



The Lector at Mass

Preparation

The lector should be truly suited to this ministry and carefully prepared, so that the faithful may develop a warm and living love for Sacred Scripture from listening to the sacred readings. (GIRM #101) In the scriptures God speaks to his people, opening up to them the mystery of redemption and salvation, and offering them spiritual nourishment; and Christ himself is present in the midst of the faithful through his word. (GIRM #55)

Ambo

The ambo is reserved for the proclamation of the scripture readings, the Responsorial Psalm, and the Easter Proclamation (Exsultet). It may also be used for giving the homily and for announcing the intentions of the Prayer of the Faithful. (GIRM #309)

The Lectionary is placed on the ambo before Mass. (GIRM #118) The Lectionary is never carried in procession. (GIRM #120d)

Introductory Rite

Entrance Procession

If there is no deacon, the lector may carry the Book of the Gospels and walk in front of the priest. The Book of the Gospels is slightly elevated—carried at shoulder height, not over the head. (GIRM #194) The lector places the book on the altar, then comes down to the entrance of the sanctuary and reverences the altar with a profound bow. (GIRM #195)

The Liturgy of the Word

The readings are always proclaimed by lectors from the ambo. At the conclusion of the proclamations, the lector says, “The word of the Lord.” The people respond “Thanks be to God” as a way for them to honor the word of God, receiving it with grateful hearts. After the people’s response, there is a period

of silence so that “at the prompting of the Holy Spirit, the word of God may be grasped by the heart and a response through prayer may be prepared.” (GIRM #56, 58, 59, 128, 130)

It is preferable that the Responsorial Psalm between the First and Second Readings be sung, at least as far as the people’s response is concerned. If the Psalm is not sung, the lector may read it in a way that fosters meditation on the word of God. (GIRM #61, 196)

Division of Readings

If there are several readings, it is well to distribute them among a number of lectors. An individual reading, however, should not be divided into sections to be read by different lectors except for the reading of the Passion of the Lord. (GIRM #109)

The Prayer of the Faithful

The priest directs the prayer from his chair. The intentions are announced from the ambo or from another suitable place, by the deacon, a cantor, a lector, or one of the lay faithful. (GIRM #71) A period of silence is observed after the announcement of each intention before the invitation “we pray to the Lord...”

Concluding Rite

Announcements

Brief announcements may be made following the Prayer after Communion by the priest, deacon, or another minister. Any announcements or directions should be given from a place other than the ambo. (GIRM #105b, 166)

Dismissal

Although not necessary, the lector may leave in procession with the other ministers. The Book of the Gospels or Lectionary, however, may not be carried out in procession. (Book of Gospels Intro #22)