

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish

Liturgical Ministry Training - Lectors

Introduction

- 1) What is “*liturgy*”?
 - 1.1) Secular - Service in the name of or on behalf of the people
 - 1.2) Religious - Participation by the people of God in the work of God
 - 1.2.1) Celebration of divine worship
 - 1.2.2) Proclamation of the Gospel
 - 1.2.3) Active charity
- 2) What is “*ministry*”?
 - 2.1) Providing service to others
 - 2.2) Based on a spiritual calling
 - 2.3) Requiring commitment, sacrifice and humility
- 3) How do we live the definition of these two words?
 - 3.1) Liturgical ministry is **not** an obligation simply to be fulfilled (contradicts ministry)
 - 3.2) Liturgical ministry is **not** a substitute for full and regular participation in the Mass (contradicts liturgy)
 - 3.3) Liturgical ministry is **not** a role that you play for one hour a week/month (contradicts both)
 - 3.4) “...Ministry is the noble and unselfish impulse to tell the good news of God’s love for the world in Jesus Christ.” – Aelred Rosser, OSB
- 4) How can a Lector live the definition of these two words?
 - 4.1) The Lord has given me a well-trained tongue, that I may know how to speak to the weary a word that will rouse them. – Isaiah 50:4
 - 4.2) “It is Christ himself who speaks when the holy Scriptures are read in the Church.” – Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy
 - 4.3) The Word of God is an act—a deed. By proclaiming it, it is fulfilled, much as the words “I baptize you” and “I forgive you” are not simply words; by saying them, you fulfill the action.
 - 4.4) Jesus is the Word Incarnate—in other words, he *is* the promise made by God throughout the Hebrew Scriptures.
 - 4.5) For many years, we as Catholics were “people of the table”—we exercised our faith and religion more vividly through the Eucharist. Protestants were “people of the book,” focusing on Scripture. Over time, we are realizing that we are *both*.
 - 4.6) Lectors assist in feeding the people of God through the Word in a similar manner to the EMs who assist in feeding the people of God through the Body & Blood of Christ.
 - 4.7) At any given Mass, there will be a wide variety of concerns, needs and degrees of receptivity to what is heard. But it is for everyone, and it can and will reach everyone wherever they are. Your ministry is to be clear regarding the words and meaning so that through the Word, Christ can speak to His people.
 - 4.8) The readings have been heard repeatedly by the faithful. Your challenge is to proclaim each reading in such a way that it is “heard again for the first time.”

General Information and Reminders

- 1) Dress Code
 - 1.1) Should not distract the assembly from your ministry—Christ should always be the focus
 - 1.1.1) Reverent, not casual – avoid jeans, tennis shoes, sweats, and other “lounging” clothes
 - 1.1.2) Modest, not revealing – avoid low-cut tops and short skirts
 - 1.1.3) Humble, not commercial – avoid large/obvious labels, branding, or printed messages
 - 1.2) Should reinforce your commitment to the nature of the ministry
 - 1.2.1) Willing to serve the whole church community
 - 1.2.2) Willing to serve even if inconvenient or sacrificial
 - 1.2.3) Willing to serve diligently, taking the required time to do all things well

