

## **STANDARD PROCEDURES FOR MHT LECTORS**

(As of: 28 OCT 08)

1. **Be there!** If you are unable to attend your scheduled Mass please try to find a substitute. If you cannot find a sub, please notify LTC Dan McCarthy ([Daniel.McCarthy@usma.edu](mailto:Daniel.McCarthy@usma.edu)) and notify the other lector assigned to your Mass so he/she can be prepared to do both readings.
2. **Prepare!** Preparation and rehearsal are critical. Remember, we are proclaiming the Word, not just reading it. Prepare for both readings, in case the other scheduled lector is missing. A couple of websites you may find helpful:

<http://www.usccb.org/nab/> (provides the readings for any given day's Mass)

<http://www.lectorprep.org/> (provides a variety of preparation materials for the readings)

[http://www.podcastalley.com/player/player.php?pod\\_id=43329](http://www.podcastalley.com/player/player.php?pod_id=43329) (provides a podcast of the reading – you can listen to someone else do the reading)

3. **Prior to Mass:**
  - a. Arrive at least 10 minutes before the Mass begins. Check your name off on the lector schedule posted at the back of the chapel. If the other lector has not checked in please wait in the rear of the church until he/she arrives. In the event the other lector does not show up be prepared to do both readings.
  - b. Identify yourself to the presiding Priest, especially if he is a visiting Priest, to inform him that you are the lector. Check with the presider for any special instructions. Confirm the pronunciation of any difficult words or names from the reading.
  - c. Before Mass begins, the lector for the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading (Lector 1) should proceed up to the lectern on the altar and find the readings in the lectionary book and mark them with the ribbon, if that has not been done already.
  - d. The lector for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading (Lector 2) should ask the presiding Priest if there will be a Deacon serving at the Mass. **If there is no Deacon serving at the Mass**, the lector for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading (Lector 2) will process in with the Priest and altar servers carrying the Book of the Gospels. If the Book of the Gospels is not already at the back of the church, retrieve it from the lectern and link up with the presiding Priest at the back of the church for the entrance processional.
  - e. If possible, both lectors should sit towards the front of the church and on the center aisle.

#### **4. Opening Announcement (1<sup>st</sup> Lector):**

- a. The 1<sup>st</sup> Lector is responsible for reading the opening announcement (and the first reading).
- b. The opening announcement should be on the lectern on the right side of the altar as you face it. You may want to check that it is there prior to the beginning of Mass. Confirm with the Priest that he will signal you from the back of the church when he is ready to begin Mass.
- c. Make sure you are in place at the lectern prior to the beginning of Mass.
- d. Read the Opening Announcement when signaled by the presiding Priest. Immediately return to your seat after reading the opening announcement.

#### **5. Entrance Processional (2<sup>nd</sup> Lector):**

- a. **If there is no Deacon serving at the Mass**, the lector for the 2nd Reading will process in with the Priest and altar servers. He or she should process down the aisle in front of the Priest carrying the Book of the Gospels with two hands at chest height.
- b. Upon reaching the step of the altar, the Priest and Altar Servers will all bow. The Lector carrying the Book of the Gospels **DOES NOT BOW**.
- c. After the Priest and altar servers bow, the Lector should proceed up onto the altar and move around to the back side of the altar (facing the congregation) and place the Book of the Gospels onto the altar.
- d. After placing the Book of the Gospels on the altar, the Lector should proceed down off of the altar to the front center aisle, face towards the altar, briefly bow and then proceed to their pew.
- e. **NOTE: If there is only one lector at Mass, the lector should ask a member of the choir (or folk group) to read the opening announcement).**

#### **6. First Reading (1<sup>st</sup> Lector):**

- a. After the Priest has read the opening prayer and the congregation begins to sit down, the lector proclaiming the first reading remains standing and proceeds up the aisle towards the lectern, pausing to briefly bow before the altar.
- b. Once at the lectern, after any commentary on the reading by the Priest, announce “A Reading from...” Pause briefly before beginning the actual reading.
- c. After you have completed the reading, pause momentarily, look at the congregation and announce “The Word of the Lord.” Do NOT pick up the lectionary as you do this.

