

Training Handbook For Ministers of the Word



Blessed Sacrament Parish Kitchener

*"It is Christ himself who speaks
when the Holy Scriptures are read in the Church." St. Pope John
Paul II*

Introduction

As a Lector, you don't just simply read; you proclaim the word of God to the congregation. Your role is to bring the Scriptures to life for the gathered community, becoming an instrument for God's message.

Through your proclamation, you inspire others to listen deeply and foster a love for the Word of God. To serve effectively in this ministry, it is essential to prepare diligently, attend both the diocesan workshop and in-house training at Blessed Sacrament Parish, and maintain a spirit of reverence and dedication.

Preparation At Home

1. Reflect and Practice:

- Prayerfully read and reflect on your assigned passage.
- Practice aloud to become comfortable and ensure correct pronunciation (use resources like YouTube for difficult names). Readings can be found on our website – I'm New tab, Daily Readings – use the arrow at the top left to scroll to the proper date.

2. Pray Before Practicing:

Say this prayer to invite the Holy Spirit into your preparation:

Holy Spirit, open my heart to that which I proclaim. Be with me as I study this Scripture and prepare the Word that is Yours to speak. Grant me the gift of understanding so this passage may dwell deep within me. Amen.

Be Reliable

- If you cannot serve, arrange for a substitute in advance.
- Arrive at least **20 minutes before Mass**.
- Sign in on the ministry list in the sacristy. (Ask the Sacristan)

Before Mass

1. Preparation in the Sacristy:

- Ensure the Lectionary is on the Ambo, open to the correct page.
- Confirm the **Prayers of the Faithful** are also on the Ambo.
- Check that the **announcements** are on the podium at the lower microphone.

2. Review Materials:

- Read the introductions, announcements, and Prayers of the Faithful to familiarize yourself with them.
- Seek assistance if you encounter challenging pronunciations.

3. Gather for Prayer:

- Remain in the sacristy until after the opening prayer with the priest and servers.

Proclamation Guidelines

1. Speaking Clearly and Slowly:

- Speak at a pace slower than normal conversation.
- If you mispronounce a word, simply continue without drawing attention to the error.

2. **Reverence:**

- Bow to the altar before and after readings, announcements, or commentary.
- Coordinate bows with the Cantor when applicable.

3. **Microphone Technique:**

- Position yourself close enough for clarity but adjust to avoid feedback or static.

4. **After Readings:**

- Pause silently for three seconds before concluding with:

The Word (pause) of the Lord.

Specific Roles Reader A

1. **Opening Commentary:**

- After the before-liturgy Prayer in the sacristy, proceed to the lower microphone to deliver the opening commentary.

2. **Readings and Announcements:**

- Reader A proclaims the **First Reading** and delivers the **opening and closing announcements** at the beginning, before the entrance hymn and after the closing prayer of the Mass. Proceed to the ambo and wait until the priest takes the seat and begins.

Reader B

- Bow to the altar before and after entering the sanctuary.

1. **Procession (if Deacon is absent):**

- Carry the **Book of the Gospels** in the procession, holding it elevated.
- Proceed to the altar without delay, place the book in the center, bow, and return to your seat.

2. **Second Reading:**

- Proclaim the **Second Reading** after the Responsorial Psalm. Coordinate bows with the Cantor when applicable.
- If the Book of the Gospels is on the altar, close the Lectionary and place it under the Ambo after your reading.

3. **Prayers of the Faithful (if Deacon is absent):**

- Approach the Ambo as the congregation recites the final paragraph of the Apostle's Creed.
- Begin with: *The Response is... Lord, hear our prayer.*
- For personal intentions, pause for about 10 to 20 seconds.
- After the final petition, turn to face the priest for the concluding prayer, then bow and return to your seat.

Attire

No special garb should be worn, but dress should be neat, consistent with the dignity of the ministerial role which is being exercised. Dress which does not draw attention to the minister ought to be worn. Shorts and gym attire are never appropriate for liturgical ministers.

Final Notes

- Always approach your ministry with prayer and humility; keep eye contact with the priest at all time when you serve.
- When only one reader is scheduled, they fulfill all roles: **Opening Commentary, First and Second Readings, Prayers of the Faithful, and Announcements.**