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- 1.3) Dress as though you are going to serve, even if you are not scheduled
 - 1.3.1) “Emergency” Subs may be required right before Mass begins due to a shortage of ministers
 - 1.3.2) Minister may become ill during Mass and require replacement (rare, but it happens)
- 2) Demeanor / Attitude
 - 2.1) Posture / Movement
 - 2.1.1) Avoid slouching, shifting your weight constantly, sticking hands in pockets, etc.
 - 2.1.2) Participate fully and reverently in liturgy as much as possible (e.g. kneeling, genuflecting, etc.)
 - 2.2) Conversation
 - 2.2.1) Keep all necessary talking to a minimal volume
 - 2.2.2) Restrict all unnecessary talking, including before and after Mass
 - 2.2.2.1) Shows respect for the presence of God
 - 2.2.2.2) Shows respect for others during their prayer and meditation
- 3) Presentation
 - 3.1) Movement
 - 3.1.1) Pace yourself – do not rush, but do not proceed too slowly
 - 3.1.2) Eye contact – respectfully address the person/people to whom you are ministering
 - 3.1.3) Self-awareness – always monitor your position relative to others (e.g. Ministers of Cup)
 - 3.1.4) Instill reverence – focus on the nature of your ministry and its role
 - 3.2) Speaking
 - 3.2.1) Use good diction – pronounce your words clearly and crisply; do not mumble
 - 3.2.2) Use moderate inflection – convey enthusiasm and meaning in the message
 - 3.2.2.1) Change volume when appropriate (e.g. angry prophets, merciful Jesus)
 - 3.2.2.2) Pauses to emphasize changes in thought or direction of content
 - 3.2.2.3) Avoid an overly dramatic “Ten Commandments”-style performance
 - 3.2.2.4) Avoid a completely uninteresting monotone pattern, as it becomes hard to follow
 - 3.2.3) Consider content – different types of readings need to be read in their own style:
 - 3.2.3.1) Narrative (stories, parables, Acts of the Apostles)
 - 3.2.3.2) Poetry (not literal) and Hymns
 - 3.2.3.3) Discourse (explanation of beliefs, or pulling out truths *a la* St. Paul)
 - 3.2.3.4) Sermons (Jesus’ teachings)
 - 3.2.3.5) Sayings (i.e. Proverbs, Wisdom, Ecclesiastes)
 - 3.2.4) Pace yourself – do not rush, but do not proceed too slowly
 - 3.2.5) Practice – insure you know what to say and how to say it
 - 3.2.5.1) Review your assigned scripture prior to Sunday
 - 3.2.5.2) Know the pronunciation of all words in the readings
 - 3.2.5.3) Learn to proclaim the message without “crutches” (e.g. traveling finger)
 - 3.2.6) Microphones – learn how to use each type appropriately
 - 3.2.6.1) Voice-Activated (ambo) – must keep mouth pointed toward mic and project sound
 - 3.2.6.2) Cardioid / “Ball”, “Ice cream cone” – must “eat” microphone and maintain good diction

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Ministry-Specific Procedures

