

LECTOR'S HANDBOOK

Blessed Sacrament Church – Midland, Michigan

GENERAL INFORMATION AND SCHEDULING

1. Remember always that the Word of God and the Eucharist are of equal importance in the Mass. Each part of the liturgy, Word and Sacrament, feeds us all in a very unique way. “The Church has always venerated the divine Scriptures just as she venerated the Body of the Lord, since, especially in the sacred liturgy, she unceasingly receives and offers the bread of life from the table both of God’s Word and of Christ’s Body.” [Dei Verbum #21]. The way you move, the way you talk and the way you carry and hold the lectionary, all proclaim to the community assembled your reverence for the Word and the special gift that Word is to all of us.
2. You model for the community an attitude of reverence and honor towards the Liturgy of the Word. Please consider the clothes you wear also as a sign of your reverence. Shorts, tennis shoes, jeans and sundresses are not proper attire for liturgical ministers.
3. You will be scheduled for Saturday/Sunday Masses and some holy days. Schedules cover the following blocks of time: December-February, March-May, June-August, September-November. Mass preference forms are usually due to the Liturgy Secretary a month before the new schedule is to be published. You will be scheduled approximately twice for each scheduling period.
4. If you cannot serve on the day you are scheduled, you need to get a substitute either from those on the sub list of the lector schedule or from among the regular lectors for your mass. You must inform the Liturgy Office (835-6777 Ext 239) when a substitution is made. Also, be willing yourself to be a substitute if you are asked to do so by another lector.
5. Lectors will be invited to proclaim the word for some holy days, for communal reconciliation, and for occasional celebrations of other sacraments [for example, Anointing of the Sick]. You will have the opportunity to volunteer for Wednesday Evening Prayer and for Stations of the Cross on the Fridays of Lent. Rehearsals are required for some liturgies.

PREPARATION

1. During the week before you are scheduled, you will receive a reminder call informing you that you are scheduled to lector and also which reading you are scheduled to do.
2. Go through the preparation process which includes reading silently, reading the commentary, coming to understand the reading, praying with the reading, making the reading your own, proclaiming the reading aloud over a period of days. Use all the skills you have learned. Prepare and prepare well. The Word of God deserves nothing less. The Workbook for Lectors and Gospel Readers will provide you with the readings and commentary.

BEFORE MASS

1. Arrive at church at least 15 minutes before Mass and check off your name on the sign-in list posted in the middle sacristy. Read ministry notes if there are any on the board above the

sign-in sheet! Tell the sacristan that you are present.

2. YOU WILL FIND THE LECTIONARY IN THE MIDDLE SACRISTY ON THE COUNTER. Be sure that the correct readings are marked with the ribbon being at the first reading position. Take time to look through your reading to see how it is laid out on the page or pages and to study it one last time. Second reader: the psalm is inserted into the Lectionary; make sure you can find your reading.
3. Check to be certain the microphone is on.
4. Prior to Mass and once BOTH lectors have checked in and reviewed the readings, place the lectionary, CLOSED, on the stand directly in front of the ambo.
5. Find a place to be seated during the liturgy. It should be located at a convenient distance from the ambo, no more than four or five pews from the front.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

1. The presider will give an introduction to the first reading. The first reader will then proceed to the stand and pick up the book and take it to the ambo and open it and proclaim the reading. Please leave the ribbon at the first reading position after proclaiming the reading and leave the lectionary open. After the psalm, the presider will give an introduction to the second reading. After the introduction, the second reader proceeds to the ambo to proclaim the reading. Do not move the ribbon. Just turn the page to your reading. After the reading, leave the book open to that reading.
2. Begin the reading with “A reading from_____.” [If you have prepared well, you will be able to proclaim this line from memory.] DO NOT use a long “A” as in the letter of the alphabet when announcing “A reading from___.” The article is pronounced as in the “a” in the word about. Please DO NOT chop the introduction to the reading, i.e., A Reading/From the Book/Of the Prophet/Isaiah. We should introduce the reading in a single phrase – A Reading From the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.
3. At the conclusion of the reading, pause, look up and say “The word of the Lord”, and continue to look at the assembly as they give their response, “Thanks be to God!”
4. Then bow your head and keep silence. This is the time for all to reflect on the Scripture that has been proclaimed. Count slowly to twenty before moving back to your place in the assembly.

AFTER MASS

1. As the assembly leaves the church, the first reader should go to the lectionary stand in front of the ambo, get the lectionary and return it to the middle sacristy counter.

Your ministry is VITAL to the life of the community! Your attention to details and commitment to our worship will improve the quality of our liturgies. Thank you for your generous service to the people of Blessed Sacrament Parish!

CONTACTS

- For questions regarding Music Ministries or the Order of Worship, please contact Pam Bourscheidt, Director of Liturgy & Music, pamb@blessed-midland.org, 835-6777.
- For questions regarding scheduling, please contact Loretta Schepperly, Office Professional, lorettas@blessed-midland.org, 835-6777 Ext 239.
- For questions regarding procedures specific to a ministry or training, please contact Joe Plevyak, Coordinator for Liturgical Ministry Formation, joe.plevyak@gmail.com, 835-2846.