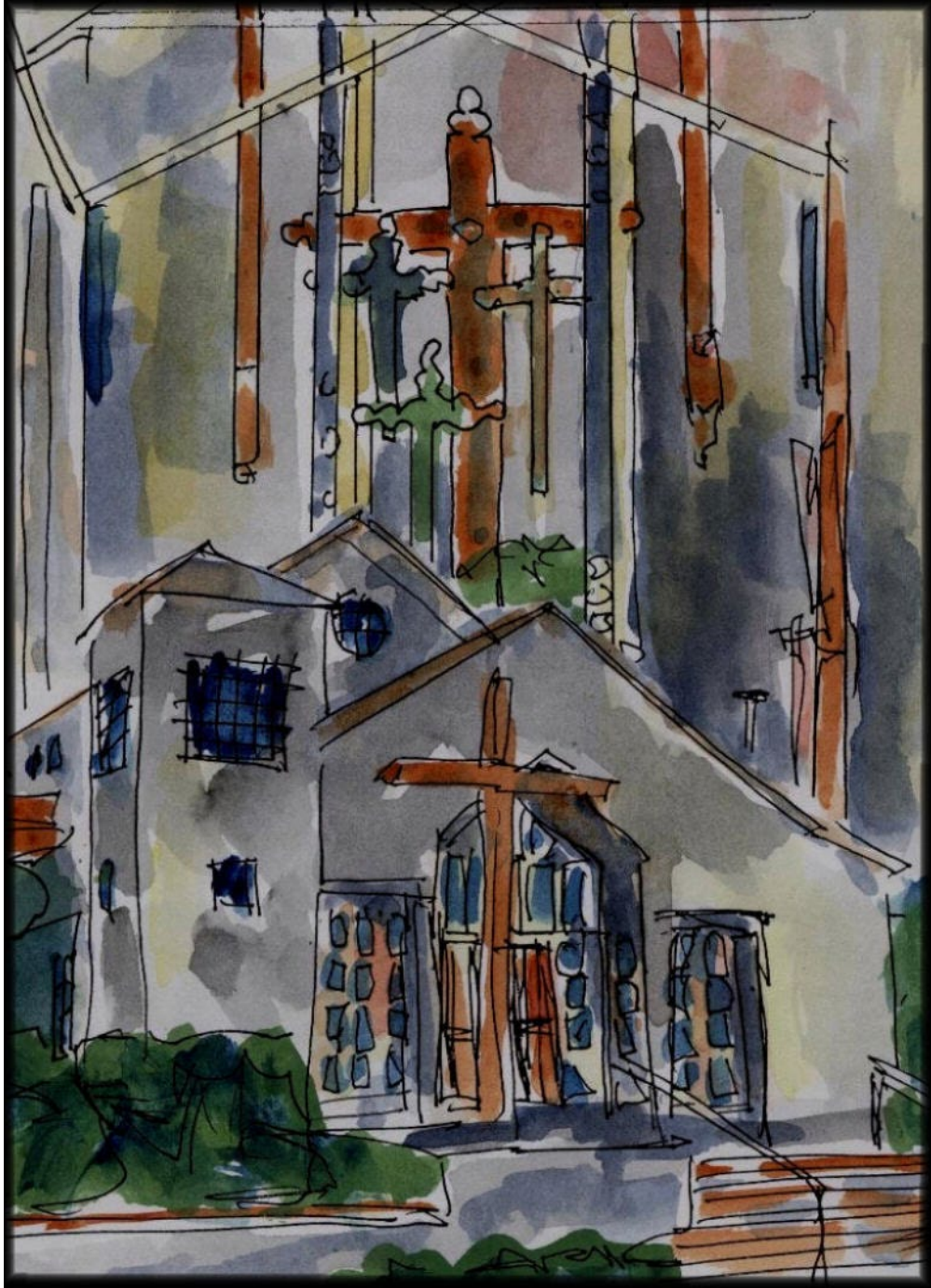


COMMUNITY OF ST. PETER
GUIDELINES FOR
LECTORS and PRAYER READERS



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COMMUNITY OF ST. PETER GUIDELINES FOR LECTORS and PRAYER READERS

The Role of the Lector in the Church

From the very beginning, Christians have gathered together to hear the Word of God, and, from the very beginning, there have been individuals entrusted with the task of reading the Word.

