

MINISTRY OF LECTOR

Introduction

Catholic theological tradition considers the Lord to be present in the *Table of the Word*, at the *Sacrificial Table of the Eucharist*, and the community of the baptized which includes an ordered communion of ordained clergy and the Bishop.

As such, the *proclamation of the Word* is an essential element of the Church's Eucharistic celebration. So important is the role of proclamation that the other members of the community should not be following along with a printed text except as necessity presents itself (e.g., the hearing impaired). This same Word is also considered to share a salvific character.¹

Procedures

Entrance Procession

At the beginning of the liturgy, the normal order of procession is:

1. cross-bearer
2. acolytes (or servers)
3. other ministers
4. concelebrating clergy, lector/Deacon with the Book of the Gospels
5. Priest-celebrant.

Movement:

- Cross bearer: Pause at the bottom of the steps, before entering into the sanctuary. Go up before the altar. Pause. Place cross in its proper receptacle.
- Server(s): Pause at the bottom of the steps, then enter into the sanctuary and leave room in center for Lector.
- Lector (or Deacon, if present): Pause at the bottom of the steps, before entering into the sanctuary. Go up the steps and stand the book on the altar. (If it will not stand, lay it down). Step aside to the left (ambo) side, profile to the congregation.
- Other ministers and priest-celebrant also approach the altar and bow. Priests and deacon bow with servers and all go to their place.
- Lector: Return to your seat in the congregation.

Proclamation of the First Reading(s)²:

- As the Opening Prayer concludes, come forward to the altar, bow before entering into the sanctuary, and go to the ambo for the Proclamation of the Reading. Remember to practice the reading(s) beforehand so that you are proclaiming, not just reading.
- At the end of the reading(s), proclaim "The Word of the Lord".
- If you are to do the next reading, step aside from the ambo to a seat in the sanctuary in order to leave room for the Cantor of the Responsorial Psalm.
 - After the Responsorial Psalm is completed, allow 30 seconds before you begin the next reading.
 - Place the book on the shelf under the podium.
 - Go back to the center of the sanctuary and bow before the altar.
 - Return to your seat.³
 - The "Alleluia" may be started a few seconds after the lector has left the Sanctuary.

General Intercessions:

- Go to the Ambo for prayers of the faithful. Make sure you very clearly articulate the response so the Congregation can follow. (Repeat the response with the Congregation. Do not use hand signals as a Cantor would.)

Movement

- As the congregation is finishing the Creed (“I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church...”) begin to come forward.
- Bow at the entrance to the sanctuary (as before).
- After the priest concludes the Intercessory Prayers, go to the front of the altar, bow, turn and return to your seat.

Notes:

¹ For example, at the end of the Gospel, after the priest proclaims that “This is the Gospel of the Lord,” he also adds the following inaudibly: “May the words of the Gospel wipe away our sins.”

- sal·vif·ic
- Pronunciation: \sal`vi-fik\
• adjective: having the intent or power to save or redeem

² If a deacon is present he will proclaim the Word. In this instance, the lector does NOT process in with the book, rather, at the appropriate time; he or she approaches the altar from their place in the assembly to proclaim the reading(s).

³ Always return to your seat unless you have a health reason that makes it necessary for you to stay in the sanctuary.

(updated January 2011)