- 1) During the Week
 - 1.1) Preparation is more important for Lectors than for any other ministry
 - 1.2) Notes on Presentation (see **General Info, Item #3**) are especially important for Lectors
 - 1.3) Please practice prior to Mass
 - 1.3.1) Be ready for any unusual names or spellings; ask priest if unsure—they'll know
 - 1.3.2) RCIA Rites on 3/4/5 Sunday of Lent require different readings from Cycle A; be ready
 - 1.4) Pray about the readings; ask the Holy Spirit to help you discern the Word's meaning
 - 1.5) If you arranged a sub, make sure they know what readings to use—this is your responsibility
- 2) Prior to Mass
 - 2.1) Setting Up Materials
 - 2.1.1) Lectionary
 - 2.1.1.1) Lectionary found in cabinet closest to Main Sacristy door (doors are labeled)
 - 2.1.1.1.1) Set of three large books, one for each Cycle (A, B, or C, depending on year)
 - 2.1.1.1.2) May need to look at title page, as letters on binding are worn
 - 2.1.1.2) Place Lectionary on ambo and open to correct week; check bulletin if you forget
 - 2.1.1.3) Move gold ribbon to readings for present week in case book is closed / moved
 - 2.1.2) Book of Gospels
 - 2.1.2.1) Center throne for Book of Gospels on front edge of altar
 - 2.1.2.1.1) Found under Chapel-side credence table (behind altar)
 - 2.1.2.1.2) Make sure metal arms are securely in place before setting book on stand
 - 2.1.2.2) Book of Gospels found in same cabinet as Lectionary, surrounded by suede cover
 - 2.1.2.3) Move ribbon to Gospel reading for present week
 - 2.1.2.4) Close Book of Gospels and place on throne (on altar)
 - 2.1.2.5) If deacon is present, he may remove Book of Gospels before Mass for procession
 - 2.1.3) Binder for Prayers of the Faithful
 - 2.1.3.1) Binder should be found on corner of counter nearest to the Main Sacristy door
 - 2.1.3.2) Insure that Prayers for present week have been inserted
 - 2.1.3.2.1) Check for Prayers that should be used only at specific Mass(es) (e.g. for Baptism)
 - 2.1.3.2.2) Verify pronunciation of all names of the sick and deceased with priest
 - 2.1.3.3) Place binder in sanctuary
 - 2.1.3.3.1) If deacon is present at Mass, place binder on choir side of presider's chair
 - 2.1.3.3.2) If deacon not present at Mass, place binder inside ambo
 - 2.1.4) Ambo
 - 2.1.4.1) Mic
 - 2.1.4.1.1) Insure microphone is positioned correctly for Lector #1
 - 2.1.4.1.2) Remember to project your voice—the mic won't say the words for you!
 - 2.1.4.2) Insure Lectionary is present and open to correct page for First Reading
 - 2.1.4.3) Insure binder for Prayers of Faithful is sitting inside ambo if deacon not present
 - 2.2) Seating
 - 2.2.1) Sit in one of the two sections nearest the Eucharistic Reservation Chapel
 - 2.2.2) Sit in the front 2-3 rows of section
 - 2.2.3) Sit at very end of pew so that you have easy access to the aisle
 - 2.2.4) To insure your seat is not taken, feel free to use "Reserved" sign from Hospitality Closet
 - 2.2.5) If you do arrive late and pews are full, sit in chairs along the front of the pew "rail"

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- 3) Entrance Procession
 - 3.1) Lectors are encouraged to process to the altar with priest
 - 3.1.1) Prior to Mass, wait in back of church for priest
 - 3.1.1.1) Take opportunity to coordinate with other Lector (if two Lectors assigned)
 - 3.1.1.2) Confirm whether or not Deacon is present (NOTE: may require moving the binder)
 - 3.1.1.3) Refrain from unnecessary chatting, as back rows of pews can hear you easily
 - 3.1.2) When procession begins, walk behind deacon (if present) or Altar Servers
 - 3.1.3) At altar, step to each side slightly (priest(s) are behind you) and bow together
 - 3.1.4) Return to your seat
 - 3.2) Occasions on which Lectors should not process with priest(s)/deacons
 - 3.2.1) Good Friday – procession does not follow normal sequence of events
 - 3.2.2) Additional occasions as directed by priest
- 4) Proclaiming Readings
 - 4.1) Liturgy of Word begins when priest and congregation are seated after the Collect (Opening Prayer)
 - 4.2) If Children’s Liturgy of the Word is scheduled, priest will dismiss this group before you begin
 - 4.3) Approaching ambo
 - 4.3.1) Lector #1 should slowly walk to a point on the main floor close to the center of the altar and bow
 - 4.3.2) Ascend steps, walking between the ambo and the altar (not around the far side)
 - 4.3.3) If hand rail required, remember to bow before turning to walk toward the handrail
 - 4.4) Preparation
 - 4.4.1) Insure page is still correct for First Reading
 - 4.4.2) Place microphone roughly one hand width away from mouth to insure good reception
 - 4.4.2.1) Resulting sound is much more natural
 - 4.4.2.2) Does not damage the microphone / sound system due to shifts in volume
 - 4.4.2.3) Lessens the chance for feedback
 - 4.4.2.4) Lessens the punch of the letters “b”, “p”, “t” and “w”
 - 4.4.3) Pause, collect yourself, and ask God to lead you
 - 4.4.4) Make eye contact briefly with the congregation
 - 4.5) Reading
 - 4.5.1) Begin with “A reading from...” **NOT** “The first/second reading is a reading from...”
 - 4.5.2) Pause for 3-5 seconds before beginning the body of the text
 - 4.5.3) Speak slowly, clearly articulating your words, and use inflection for emphasis and variety
 - 4.5.4) When you complete the body of the text, pause for 3-5 seconds
 - 4.5.5) Conclude Reading with “The Word of the Lord.” **NOT** “This is the Word of the Lord.”
 - 4.5.6) Do not move until the congregation responds, “Thanks be to God.”
 - 4.6) Post-Reading
 - 4.6.1) If Lector #1 will also proclaim the Second Reading, he/she may sit in chair behind ambo
 - 4.6.2) If Lector #1 is returning to pew, follow steps for approaching the ambo, but in reverse order
 - 4.7) Additional Notes
 - 4.7.1) Lector for Second Reading should not approach steps / ambo until psalmist has bowed at steps
 - 4.7.2) Prior to leaving ambo after Second Reading, close Lectionary and place inside ambo