The General Instruction on the Roman Missal (GIRM) provides us the following: *100. The lector is instituted to proclaim the readings from Sacred Scripture, with the exception of the Gospel. He may also announce the intentions for the Universal Prayer and, in the absence of a psalmist, recite the Psalm between the readings. 101. In the absence of an instituted lector, other lay people may be deputed to proclaim the readings from Sacred Scripture, people who are truly suited to carrying out this function and carefully prepared, so that by their hearing the readings from the sacred texts the faithful may conceive in their hearts a sweet and living affection for Sacred Scripture.*

Qualifications to serve as a Lector

As the lector serves an important liturgical role in proclaiming the Word of God, it is necessary that they not only be suited for the task, but that they also prepare themselves carefully for their service to God and the Church.

The two requirements for lectors, listed in the General Instruction, are that they “truly be suited to perform this function,” and that they “should receive careful preparation.” To be truly suited to perform this function, lectors should be a fully initiated Catholic living in full communion with the Church. It also implies the necessary native talents to serve as a lector. Thus, individuals who are not able to proclaim the readings in a clear manner that expresses the dignity of Scripture may not be suited for this service in the church.

Preparation for Serving as a Lector

As the lector serves an important liturgical role in proclaiming the Word of God, it is necessary that they not only be suited for the task, but that they also prepare themselves carefully for their service to God and the Church. This preparation consists of two elements: remote preparation and proximate preparation.

Remote Preparation: One of the tasks of the lector, in preparation for proclaiming the Word of God, is to develop a knowledge and familiarity with Scripture and its proclamation that will enable him/her to proclaim the Word in such a way that the Christian assembly may benefit deeply from it. This preparation consists, first, in the lector nourishing his/her own prayer life with the study of Sacred Scriptures, especially through the practice of regular Scriptural reading. Secondly, the preparation consists in learning the vocal techniques of proclamation, so that he/she may make use of the resources of the human voice in such a way that the intonation, pitch, pacing and timbre of his/her speech may most effectively convey the content of the sacred writings. This preparation can take the form of workshops or programs conducted by the parish to assist lectors in developing their proclamation skills.

Proximate Preparation: Before reading at Mass, the lector will want to ensure that he/she has a true familiarity with the scriptural texts to be proclaimed, possibly in their context within the whole of scripture, and within the context of the liturgical year and the other readings for that day. This proximate preparation may also consist of practice in reading scriptural texts, which should take care to avoid a sense of the dramatic, while presenting the readings in all of their depth and richness.

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Dress: The lector's task is to help the gathered assembly to encounter God in His Word. Thus, everything that the lector does during Mass should aid the faithful to focus on the Scripture, and not on him/herself. This means that the lector's dress should not distract from the reading of the Word of God, but should rather express the dignity of the Word, and the importance that the lector assigns to his/her service. While standards for dress vary from community to community and from time to time, the lector's dress should not be in any way revealing or distracting and should correspond to the importance of the Word of God. Pastors may adopt concrete requirements for lectors' dress, to assure that this service is carried out with fitting modesty and decorum as well as to convey the dignity of the role. Lectors at St. Peter are asked to refrain from wearing t-shirts, jeans or shorts.

Preparation at Church

Arrive at least 10-15 minutes prior to the start of Mass. Sign in as Lector 1 or 2 in the white binder on the podium located on the right side of the Narthex.

Before Mass begins check your Reading(s) in the lectionary book located on the Ambo in the Church. Note what page your Reading is on.

Check the microphone and adjust if necessary (first reader)

Plan to sit near the very front of the Church, preferably on the left side, so that you may approach the altar without undue delay.

Be prepared for anything – the absence of the second lector, a visiting priest, special occasion, Baptism. Also, check to learn if there will be a short announcement prior to the first Reading, e.g. gathering of the children for their own liturgy of the Word in the chapel.

