



Madonna Parish - Guide for Lectors

God's Word is "living and effective" (Hebrews 4:12). Thank you for your ministry!

1. Lectors are fully initiated and devoted practicing Catholics

- Lectors serve by proclaiming the Scriptures and are an instrument of God's voice.
- When Scriptures are proclaimed in the Church, God is present.
- They fulfill an act of ministry that invites listeners to hear and encounter God's Word.

2. Preparation strategies

- During the week of your assignment:
 - **Get a head start.** Make it a practice to read the lectionary selections early.
 - **Pray.** Invite the Holy Spirit to be present during your preparation ([sample prayer](#)).
 - **Practice out loud.** A useful online guide is <https://bible.usccb.org/> (audio available).
- Before Mass begins:
 - **Check the lectionary at the ambo.** Arrive early to check that the lectionary is turned to the appropriate page.
 - **Review the Prayer of the Faithful.** At Madonna, the lector generally reads the prayer intentions during the Holy Day Mass, while the priest may lead during the Daily Mass.
 - **Responsorial Psalm.** The choir leads the Psalm during the Holy Day Mass. The lector may sit in the chair next to the ambo while the cantor sings the verses. In the absence of a psalmist, the lector may recite the Psalm (e.g. during SUN 7:30 AM or Daily Mass).

3. Proclamation during the liturgy

- **Gesture of reverence.** Bow to the altar as a sign of respect and adoration. If taking the ramp, first genuflect before the tabernacle, then bow to the altar upon arriving at the sanctuary. When coming down to switch with a cantor (e.g. when there is no 2nd reading), or when 2 lectors are serving (e.g. during Paschal Triduum), they may meet at the front of the altar and bow together.
- **Read with reverence and intention.** Proclaim the Scriptures using the lectionary from the ambo. Take your time: read without rushing and leaning into the microphone.
- **Make eye contact and pause.** At the end of the reading, pause to make eye contact with the community before pronouncing the acclamation "The Word of the Lord".
- **What happens if I make a mistake while reading?** There is no need to say "sorry", simply correct yourself and continue.

4. Dress code - Dress neatly: choose clothing that is respectful and does not distract from the liturgy.

Glossary

Ambo: a raised platform where Scriptures, prayers and homilies are proclaimed.

Lectionary: a collection of Scripture passages that the Church has chosen for our liturgy.

Paschal Triduum: a three-day liturgical period beginning on Holy Thursday to celebrate the Passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Sanctuary: the sacred area that holds the altar, tabernacle, ambo, and the chair for the priest.

Tabernacle: a sacred place where the consecrated Eucharist is kept with reverence.

Reference

1. Workbook for Lectors, Gospel Readers, and Proclaimers of the Word, 2025 US edition, pages iv-x.
2. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops: [The Lector at Mass](#) article.