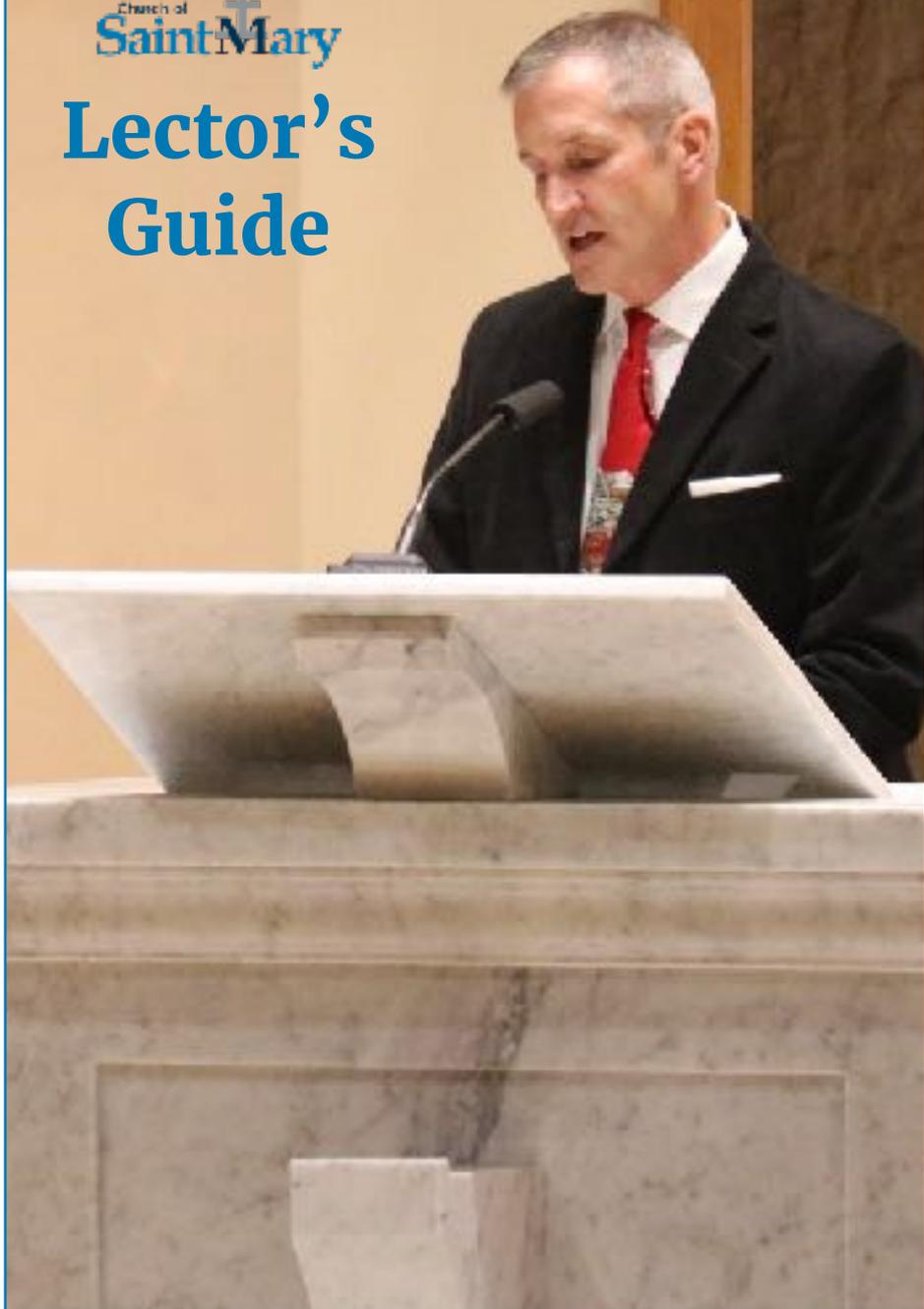


Church of  
**Saint Mary**

# Lector's Guide



## **Prayer**

Loving Father, creator of the universe,  
You call your people to worship,  
To be with you and one another at Mass.  
I thank you for having called me  
To assist others in their prayer to you.  
May I be worthy of the trust placed in me  
And through my example and service  
Bring others closer to you. Amen.

# **A Theology of Lay Liturgical Ministry**

“But you are a ‘chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own, so that you may announce the praises’ of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” All liturgical ministers are, first and foremost, members of the Body of Christ. Through their baptism they are the “holy people and royal priesthood” whose right and privilege it is to participate in the ministry of Christ. How the lay faithful exercise this ministry in the world varies, but the fullest and most fundamental expression of it has always been “conscious, active and fruitful participation in the mystery of the eucharist.” (General Instruction Of The Roman Missal – GIRM)

## **Introduction**

Since the celebration of the Eucharist is the “action of the whole Church” (GIRM, Introduction #5), everyone in the assembly has “an individual right and duty to contribute their participation” (GIRM #58). Some of the faithful are called to serve God's people in a more particular way through one of the many liturgical ministries that have flourished in the Church since the Second Vatican Council.

This diversity of roles, functions and ministries enriches our celebrations and assists us in our prayer. Serving in one of these ministries is both an honor and a responsibility, and those who commit to it need nurturing and support.

