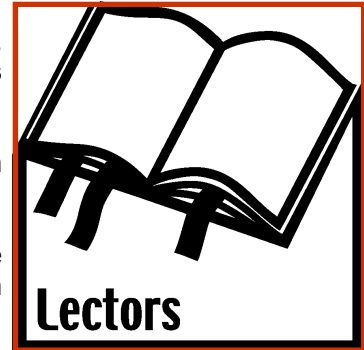


## **Lectors (Readers):** Revised on August 4, 2009

**Mission:** “Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly” (Colossians 3:16). The Lectors of St. Mary Parish serve the assembly by conveying God's Word through Sacred Scripture.

During the Liturgy of the Word, the Lectors proclaim the Scriptures with feeling and give voice to God's word.

Through intimacy with Scripture, the Lectors capture the hearts of the assembly, move them to embrace the revelation of God, nourish their faith life, and call all the listeners to conversion.



**Organization:** A representative from the Lectors serves on the Worship Commission, and assists the Liturgy Coordinator in the recruitment, training, and updating of the participants in this ministry. This person works closely with the Liturgy Coordinator in the fulfillment of all these duties.

Each year, the Liturgy Coordinator asks the participants in this ministry to propose the names of individuals from this ministry for consideration as their representative. After consulting with the Pastor, the Liturgy Coordinator selects the representative from this ministry to the Commission.

**Training:** Lectors are recruited, trained, and updated by the Liturgy Coordinator, with assistance from the designated representative from the Lectors.

- **Selection:** Lectors are discerned for this ministry primarily because of their reading ability. These talents are enhanced by annual or semi-annual workshops to further develop these special abilities. All Lectors are invited and encouraged to attend these skill-enhancing workshops, or to seek individual training through the Liturgy Coordinator and the Lector representative. In some cases, the Liturgy Coordinator may require a Lector to take additional training in these skills. Lectors are encouraged to attend monthly practice sessions in order to practice their readings together, to share supportive feedback with one another, and to prepare for their liturgical ministry with common prayer.
- **Spirituality:** Lectors are introduced to the theology and spirituality of this ministry through study of the various church documents relating to the Liturgy in general, and the Lectionary in particular. A regular prayerful reading of the Scriptures should be part of the spirituality of all Lectors. These insights are further enhanced by annual or semi-annual workshops to further develop an appreciation for the Liturgy and the Scriptures. All lectors are invited and encouraged to attend these spirituality workshops, which are held in conjunction with all the other liturgical and music ministers. Faithful and regular participation in the worship life of the parish is the most important form of spiritual development for all liturgical ministers. Participation in parish Bible Study programs is also highly recommended for all Lectors.
- **Rubrics:** The Lectors are trained for the protocols of performing their ministerial role in our sanctuary. These rubrics are updated by the Pastor from time to time, according to pastoral need and diocesan directives. The current protocols are listed below in this document, and updates are given to Lectors at least annually, when the booklets with their Scriptural readings for the year are presented to them.
- **Other Considerations:** Because many Lectors also serve as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion and other worship ministries, care must be taken to avoid over-involvement and burn-out. Also, it is important to open up all the liturgical ministries to more parishioners by gradually reducing the number of multiple ministerial positions, chiefly through attrition. The goal is to have one Lector for each Mass, reading one Sunday per month. The exceptions for the Sunday Evening Mass, and occasions other than the regular Sunday and Holy Day Masses, are noted below in this document.

**Protocols for Lectors:** The following are the current rubrics for weekend and holy day Masses at our parish, effective September 2009. They have been updated to reflect changes in the new Sacramentary that has been approved by the Vatican, and which is in the process of implementation in our country at this time. (For more information about the new Sacramentary, especially in regard to the ministry of Lectors, please consult [www.usccb.org/liturgy/girm/lit3.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/liturgy/girm/lit3.shtml).)

- Before Mass, the Lector signs in and asks the Celebrant if there are any special instructions, especially in regard to shorter forms of the readings. The Lectionary and the General Intercessions remain on the pulpit throughout the weekend, and should be checked by the Lector before Mass begins.
- According to the new liturgical directives, the Lectionary remains on the pulpit, and is no longer carried in procession. On special occasions, the Gospel Book may be carried in procession, but not the Lectionary. Accordingly, the Lectionary is not carried out in procession either, but remains on the pulpit at all times.
- According to new directives, the Lectors, like the Extraordinary Ministers, are no longer part of the entrance procession or the recessional, which consists of the “vested” clergy and altar servers. Lectors should be seated up front close enough in a pew to promptly ascend to the pulpit for their readings.
- Lectors with mobility issues are invited to come up the altar steps when the Mass begins, and stand next to the altar servers along the back of the sanctuary before the time of the first reading. The use of the handrail at the side of the sanctuary is also recommended for Lectors with disabilities or mobility issues.
- The Lector comes up to the pulpit promptly for the first reading. Afterward, the Lector may either be seated next to the servers or return to their nearby pew during the chanting of the responsorial psalm. The issue of providing meditative silence during the Liturgy will be explored during the coming year.
- After the responsorial psalm, the Lector returns to the pulpit for the second reading, as usual. In some cases, usually due to mobility issues, the Lector may choose to remain seated in the sanctuary until the General Intercessions (if there is no Deacon at the Mass, and the Lector will be reading the petitions).
- To avoid any confusion with the Lector at the next Mass, the ribbons in the Lectionary should always remain on the same page where they were originally found at the beginning of Mass. The Lectionary and the General Intercessions will only be removed from the pulpit after the Sunday evening Mass.

**Scheduling:** Lectors for weekend and holy day Masses are scheduled by the Liturgy Coordinator, with assistance from the Lector representative. This is done in conjunction with the scheduling of all the other liturgical ministers, such as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, Sacristans, and Altar Servers.

- Lectors are scheduled at least once a month, but should not be scheduled more than twice per month. The number of active Lectors is regulated in order to make this kind of monthly rotation possible.
- Lectors should not be scheduled to function in a second ministry during any given Mass, nor should they be scheduled twice on any weekend, unless there is an urgent need to do so.
- Individuals with multiple ministry involvements are encouraged to become designated substitutes in order to allow room for more parishioners to participate in the ministry of Lector, as the need for more ministry scheduling positions arises through recruitment efforts or through the attrition of current Lectors.
- The norm is to have one Lector at each Mass, who reads both readings and, when there is no deacon, the General Intercessions. However, Lectors may choose to be assigned along with another Lector to read as a team at the same Mass. During Holy Week, there are special provisions for multiple Lectors.
- There are special scheduling protocols for Sunday Evening Masses, weekday Masses, school Masses, sacramental celebrations, and feast days, as noted below.

**Holy Week Lectors:** The narrators for the Passion Gospels are chosen and trained by the Liturgy Coordinator and the Lector representative, after consultation with the Pastor. More than one Lector is scheduled for Palm Sunday Masses, the Good Friday Evening Service, and the Holy Saturday Easter Vigil, due to the additional role of Holy Week Narrators, and the increased number of readings for the Easter Vigil service. The quality of Lectors for Holy Week is of paramount importance to the Liturgy.

**Youth Ministry Lectors:** Members of the Youth Ministry program are scheduled as Lectors only for the Sunday Evening Mass during the school year, but may also volunteer for the Sunday Evening Mass during the summer. Youth Ministry Lectors are trained by the Youth Ministry Director. They usually serve as teams, and their schedules are worked out by the Youth Ministry Director.

**Other Lectors:** At School Masses, students read the first reading, the psalm, and the general intercessions, and are trained and scheduled by school personnel. At weddings and funerals family members and friends are selected to read, with guidance from the person planning the liturgy with them. At parish sacramental celebrations, catechists, staff members, family members, and students are selected to read. At weekday parish Masses, volunteers trained by the Liturgy Coordinator read the first reading and the psalm (and the second reading, if there is one). Reading for other special occasions is considered as circumstances arise.