

QUEENSHIP OF MARY ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH



Ministers of the Word Guidelines

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Plainsboro, New Jersey
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I. Introduction:

To be in ministry is to serve the Lord and His people --- it **is a privilege, not a right!** A Minister of the Word (Lector) serves God and God's people at Mass by proclaiming God's Word. When you answer this call, you enter a deeper relationship with God revealed in sacred scripture. You take upon yourself the awesome duty and privilege of sharing the Word with your brothers and sisters in Christ.

Lectors proclaim the readings, with the exception of the Gospel. You may also read the general intercessions.

Your part in this ministry helps set the tone for all who take part in the Mass. What you do and how you do it can help other people understand the Mass better and make their love for God stronger. Your involvement in the Mass serves as an example and an encouragement for others to be actively involved. At Mass, your actions and appearance show that you are proud to serve.

You are asked to take this ministry seriously and to realize that it is done as a response to God's call to service in the church. It is also understood that as a minister of this sacrament of unity that you will work to build up and unify the community of Queenship of Mary and be a positive presence within this parish.

II. Expectations:

- A. Arrive at Church at least 15 minutes before Mass begins. Sign in, review the intercessions and join in greeting parishioners as they arrive in church. We are all called to be ministers of hospitality. Be attentive to the noise level in the lobby, as parishioners are praying in church.
- B. Upon arrival please sign in. Know that these sign in sheets will be used as an attendance record. If you are consistently **absent** you may be asked to step down from the ministry. If you inform the ministry head of your special request before the 10th of the prior month, or earlier if the 10th falls on a weekend, it will be honored, thereby, negating the need for a substitute. You are expected to **fulfill your obligation to serve at your assigned time or find your own replacement** if you cannot make it for whatever reason.
- C. The Ministry head will handle the scheduling for each Mass. Her contact information is as follows:

Joanne Pinter-Mulder
11 Market Square South
Plainsboro, NJ 08536
Phone: 609-378-5032
Email: lectors@qomchurch.org
- D. All Lectors should maintain a spirit of appropriate reverence. This reverence is shown by your demeanor, your manner and your dress. Therefore, you should be appropriately dressed whenever you are scheduled to serve. Sweat pants, sweat shirts, t-shirts, jeans, shorts, sneakers, flip flops, uncovered shoulders, etc. are not considered appropriate. Exceptions may be allowed if you are filling in without advanced notice and no other lectors are available.

- E. One lector is assigned to each Mass. While it is relatively easy to find a substitute at the last minute for a Eucharistic Minister or Usher, a lector who is asked to fill in at the last minute will not be prepared to present the readings or may not be appropriately dressed. If a subsequent conflict should occur, it is your responsibility to get a substitute.

III. Preparation:

- A. Set aside at least one hour for review of the readings prior to arrival at church. The lector's workbook, with its in-depth review of the readings and recommended emphasis on certain words and phrases will provide you with the material you need to fully understand, appreciate, and present the readings. If the workbook provides an option for the readings you should check with the Ministry Head or the Presider to determine which reading should be used.
- B. The Scripture, like a good work of art, calls for an intellectual and emotional response on the part of the lector. Hopefully, your emotions will be awakened through an insightful understanding of God's Word. This leads to a more enthusiastic sharing of the stories of our faith.
- C. Proclaiming the Word of God is a very important part of the Liturgy. It is important that each lector be prepared to perform the ministry in a manner which is both rewarding to the lector and enlightening to the congregation.

Parishioners look to the Lector to present the material in an interesting, story-like manner. Simply reading the material in a low, monotone voice will not achieve proclamation of God's Word. In order to present the material properly and at the same time generate extended periods of eye-to-eye contact with the assembly, you must know and understand the material. **Note that while eye contact is important, focus first on proclamation, eye contact will flow from this. At the very least, try to maintain eye contact as you announce the reading and as you conclude it with 'The Word of the Lord'.**

IV. Order of Service:

- A. Before Mass begins the Lector must:
 - i. Sign in and locate the Book of Gospels and the copy of the Prayer of the Faithful in the sacristy. Review the Prayer of the Faithful and read them through once or twice. If you are uncertain of any words or names, consult with the Presider.
 - ii. A copy of the Prayer of the Faithful is kept in a binder at the ambo. The Lectionary should already be on the ambo open to the first reading. Verify this upon your arrival.
 - iii. The Presider will usually assemble the ministers for the Mass for a brief prayer. After the bells ring, line up directly behind the altar servers for the procession.
- B. During the procession:
 - i. The book of the Gospels is a visible symbol of God's Word and should always be treated with reverence. It is held with both hands at chest level, in a vertical position.

