed with the binder opened to the appropriate page. Therefore, once the verse "For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate" is recited, proceed to the altar, this time entering the sanctuary from the side of the ambo near the baptismal font to avoid distracting the Creed. You will begin reading the Prayers of the Faithful following the priest's introductory prayer after the completion of the Creed.

Before mass, the lector should practice the proper pronunciation of the names of the deceased for whom the Mass is offered. Some names can be difficult to pronounce, and out of respect for those relatives and friends who are there to celebrate the Mass on their behalf, we owe it to them to pronounce the names correctly. Also, be sure to pause following the verse, "For those prayers we offer in the silence of our hearts". This is a time for the congregation to offer their prayers in silence to the Lord. Wait at least 5 seconds before completing the rest of the prayer.

Once you have completed the Prayers of the Faithful, turn and face the priest, wait for the priest to recite the closing prayer, and then depart down the side steps directly to your seat. Remember to bow before leaving the sanctuary.

- Do not process out following the completion of Mass. Only the servers, deacon, and priest are in the recessional procession. The Book of Gospels remains on the ambo until the Mass is completed.
- Once Mass is over, and the recessional hymn is completed, one of the lectors should return the Book of Gospels and the Lectionary from the ambo back to the Sacristy. Please ensure that the Lectionary is placed on the center counter and opened to the first reading for the lectors serving the next Mass. Following the 5:00 PM Sunday Mass, the book should be returned to the overhead cabinet to the right of the entrance of the Sacristy.

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