The first reader carries the Gospel book, unless a physical limitation would prevent the first reader from carrying the book. Lectors should decide between the two of them who will carry the Gospel book into the Church. If a deacon is present, the Gospel Book will be carried by the deacon.

As you wait in the Narthex before the procession, please greet parishioners as they arrive.

Processional

The proper order of the procession ministers is single file. The group may gather for a short prayer before Mass and then line up in the following order:

1. Cross bearer leads
2. Ministers of the altar (Acolytes)
3. Lector (second Reader)
4. Lector (first Reader) carrying the Gospel Book, unless a deacon is present
5. Deacon carrying the Gospel Book
6. The Presider

Upon a signal from the presider the cantor will welcome the congregation and ask them to rise as we gather and join in singing the opening hymn. The ministers and presider process down the middle aisle toward the altar. From time to time in the liturgical year there may be a gathering around the

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Baptismal font in the back of the church and opening prayers and blessing of the congregation may precede the processional.

The lector holding the Gospel Book above his/her head does not stop at the foot of the altar but proceeds straight up the steps, goes around on the left side, and places the Book in the center of the altar, steps back and bows in reverence to the altar, and then s/he turns and walks between the altar and the ambo, descends the stairs and takes his/her seat in the Assembly. Simultaneously, the presider and other ministers stop at the foot of the altar and bow together. As the presider ascends the steps the ministers disperse to their seats in the Assembly.

Proclaiming the Word (Visual guidelines are on page 16)

Visible to the congregation as coming forward from among them, the first reader approaches the altar steps and stops at the foot of the stairs, directly aligned with the Ambo, then bows by inclining his/her head in reverence, and then ascends the stairs to the Ambo. (Note: If physical limitations are an issue, there are two options to consider to ensure your safety and a smooth transition to the Liturgy of the Word. If you only need to steady yourself, use the railing to ascend the stairs; or if the ascent up the stairs is cumbersome, please forego walking in the procession and take a seat on the bench behind the altar prior to the processional. You may approach the Ambo when it is time for your Reading and return to the bench for the remainder of the Liturgy).

Take a moment at the Ambo to look up, engage the people in the congregation and then begin your proclamation with “A Reading from...” It has been suggested that you memorize this first line and then look down to continue. (Note: A rule concerning the proper pronunciation of the indefinite article “a” is that it is pronounced as the “a” in *hay only* when reciting the alphabet; otherwise it’s “a” as in above.)

During your proclamation of the Word, refrain from leaning on the Ambo and do not grasp the edges of the Ambo; you may hold the lectionary in your hands or use your finger to “mark” your place as you proclaim. Stand erect and speak slowly and loudly enough to be heard in the last row of the Church.

When you have finished your Reading, pause 1-2 seconds before stating “The Word of the Lord.” Do not lift the book at this statement as your proclamation is the Word of the Lord and raising the book would give inference to it being the written Word. Remain at the Ambo assuming a reverent, reflective posture. Do not bow again. You may then return to your seat by exiting to the right of the Ambo, descending the stairs. If you cross in front of the altar it is not necessary to bow again.

Once the music stops after the Responsorial Psalm the second reader proceeds to the Ambo, stopping at the foot of the altar parallel to the Ambo, and makes a simple bow before ascending the steps. After the Reading the second reader will wait a few moments, then closes the Lectionary and places it on the shelf of the Ambo and proceeds to his/her seat, exiting to the right of the Ambo. The lifting and placement of the Lectionary should be done inconspicuously. (Note: If the Lectionary is too heavy for you to lift and place on the shelf beneath the Ambo, please consider asking to be scheduled for only the first Reading.) Do not bow again; simply return to your seat. (Note: if one lector is doing both Readings s/he should take a seat next to the priest during the Responsorial Psalm, returning to the Ambo when the song concludes.)

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Recessional

As the closing hymn begins the presider will leave his position and walk down the steps in front of the altar. All ministers will join Father there, taking their cue from him and bowing before the altar just before beginning the recessional in the same order as the processional. The recessional includes the cross bearer, youth servers (when present), acolyte and lectors walking side by side rather than in single file. They are followed by a deacon (when present) and the priest presider.