This guide has been prepared to help you grow in a deeper understanding and love for the liturgy, your ministry and ultimately the Lord whom we all serve.

# An Overview of Proclaiming the Word at Mass

## Introduction

The role of Lector is a very important one in the context of the Mass. When the Sacred Scriptures are proclaimed at Mass, 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. Those chosen to serve in the Ministry of Lector to proclaim the readings from Sacred Scripture, are people who are truly suited to carrying out this function and carefully prepare, so that by hearing the readings from the sacred texts the faithful may conceive in their hearts a sweet and living affection for Sacred Scripture.

## General Guidelines

In order to properly reverence the Word of God, it is appropriate to wear something fairly formal. At the Church of Saint Mary the preferred attire is minimally 'business casual' meaning that for:

- **Males:** Buttoned shirt, long pants or slacks, socks and closed toed shoes. Sports jackets are encouraged. No tee-shirts, jeans, or shorts. No sandals or flip-flops. Athletic shoes are okay, although not preferred, provided they are clean and not tattered.
- **Females:** Blouse or shirt, slacks, skirt, or dress. Be mindful of hem and neck lines. No flip flops or shorts. Athletic shoes are okay, although not preferred, provided they are clean and not tattered.

The Lectors proclaims from the ambo the readings that precede the Gospel. In the absence of a psalmist, the lector may also proclaim the Responsorial Psalm after the First Reading. In the absence of a deacon the Lector will also be called upon to process into Mass with The Book of the Gospels and to read the Prayers of Intercession

# Proclaiming Scripture

Begin the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> readings by saying “A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah,” for example. Do not say “The first reading is a reading from...”

The Liturgy of the Word is to be celebrated in such a way as to favor meditation, and so any kind of haste that hinders recollection is clearly to be avoided. In other words, read slowly and clearly. In the course of the Liturgy of the Word, brief periods of silence are also appropriate so that the Word of God may be grasped by the heart and a response through prayer may be prepared. Pace your time at the ambo. Pause between greeting, reading, and closing.

Close with “The Word of the Lord.” Do not say “This is the Word of the Lord.” Then a few moments of silence may be observed so that all may meditate on what they have heard. The lector can encourage this by stepping down from the ambo and in silence recites a “Glory Be” or other short prayer before returning to their seat.

Do not say, or read, the “Alleluia” or any text that follows the 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading.

## Before Mass

- Remember to fast for one hour.
- Arrive in the Sacristy at least 15 minutes before Mass.
- Sign in on the Ministry Pro Scheduler kiosk
- Read the assigned reading aloud several times.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> Lector checks the setting of the Lectionary on the ambo for the correct marking for the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> Lector verifies with the music director if a cantor will be present for the Responsorial Psalm. If not then the 1<sup>st</sup> Lector is to proclaim the Psalm.

# Mass

## Entrance Procession

Lectors ordinarily take their places in the pews with the congregation. It is recommended that Lectors sit in close proximity to the ambo on the Mary side of the altar.

In the procession to the altar, in the absence of a Deacon, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Lector may carry the Book of the Gospels, slightly elevated. In that case, the Lector walks in front of the Priest immediately following the Acolytes (if present) or altar servers in the procession.

Upon reaching the sanctuary, the Lector carrying the Book of the Gospels approaches the altar from the Saint Joseph side of the sanctuary and places the Book of the Gospels upon it, then returns to the foot of the altar in front of the ambo with hands raised to chest level folded near the heart. Genuflect or bow toward the tabernacle in unison with the presider and deacon and other liturgical ministers. Then the reader takes his own place in the assembly preferably in close proximity to the ambo.

## The First Reading

Once the assembly sits after the Opening Prayer, the First Reader walks to the center of foot of the sanctuary, makes a simple, but pronounced, head bow toward the tabernacle, walks up the steps toward the altar, turns left, walks to the ambo, pauses briefly, and begins the reading.

After the First Reading, the First Reader pauses, [leads the Responsorial Psalm in the absence of a cantor,] silently recites a short prayer, and then retraces his steps to the foot of the sanctuary, faces the tabernacle, and gives another pronounced but simple head bow before returning to their seat in the congregation.

## The Second Reading

After the Responsorial Psalm, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Lector proceeds to the ambo in the same manner as the 1<sup>st</sup> Lector. After the reading he/she places the Lectionary into the holder beneath the ambo reading

surface, pauses while silently praying a short prayer, then returns to the pew by first walking to the center foot of the steps, making another pronounced but simple head bow towards the tabernacle.

### **Prayers of the Faithful**

If a deacon is present, he will read the intentions.

In the absence of a Deacon, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Lector, after the introduction by the Priest, may announce the intentions of the Universal Prayer from the ambo.

At the words “We believe in the Holy Spirit” in the Creed, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Reader approaches the ambo by walking to the center of the steps, bowing in front of the altar, walking up the steps toward the altar, turning left toward the ambo. Read the intentions, pause and wait for the presider to finish the summary prayer after the Intercessions are read. The lector then returns to the pew by first walking to the center foot of the steps, makes another pronounced but simple head bow towards the tabernacle.

### **After Mass**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Lector resets the Lectionary to the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading and places it on top of ambo for the next Mass. If this is the last Mass of the weekend the Lectionary can remain in the slot under the ambo top.