



DIOCESE OF FALL RIVER

GUIDELINES FOR THE EXERCISE OF THE MINISTRY OF LECTOR

1. Every minister, ordained and non-ordained, exists to serve God's people. The lector's ministry is to prepare and proclaim the Word with faith and conviction. It is important that the SIGNS by which the ministry is carried out speak clearly of the true nature of the ministry.
2. **Attire.** Because the lector is not ordained, vestments or robes are not to be used. Jackets for the men and dresses for the women are suggested. To be appropriately dressed indicates the importance one attaches to the worship of God on Sunday.

4. Proclaiming the Word.

- a) **Allow the people to be seated** and attentive before beginning the first reading. The sign of the lector moving from his/her seat to the lectern is an excellent sign announcing to the entire community that it is time to get ready. This sign helps to begin calling people to attention.
- b) **Use the lectionary/lectern.** The Word of God is to be proclaimed with clarity and expression, only from the lectionary and not from a leaflet or missalette. The presence of God in his Word would suggest that the lectionary be treated with dignity and respect. The lector should be instructed in the proper use of the lectionary. The Word should be proclaimed from a single lectern/ambo.
- c) **Do not make unnecessary comments.** Lectors should not introduce the readings by any extraneous commentary. They should allow the Word to speak. Also, it is not necessary to mention that it is the "first" or "second" reading.
(PLEASE NOTE: The lector should not direct the people to their missalettes by mentioning the page number. It is best that the congregation listen while the readings are proclaimed. Those who find it necessary to read along should be familiar with the missalette and where the readings are to be found.)
- d) **How to conclude the reading.** The lector should pause briefly at the end of the reading before declaring, "This is the Word of the Lord."
(PLEASE NOTE: The common and somewhat "folksy" practice of saying, "and this is the Word of the Lord," is not appropriate. It is also not appropriate for the lector to raise the lectionary when declaring, "This is the Word of the Lord.")

5. Some other considerations.

- a) **The Responsorial Psalm.**
The psalm should normally be sung. If it is spoken the lector should pause after the first reading and then read the response **without mentioning** "the responsorial psalm is . . ." After the people recite the response, the lector slowly reads the verses. It may also be appropriate for the people to chant the response and the lector to read the versicle.
- b) **The Gospel Acclamation.**
If the acclamation is not sung it should **not** be recited. The lector simply concludes the second reading and returns to his/her place.
- c) **Lectors are not Mass commentators.**
It has become the practice in certain parishes for the lector to stand at the lectern at times other than the Liturgy of the Word. This practice of having the lector "lead" the congregation in prayers and responses is unnecessary and distracting.
- d) **The General Intercessions.**
The deacon normally reads the intercessory prayers. In the absence of the deacon, the lector, or other reader, may do the intercessions.