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Prayer Reader Guidelines (Visual guidelines are on page 16)

Arrive 10-15 minutes prior to start of Mass and sign-in the ministry binder in the narthex. Please let acolytes know you are there (so they won't have to look for a replacement.)

Upon your arrival, check to ensure that the prayers for the current week are in the front of the binder. If they are not there, let an acolyte know so that they can be located prior to you removing the book from its stand in Church at the start of Mass.

When you see Father, the acolytes and lectors line up, remove the Book of Prayers from the podium and proceed to your seat for the start of Mass.

Be ready to approach the altar while the Creed is being prayed. When the last slide of the Creed is displayed (it will say "Amen"), approach the altar from the organ side. Do not bow before ascending the stairs. Father will read the short invitation to prayer at the top of the page (usually in parenthesis). When Father is finished, you may then recite the petitions. Note: There are times when the Creed is not said. In this case, Father will usually begin the Prayers of the Faithful by reciting the short prayer at the top of the page of petitions. If this happens, approach the Ambo when Father begins to read this prayer.

The last petition is usually a general petition, which includes the petitions written in the Book of Prayers and petitions "we offer silently in our hearts." When reciting the prayers for the petitions in the Book of Prayers, slightly raise up the binder so that the congregation can see it. When offering the silent prayer, you can either count to ten or continue after saying your own silent petitions with the "Let us pray to the Lord."

When you are finished, please look and smile at Father and he will then say offer the concluding prayer.

Remain at the Ambo until Father finishes the concluding prayer and when the Offertory prayer begins only then return to your seat, descending from the sanctuary on the organ side. On occasion, a special prayer will be offered by all, e.g., a Lenten or Advent prayer, or Stewardship prayer. On those occasions, remain at the Ambo until the prayer is concluded, and then return to your seat on the organ side.

After Mass, place the binder back on the podium at the back of the church, remove the sheet for your Mass and place it face down at the back of the binder (in the folder part). Leave the page open for the written petitions for the next Mass.

If you switch dates with another reader, please make a note of it in the ministry binder in the narthex. There is a tab labeled "Prayer Readers" which contains the current prayer reader schedule.

During Lent and Advent, a Lenten Prayer and/or Advent Prayer may be said after reading the Prayers of the Faithful. There may be other times when other prayers, such as Stewardship, are recited after the Prayers of the Faithful. Remain at the Ambo until this prayer is concluded and then return to your seat.

To adjust the microphone, move it up or down. Moving it to the right or left creates feedback.

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Schedule and Training

When more than one Reading is listed for a given Sunday, whenever possible the schedule will include which of the two Readings should be proclaimed. If the schedule does not include the selection, please check with the presiding priest during the week before; and if that is not possible, it is recommended that you prepare both and check in with the presiding priest prior to the beginning of the Liturgy.

Pat Carroll and Vickie Newman, our schedulers, will contact you before finalizing a three-month schedule to ensure your availability. The schedule is emailed directly to the lectors and is also published online at the parish website. If you are unable to lector on your scheduled date you are responsible for finding a substitute lector. You can contact someone on the back page of the lector schedule where the roster of all lector names and phone numbers are listed. Or, you may also connect with lectors via email.

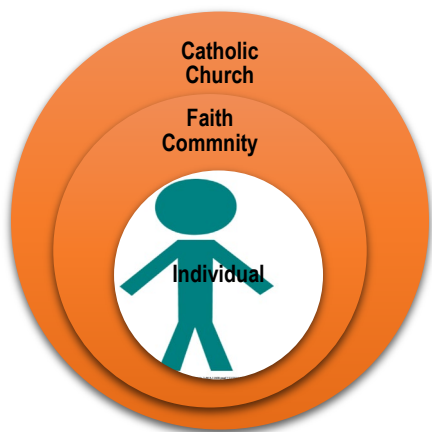
Pat Carroll can be reached by email at patt03@aol.com or by phone at 650-359-7769.