- ii. At the sanctuary steps file off to the side and stand in front of the **lector's pew**. The Presider and other ministers will bow. Do not bow when you are carrying the book of the Gospels. The Presider will proceed to the Sanctuary and kiss the altar. Hesitate long enough to allow the Presider to reach the altar. Then proceed between the altar and the ambo to the area behind the altar just vacated by the Presider. Place the Book of Gospels in the center of the altar with the decorated front facing up and proceed to the lector's pew by exiting the sanctuary behind the ambo.

C. During Mass:

- i. As Mass continues, remember that as a minister your participation and reverence are a model to all parishioners.
- ii. Once the Presider completes the opening prayer, is seated and the Altar Server has left the Sanctuary and is seated, you proceed to the sanctuary, bow to the altar and step to the ambo to proclaim the first reading. If a cantor is present, return to your pew after the first reading. Otherwise, complete the responsorial psalm. When the cantor completes the responsorial psalm and takes his/her seat, you wait for a five second pause. Proceed to the sanctuary, bow to the altar and step to the ambo to proclaim the second reading. Upon completion of the second reading, place the Lectionary on the second shelf of the ambo and return to your pew.

Note that if the psalm is not sung, that there should be an appropriate pause between the first reading and the psalm and the psalm and second reading.

The readings should be proclaimed slowly and clearly, recognizing that a microphone will not necessarily make a soft voice loud. Provide emphasis to the readings through variation in pitch, pace, and volume. ***Check the position of the microphone prior to the start of Mass***, but keep in mind, that while the microphone should not be too far away, it also should not be too close to your mouth while proclaiming the readings.

- iii. Immediately after the Creed, proceed to the ambo. **Do not wait for the Presider to nod in your direction.** After the Presider concludes the introduction, clearly and slowly read each petition. The response is recited by the congregation and not by the Lector. Upon completion of the intercessions, you remain standing at the ambo until the Presider completes the concluding prayer. When he finishes, place the binder back into the ambo and return to your pew.

D. At the conclusion of Mass:

- i. The Presider moves from his chair to kiss the altar. At that point you take your hymnal and proceed to stand in front of the first pew. The book of the Gospels remains on the ambo.
- ii. When the Presider bows, you bow, and then process **two by two** behind the altar servers.
- iii. Please return the hymnal back to the Lector's pew.

E. After Mass:

- i. Place the Lectionary back on top of the ambo; open to the first reading.
- ii. Return the book of the Gospels to the sacristy.

Definitions:

- **Altar**--the table of the Lord in the sanctuary.
- **Altar Cloth**--the tablecloth for the altar.
 - **Purificator**--small white cloth used with the chalice.
 - **Corporal**--small white cloth placed in the center of the altar.
- **Altar Vessels**--sacred vessels used during the celebration of liturgy.
 - **Chalice**--cup used by the priest/Eucharistic ministers for the Blood of Christ.
 - **Paten**--small dish usually used with the chalice.
 - **Ciborium**--cup for the Body of Christ in the Tabernacle.
 - **Pall**--stiff, white board placed over the chalice. **Note!** The white covering for a casket is also called a pall.
- **Ambo**--the place where the Word of God is proclaimed.
- **Aspergillum**--the holy water sprinkler.
- **Bells**--rung during the consecration of the Mass.
- **Boat**--the container for incense.
- **Book of Gospels**--the book containing the Gospel readings.
- **Credence Table**--the small table off to one side of the sanctuary for sacred vessels.
- **Cruets**--small pitchers of water and wine for the Mass.
- **Water Bowl**--small bowl for the priest to wash his hands during the Liturgy of Eucharist.
- **Intinction**--is the practice of dipping the consecrated bread, or *host*, into the consecrated wine. This is not allowed in the United States.
- **Lectionary**--the book of scriptures read at the liturgy of the Word.
- **Paschal Candle**--the large ornate candle used at funerals, baptisms, and Easter.
- **Processional Cross**--the cross that is carried during the procession in and out of the Mass.
- **Sacramentary**--the book the priest prays from during the Mass.
- **Sacrarium**--special basin that is connected by a pipe directly to the ground used to dispose of water used sacramentally, and particles of the consecrated Eucharist by returning these particles directly to the earth from which it came.
- **Sacristy**--the room where priests vest before Mass.
- **Sanctuary**--the sacred space elevated before the congregation.
- **Tabernacle**--the ornate receptacle used to place the Body of Christ.
- **Thurible**--container for burning incense.
- **Thurifer**--the server responsible for the Thurible.
- **Vestments**--special robes worn by priests, deacons and altar servers.
 - **Alb**--white robe worn over street clothes.
 - **Cincture**--cord used as a belt for the alb.
 - **Chasuble**--colored vestment worn only by the priest.
 - **Dalmatic**--colored vestment worn only by the deacon.
 - **Cassock**--black/red/white vestment worn by priests or altar servers.