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5) Proclaiming Prayers of Faithful

5.1) If Deacon is present, he will proclaim Prayers of Faithful

5.2) Procedure if Deacon not present

5.2.1) Approach ambo once Creed reaches "...Communion of Saints, forgiveness of sins..."

5.2.1.1) Important if you are sitting a bit further back in the room

5.2.1.2) Provides time to open binder and get your bearings (see **Special Events, Item #5.3**)

5.2.1.3) When approaching, use the same procedure outlined for Readings (see **Item #4.3**)

5.2.2) Priest will provide introduction to Prayers

5.2.3) Pause briefly and then proclaim, "Our response is: **Rx**." (Rx = marked response on page)

5.2.4) Proceed through the list, watching out for any Prayers to be used at a particular Mass time

5.2.5) After congregation responds to final Prayer, turn to face priest for concluding prayer

5.2.6) When returning to pew, follow steps for approaching the ambo, but in reverse order

5.3) Special Events

5.3.1) Depending on liturgical season or event, Prayers of Faithful may be implemented differently

5.3.2) Check front of binder prior to Mass for any changes in procedure

5.3.2.1) Sacrament Included as Mass – Specific Prayer may be inserted for that Mass only

5.3.2.2) Mass with Bishop – Deacon will normally proclaim Prayers from a specific set

5.3.2.3) Lent – Acclamation may be sung before and/or after Prayers

5.3.2.4) Other events

6) Recessional

6.1) Lectors are encouraged to recess from the altar with priest

6.2) When priest leaves chair, walk to a point on the main floor close to the center of the altar

6.3) If two Lectors present, one should stand on each side of the main aisle

6.4) Bow deeply from the waist

6.5) Turn and process out behind the Deacon (or Altar Servers, if Deacon not present)

7) After Mass is Concluded

7.1) If another Mass follows, then do the following before you leave:

7.1.1) Throne for Book of Gospels

7.1.1.1) Retrieve throne for Book of Gospels from underneath Chapel-side credence table

7.1.1.2) Center along front side of altar and position height adjustment arms

7.1.2) Close and return Book of Gospels to throne on altar

7.1.3) Reposition Lectionary on ambo and open to correct page

7.1.4) If Deacon present at next Mass, place binder on choir side of presider's chair

7.2) If no Mass follows, then do the following:

7.2.1) Book of Gospels

7.2.1.1) Close Book and return to Main Sacristy

7.2.1.2) Insert Book into suede cover and place on shelf

7.2.2) Retrieve Lectionary from ambo and return to cabinet in Main Sacristy with other 2 volumes

7.2.3) Retrieve binder for Prayers of Faithful and place on counter in Main Sacristy

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Scheduling / Attendance / Substitutions