Vickie Newman is also the parish Prayer Reader trainer and can be reached at 650-355-5067 or email vickie_newman@sbcglobal.net.

Eileen Barsi is the parish lector trainer and can be reached at 650-438-7877 (cell) or email Eileen.barsi@gmail.com.

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Additional Information about Proclaiming the Word of God¹



We come to know God through our own personal experience of God, through the living faith of the community, and through the institutionalized faith of the church. The Scriptures fit in all three categories. As we know them now, the sacred writings are part of the outer circle, the formal faith system of the church. But they are that because they are a record of a living faith experience, the lived faith of the Hebrew people (Old Testament) and of the first followers of Jesus (New Testament). And the faith that was lived out in those communities was a response to the personal God-experience of the Old Testament and New Testament prophets, poets and apostles.

The words of the Scriptures are the words of ordinary people like you and me, people who are trying to tell us who God is for them and how God has touched their lives. Sometimes they describe the God-experience symbolically. Isaiah (in Chapter 6) says he saw God seated on a high throne, with the train of his robe so long it filled the temple. He reported that an angel from beside God's throne took a burning ember from the altar and touched his mouth with it. Then, he says, he was sent out to speak God's words to his people. Ezekiel (in chapters 2 and 3) describes an experience in which he was commanded to eat a scroll covered with God's words. (Try to understand what each of these two prophets might be trying to say by relating these experiences.)

Sometimes the writers capture the experience in a *story*, like the story of Jonah and the whale (Jonah 1:17-2:10), or in a *parable* like the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32). (Consider what the writers are saying about the God-experience in these two stories.) Sometimes the writers praise God for presence, help and blessings; sometimes they scold God for not being there in a time of need.

It isn't easy to read Scriptures. They were written by people who lived centuries ago in a country far from our own. But they were written by real people who experienced God much as we do – vaguely and mysteriously, but consistently and unmistakably. When we read their words with prayerful attention, we find that they ring true in our hearts. The ancient words seem to name our own inner experiences of God.

Getting Acquainted with Scripture

Truth in the Bible

The Bible is not a book in the usual sense of the word. It is a collection of books or writings. All kinds of writings can be found there: prayers, stories, poetry, battle reports, love songs, letters and so forth. What the writings have in common is God. They all record in some way the living experience of the Chosen People, and that experience always includes God.

¹ Excerpted from *Confirming Faith*, Kieran Sawyer, SSND, Ave Maria Press, 1978.

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Is the Bible Really True? There are various kinds of truth, each important to consider as you reflect on the Scriptures.

There are various kinds of truth

- Geographical Truth – To verify, you would check a map or drive yourself; you need to trust the cartographer and the odometer.
- Historical Truth – To verify, you would check an encyclopedia, history book, Internet resource; you need to trust the authors.
- Mathematical Truth – To verify, you would “work it out,” draw a comparison, use a calculator or computer, and so forth; you need to trust the algorithms or the machines you use.
- Relational Truth – Verification is difficult; scientific verification is impossible. However, from *my own experience* I know it’s true.
- Character Truth – Verified by the people who knew Mary Jane, but never definitively. Mary Jane might *act* kind and not be kind; might be kind one time and not another; might be kind to you, but not to me, etc.
- Scientific Truth – Scientific truth is verified by observation, often aided by use of instruments. We trust scientists’ explanation of these observations even when they seem to contradict what we ourselves experience.
- Proverbial Truth – This kind of truth is verified by experience; for example, if I fix or mend something right away, I have an easier job. Note that you can’t expect to verify in this kind of truth statement – one stitch doesn’t save *exactly* nine stitches.
- Moral truth – This kind of truth is verified by the accumulated experience of society and by our own experience, especially (in this example) the experience of being stolen from.
- Symbolic truth – This is a true description of a happy child, even though eyes don’t really give off sparks and stars don’t really dance.
- Religious truth – Religious truth is verified by experience of God’s loving forgiveness and by the concurrence of many other people who have known God’s love even in their sinfulness.
- Against the background of different kinds of truth, let’s ask again, how is the Bible true?
- Geographical Truth – The scripture writers often describe their country, local cities, etc. Geographical references are usually accurate.
- Historical Truth – Even though historical method was much different in those days, and much of the history was handed on orally for hundreds of years before being written down, the historical references in the Bible are usually accurate.
- Mathematical Truth – There is a little mathematical truth, like measurements, weights and so forth.
- Relational Truth – The Bible deals with human relationships sensitively and honestly.
- Character Truth – Most biblical characters live with the full flavor of real human men and women.
- Scientific Truth – The Bible reflects the scientific understanding of the day. By our standards, it seems very primitive.