- d. After a pause, announce to the congregation the number for the Responsorial Psalm: “The Responsorial Psalm can be found in the Gathering Hymnal at number XXXX”
- e. As a courtesy, place the ribbon in the lectionary where the second reading begins.
- f. Step down from the lectern and return to your seat, bowing once briefly towards the altar. It is not necessary to wait for the choir to begin the responsorial psalm (because often they are waiting for you to leave).

**7. Second Reading (2<sup>nd</sup> Lector):**

- a. Upon the conclusion of the responsorial psalm, the lector proclaiming the second reading stands and proceeds to the lectern, pausing to briefly bow before the altar.
- b. Once at the lectern, after any commentary on the reading by the presiding Priest, announce “A Reading from...” Pause briefly before beginning the actual reading.
- c. After you have completed the reading, pause momentarily, look at the congregation and announce “The Word of the Lord.” Do NOT pick up the lectionary as you do this.
- d. After the second reading, close the lectionary and place it on the shelf under the lectern to leave room for the Book of Gospels which will be brought to the lectern by the Priest to proclaim the Gospel reading.
- e. Step down from the lectern and return to your seat, bowing once briefly towards the altar.

**8. Prayers of the Faithful (2<sup>nd</sup> Lector):**

- a. At the beginning of the last paragraph of the Nicene Creed (“We believe in one holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.”) proceed up to the lectern on the right side of the altar (as you face it).
- b. At the conclusion of the Priest’s introduction to the Prayers of the Faithful, read the intercessions that are in the binder on the lectern. After each intercession, announce “We pray to Lord.”
- c. After the last intercession, wait until the Priest gives his final intercession (or prayer) and then head back to your seat, bowing briefly towards the altar.

**9. General Announcements (2<sup>nd</sup> Lector):**

- a. After Communion is finished, proceed up to the lectern on the right side of the altar.
- b. After the Priest has said the Closing Prayer, read the announcements that are in the binder on the lectern.
- c. When finished with the announcements, immediately head back to your seat, bowing briefly towards the altar.

## **10. Proclaiming the Word:**

1. Be prepared. Spend time during the week leading up to Mass looking over the reading you have been assigned. Use the available web sites to get an understanding of the reading and the historical context. This will help you proclaim the word as it was intended.
2. Break the reading down and decide where you may need to provide extra emphasis, perhaps an extended pause, to allow the congregation to reflect on the reading.
3. Start strong and confidently. Memorize the introduction to the reading (e.g. “A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians.”) Memorize the first line of the reading so that you can begin the reading maintaining good eye contact with the congregation.
4. Read SLOWLY. People have a tendency to read too fast. Deliberately pause at natural breaks in the reading to allow the congregation time to absorb the reading.
5. Your goal should be to proclaim the reading in such a way as to have the congregation listen to you, rather than read along in their missals.
6. In the end, as lectors we are not intended to be actors. Do not be overly dramatic in proclaiming the reading as that can become distracting to the congregation.

### **Notes:**

1. There are three cycles to the lectionary (A, B & C). These cycles are rotated each liturgical year.
2. There are some special times when the cycles are merged into only one cycle, for example during Lent (in conjunction with RCIA in particular) and the Triduum (Thursday, Friday and Saturday of Holy Week). Be prepared to receive special instructions for shared readings or additional readings during Christmas, Lent and Easter.
3. Check with the presider to see if he plans to use the short or long versions of any reading, or even an alternate reading. Also check with the presider over questions on pronunciation or any other difficulties before Mass.

Please call or email **LTC Dan McCarthy**, MHT Lector Coordinator, with questions or concerns:

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