1) Scheduling Procedures

1.1) New schedules are released every two months

- 1.1.1) Always published on OLL web site - <http://www.ourladyoflourdes.org/ministry/ministry.html>
- 1.1.2) *If a minister's current email address is known*, then schedule sent directly to email address
 - 1.1.2.1) Should be readable by any word processor or editor (formatting may vary slightly)
 - 1.1.2.2) Any changes in email address should be submitted right away
- 1.1.3) *If minister has no email / internet access* (yes, it happens), hard copies are available
 - 1.1.3.1) "Ministry Schedules" box on literature tables in foyer outside of church (with newsletter)
 - 1.1.3.2) Hospitality Closet (door just inside Cry Room) in plastic drawers on right-hand side
 - 1.1.3.3) **Ministers with email/internet access should not take hard copies**—please print e-copies

1.2) Schedules include several items

- 1.2.1) Mass assignments – lists date, Mass time, and ministry
- 1.2.2) Newsletter
 - 1.2.2.1) Provides deadline for submitting vacation dates before next schedule
 - 1.2.2.2) Provides updates to any procedures (e.g. how to set up items prior to Mass)
 - 1.2.2.3) Provides notice of upcoming events (e.g. special Masses, training sessions, etc.)
- 1.2.3) Readings (mainly for Lectors)
 - 1.2.3.1) Included as attachment for those who provide email address
 - 1.2.3.2) Readings available on US Catholic Bishops' web site - <http://www.usccb.org/>
 - 1.2.3.3) Hard copies can be provided if no email/internet access—call office directly
- 1.2.4) Any special items not included in Newsletter

2) Unavailable Dates and Substitutions

2.1) Before a new schedule is published, submit vacation/unavailable dates

- 2.1.1) Can be submitted via phone message, email, or on-line web terminal ("My Profile" tab)
- 2.1.2) **Must be received > 2 weeks before next schedule is released** (see deadline at top of Newsletter)
- 2.1.3) Include minister's name, contact information, and dates/Mass times not available

2.2) After a new schedule is published, each minister must find their own substitutes

- 2.2.1) Request a sub using on-line web terminal (MSP) – **only use when >2 days available to find sub**
 - 2.2.1.1) Login using your username / password (provided when ministry started)
 - 2.2.1.2) On the "My Schedule" tab, find the date/Mass time for which you require a sub
 - 2.2.1.3) Click on the "request a sub" link at the end of this entry
 - 2.2.1.4) Request sent only to ministers who could accept (i.e. have no conflicts on that date)
 - 2.2.1.5) Web terminal updated to show that "sub requested" for that slot/Mass
 - 2.2.1.6) **To accept an automated sub request**, click on "volunteer now" link in requesting email
 - 2.2.1.7) Acceptance sent to requesting minister, confirming that coverage is arranged
 - 2.2.1.8) Web terminal updated again to show that substitute minister is covering slot
- 2.2.2) Request sub by calling other ministers
 - 2.2.2.1) **Required option if sub needed on short notice (<2 days in advance)**
 - 2.2.2.2) Once substitute is obtained, submit information to Director via email/phone
 - 2.2.2.3) Access phone lists on-line (MSP)
 - 2.2.2.3.1) Login to web terminal pages and click on "Rosters" tab
 - 2.2.2.3.2) Login also via OLL page - <http://www.ourladyoflourdes.org/ministry/ministry.html>
 - 2.2.2.4) Pick up hard copy of phone lists from Hospitality Closet
 - 2.2.2.4.1) First door on left in Cry Room
 - 2.2.2.4.2) Phone lists found in labeled plastic drawer on right-hand side of Closet
 - 2.2.2.4.3) Lists are color-coded to prevent confusion