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- Proverbial Truth – The wisdom of biblical times was often expressed in short, pithy proverbs. There are four books of the Old Testament filled with proverbs: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Wisdom and Sirach.
- Moral Truth – The Bible is filled with moral teachings, codes and laws. Some of the morality of the Old Testament was changed by Jesus.
- Symbolic Truth – Much of the truth in scripture is presented in symbolic language: metaphors, parables, myths, allegories, and stories.
- Religious Truth – The Bible is, of course, filled with religious truth. The religious truth is found in all the other kinds of writing and is sometimes presented in straight theological language.

There are different kinds of truth represented in the Bible.

- Historical Truth – The Bible contains the history of the Hebrew people from about 2000 B.C. to A.D. 100. Much of this history was passed down orally for generations before it was written. It is, nonetheless, surprisingly accurate. There are few historical errors in the Bible.
- Geographic Truth – The geography of the Bible is accurate, as far as it goes, which isn't very far. The "whole world" of the Bible consisted of the Mediterranean and Mesopotamia areas.
- Character/Relational Truth – The authors of scripture are perceptive interpreters of human character and relationships. The people in the Bible act and think and respond emotionally in very typical human ways.
- Scientific Truth – The biblical writers reflected the scientific understanding of their day, which – we now know – was very primitive. For instance, the Bible says the world was created in seven days. We are able to read through the scientific "error" in the Bible and find the religious truth the writer was trying to get across. There was no need for God to reveal a more accurate understanding of science to his people. Revelation is concerned with religious truth, *that* God created the world, not scientific truth, *how* the creation event took place. The Hebrew people didn't have to know the latter in order to be close to God.
- Proverbial Truth – Much of the Bible, especially the wisdom books, is the kind of folksy truth contained in proverbs; for example, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you; A stitch in time saves nine."
- Symbolic Truth – Much of the truth in scripture is told in symbols, parables, myths and allegories. We have to read between the lines to discover the truth being presented. The story of the tree of good and evil in the Garden of Eden is an example of such a symbol. There is truth there, but it is religious truth about human freedom and divine laws, not factual truth about eating fruit and talking snakes.
- Moral Truth – The Bible contains much moral truth. Moral truth tells us what is right and wrong, what we must do and how we must live if we want to be good people and close to God. However, the Old Testament reflects the morality of the Hebrew people, and their standards were very different from ours. For instance, according to Hebrew morality, if a person poked out your eye, you were permitted to poke out one of his; if he knocked out your tooth, you could knock out one of his. The New Testament tells us that Jesus expressly raised the moral standards. "It was said of old..., but I say to you..."

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- Religious Truth – The Bible is primarily religious truth. Religion is concerned with the person's relationship with God, and the Bible is the record of the relationship between God and his Chosen People, the Hebrews. The Bible gives a true account of how the people experienced God, and how they responded (or failed to respond) to him.

What's in this Book?

- Theology – there is an underlying theological perspective on which each of the biblical books is based
- Liturgical rubrics – especially in Leviticus and Numbers
- Ancient Myths – the creation stories, for example, are ancient myths used to teach religious truth
- Exhortations – especially in the prophetic books and epistles
- Poetry – especially in Psalms
- Battle stories – especially Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings
- Letters – all of the epistles
- Sermons – especially the prophetic books
- Diaries – the book of Acts is something like a diary, a daily record of the missionary journeys of Paul and Luke
- Biographical Accounts – although not in the modern sense of the term
- Parables – especially in the gospels
- Dreams – for example, