

Duties of Sunday and Holy Day Readers St John the Evangelist Campus

1. Arrive at least 20 minutes before Mass begins.
2. Go to the vesting room, check that the audio system light is on as you pass by it, sign in, check the schedule to see who is reading with you, introduce yourself to the other reader if you do not know each other, and then review your reading for that Mass. The first reader will carry the Lectionary to the ambo, but let the second reader have a chance to scan the reading before you do so. When placing the Lectionary on the ambo, be sure to open it to the appropriate page and place the ribbons so that pages can be easily turned. If you need to adjust the microphone, do not touch the microphone itself - instead adjust the wand that the microphone is attached to.
3. If you are the first reader, you will also read the Introductions for that Mass. Be aware that each Mass time has its own specific sheet. (Also, for most Holy Days, the cantor will do a short introduction.) Please read it over carefully before Mass. Make sure that there have been no last minute changes in who is listed. (You can check with the ushers and the organist about the gift bearers & cantors, etc.) Check on the proper pronunciation of names with the presiding priest or deacon. Wait until the organist has finished, and check to see that the Priest is ready to approach the altar BEFORE you go to the ambo. Reverence the altar by bowing towards the altar before you read the introductions. When you have finished reading them, leave the sheet of introductions on the shelf at the ambo.
4. If you are the second reader, and if there is no deacon for that Mass, you will carry the Book of Gospels to the altar. Hold the book slightly elevated (not with arms straight above your head, but in front of you and slightly higher than your face. See photo on inside of sign in book). You will follow the altar servers down the aisle. Go to the left side, and STAND until Father bows, and genuflects, then you will approach the Altar from the left side, place the Book of Gospels gently and reverently in the center of the Altar, and return to your seat. **CARRY THE GOSPEL SO THAT THE FRONT IS FACING THE ASSEMBLY AS YOU WALK DOWN THE AISLE. THIS MEANS THAT YOU ARE LOOKING AT THE SYMBOL OF ST. JOHN, WHICH IS THE EAGLE, AND PLACE IT FACE DOWN ON THE ALTAR SO THAT THE PRESIDING PRIEST DOES NOT HAVE TO FLIP THE BOOK WHEN HE CARRIES IT TO THE AMBO.** (This is according to Father Andrew's directions).
5. After the Opening Prayer is concluded the first reader proceeds to the ambo. Reverence the altar by bowing. Take a moment before beginning to read to ensure that people are settled and able to listen. *There is no need to "introduce" the first reading by saying "The first reading is a reading from..."* This is not appropriate. Proclaim exactly what the Lectionary specifies: *"A reading from..."* Then pause for a moment. If at all possible, this should be spoken while looking out at the people, and not at the Lectionary. Because of your preparation before Mass you will know exactly what book the reading is from. After the reading is proclaimed, pause for a moment, look up and address the assembly with the words: "The word of the Lord." Wait for the assembly's response. Pause for a few moments of silence, and then proceed back to your seat.
(At the 7:30 A.M. Mass, the first reader should step back a moment, pause and then step forward and start reading the psalm. Once again, it is not necessary to introduce it in any manner. ***You should NOT say "The responsorial psalm is..."*** Simply start with the

- response, and then with a gesture, invite them to repeat it. It is only at the 7:30 Sunday mass that the 1st reader is responsible for leading the psalm. Remember to raise your arm, palm extended outward, to indicate when the people should repeat the response. If necessary, softly speak into the microphone and help them to repeat the response.)
6. Once the cantor (or first reader) has left the ambo, the second reader will rise and go to the ambo. After bowing toward the altar to reverence it, the same instructions apply for the second reading as for the first. After the assembly has responded to that reading with "Thanks be to God" pause for a few moments, close the Lectionary and move it to the lower shelf of the ambo. Be mindful of the microphone so that you do not hit it.
 7. If there is no Deacon, the second reader will also read the General Intercessions after the Creed. Be aware that these, too, are different for each Mass time. Once again, please check on proper pronunciation of names with the presider. Approach the ambo during the last few sentences of the Creed, so that you will be ready, with the book open, when Father has finished the short introductory prayer. Be sure to reverence the altar by bowing your head. (Also remember that there are times when we do not recite the Creed during special ceremonies, i.e. Baptisms, commissioning, anniversaries, etc. Be alert to what the presider is doing and be prepared to approach the ambo at the appropriate time.) Be aware of the seasonal changes in how the response is done. Check with the organist if there is any doubt on how the response should be handled. Remain standing at the ambo, with the book open, until the celebrant has said the concluding prayer for the Prayer of the Faithful. Close the book, place it on the shelf under the ambo and return to your seat.
 8. It is the responsibility of the second reader to carry the Lectionary, the Book of the Gospels, the Introduction Sheet, and the General Intercessions Book back to the vesting room after Mass.
 9. Place the books on the counter, and return the Introduction sheet to the 3 ring binder that has been provided for the purpose of keeping all the Introductions together in the same spot. If there is another Mass to follow, remove the General Intercessions from your Mass to the back of the book, so that the intercessions for the next Mass are in the front ready for that Mass.

"Two things to always remember: It is important that you handle the books that we use with reverence. Apart from the readings within them, the books themselves, especially the Book of the Gospels, are symbols of our faith and of the salvation of Christ throughout the history of God's people. They should be carried with two hands and picked up and put down carefully. Finally, your choice of attire also says something about your ministry and the importance of us gathering in praise and worship of our Lord. Most often you will know when you will be serving as a lector, a leader within the community of our parish. Therefore, you should be dressed in such a way as to convey that you both knew you were coming to serve, and cared about that service to the people and to God. Your clothing should never distract from your ministry. Distractions of this kind are easily avoided and should be. Give some thought to what clothes in your wardrobe would be most appropriate, keeping in mind that simplicity, modesty and dignity should be your goal."

Guide for Lectors, The Liturgical Ministry Series by Virginia Meagher and Paul Turner.