

STANDARD PROCEDURES FOR MHT LECTORS

(As of: 30 September 2011)

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) 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/bible/> (provides the readings for any given day's Mass)

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

<http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings-audio.cfm> (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. 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.
 - b. Before Mass begins, the Lector for the 1st 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.
 - c. Before Mass begins, Lector 2 should proceed up to the podium on the right side of the altar to check for the Prayers of the Faithful and any special announcements. These are normally printed out and placed on the podium. If you don't find them, please ask the presiding Priest for them. Be sure to look up the names of the Entrance and Offertory songs in either the Red Gather Hymnal (at all Sunday Masses) or the Blue Music Issue (usually at the Saturday evening Mass). The song numbers are posted on the wooden sign next to the podium.
 - d. If possible, both Lectors should sit towards the front of the church and on the center aisle. In the event the other Lector does not show up be prepared to do both readings.
 - e. *If there is only one lector assigned or present at the Mass, he or she will be responsible for performing the duties of both Lectors outlined below.*

4. Opening Announcement (1st Lector):

- a. A few minutes prior to the beginning of Mass, the 1st Lector should proceed up to the podium on the right side of the altar and find the sheet with the Opening Announcement. The Opening Announcement usually includes naming the person for whom the Mass is being offered and the number and title of the Entrance Hymn.
- b. In the event there is no sheet with the Opening Announcement, look in the bulletin for the name of the person for whom the Mass is being offered and look at the wooden sign next to the podium which lists the song numbers for the Mass. You can then craft the opening announcement as follows:

“Good morning. We will be praying especially during this Mass for [John Doe](#). The entrance song can be found in the Red Gather Hymnal (or Blue Music Issue) at number [123](#), “[Come All Ye Faithful](#).” Please rise and join our celebration by singing number [123](#).”

- c. The Lector should watch for a signal from the presiding Priest at the back of the church to begin Mass.
- d. Upon signal from the presiding Priest, the Lector should welcome the congregation and read the Opening Announcement.

5. First Reading (1st Lector):

- a. After the Priest has read the opening prayer and the congregation begins to sit down, the 1st Lector proceeds up the center 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 the [first letter of Saint Paul to the Romans](#)” then 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 Red Gathering Hymnal at number [1234](#).”** Make sure you look up the number before Mass. It is also listed on the wooden sign with the numbers for the music.
- e. As a courtesy, turn to the page in the lectionary where the second reading begins.
- f. Step down from the lectern and return to your seat, bowing briefly towards the altar. It is not necessary to wait for the choir to begin the responsorial psalm before leaving the lectern (Often they are waiting for you to leave before starting the psalm).

6. Second Reading (2nd Lector):

- a. Upon the conclusion of the responsorial psalm, the 2nd Lector 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. As a courtesy, turn to the page in the lectionary where the Gospel begins.
- e. Step down from the lectern and return to your seat, bowing briefly towards the altar.

7. Prayers of the Faithful (2nd 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 podium on the right side of the altar.
- b. At the conclusion of the Priest’s introduction to the Prayers of the Faithful, read the intercessions. 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 announce the Offertory song and invite people to bring up food for the food basket.

“The offertory song can be found in the Red Gather Hymnal at number [123](#), “[Here I am Lord](#).” Please join us in singing number [123](#). At this time, if you have gifts for the food basket you can bring them to the front.”

- d. After announcing the offertory song, head back to your seat bowing briefly towards the altar.

NOTE: Father Wood will do the Prayers of the Faithful himself. The 2nd Lector does not have any responsibility for these at Masses conducted by Father Wood and the choir will then announce the Offertory Song.

8. Closing Announcements (2nd Lector):

- a. Check with the Priest before Mass. Sometimes they like to do the announcements.
- b. After Communion is finished, proceed up to the podium on the right side of the altar.
- c. After the Priest has said the Closing Prayer, read the announcements that are on the lectern.
- d. When finished with the announcements, immediately head back to your seat, bowing briefly towards the altar.

9. 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. 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.
2. There are times when the readings are offered in a short and a long version. Check with the presiding Priest before Mass begins to see if he wants you to use the short or long version of any reading. Also check with the presider over questions on pronunciation or any other difficulties with the readings before Mass.

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

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