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- 3) Attendance Procedures for Regular Weekend Mass
 - 3.1) The Sign-In / Attendance Sheet is located in the Vesting Sacristy (at end of bathroom hallway)
 - 3.2) **Ministers should sign in 15 minutes before Mass begins** and then begin their pre-Mass duties
 - 3.2.1) Allows time to complete all pre-Mass duties
 - 3.2.2) Provides an opportunity for clergy to explain any differences (Holy Day, Baptism, etc.)
 - 3.3) **If you arrive late**, check the Sheet immediately; someone may be covering for you already
 - 3.4) **If you are covering for someone else as a pre-arranged sub**, please remember:
 - 3.4.1) Be sure to fill out the sign-in sheet appropriately—*see instructions sheet on cork board*
 - 3.4.2) Do not assume that I received any messages regarding changes/substitutions
 - 3.4.3) Do *not* write substitutions on the master schedule on the cork board
 - 3.5) **If you are not scheduled and you are not a pre-arranged substitute**, please remember:
 - 3.5.1) **Wait until 5 minutes before Mass and check the sheet**—someone may simply be running late
 - 3.5.2) If you sign in as though you are scheduled, you will take away someone else's chance to serve
 - 3.5.3) Please don't sign in the margin or in another ministry's blanks—confuses me and the clergy
- 4) Attendance Procedures for Special Masses/Services
 - 4.1) Sign-up sheets are posted in advance to allow trained ministers to volunteer for service
 - 4.1.1) Poster board in foyer – allows people without email/internet access to volunteer
 - 4.1.1.1) Contact me directly for changes / substitutions
 - 4.1.1.2) If number of required ministers changes, I will rearrange names and contact everyone
 - 4.1.2) Web terminal (MSP) – allows people with internet access to volunteer on-line
 - 4.2) **Holy Days have sign-in sheets just like regular Sundays, so please remember to sign in**
- 5) Policy Regarding Attendance
 - 5.1) Based on the Sign-In Sheets – *if you don't sign in prior to Mass, you're considered absent*
 - 5.2) Chronic absenteeism (> 50%) will entail a reminder, asking if we need to adjust your schedule
 - 5.3) Further absenteeism after the reminder will entail suspension and/or removal from schedule
 - 5.4) Reason for Attendance Policy
 - 5.4.1) Must have minimum number of ministers for Mass to proceed smoothly
 - 5.4.2) Experience dictates that we cannot rely solely on volunteers every week
 - 5.4.3) Prevents confusion and accidents caused by lack of practice/involvement
 - 5.4.4) Encourages respect for other ministers and for the community
 - 5.4.5) Scripture (Acts, St. Paul's letters) repeatedly tells us that we are accountable for our actions
- 6) Extra Schedules / Phone Lists
 - 6.1) Extra copies of new schedule provided every two months when assignments released
 - 6.2) Phone lists updated every 6-12 months depending on turn-over
 - 6.3) Location of extra copies
 - 6.3.1) Hospitality Closet (see above)
 - 6.3.2) Web Site (<http://www.ourladyoflourdes.org/ministry/ministry.html>, see above)

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Concluding Notes

- 1) Training
 - 1.1) All liturgical ministers **must** receive training before assuming their duties
 - 1.1.1) Specific to Our Lady of Lourdes – procedures from other churches may not be the same
 - 1.1.2) Provides basic knowledge needed when events require change (visit by bishop, etc.)
 - 1.2) Training dates are normally advertised in at least one of the following places
 - 1.2.1) Sunday Bulletin – primary location; listed several weeks in advance
 - 1.2.2) Ministry Newsletter – included with each schedule
 - 1.3) The following ministers should attend a refresher training periodically based on procedure changes
 - 1.3.1) Lectors
 - 1.3.2) Hospitality Ministers
 - 1.3.3) Offertory Ministers
 - 1.3.4) Children’s Liturgy of the Word
 - 1.3.5) Altar Servers
 - 1.3.6) Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist – require additional steps beyond standard training
- 2) Who to Contact with Questions / Problems / Issues
 - 2.1) Worship and Spiritual Life Commission members – talk to the person who trained you
 - 2.2) Director of Music and Liturgy – contact me via email, phone, or personal conversation
 - 2.3) Clergy – contact a deacon or priest through the parish office

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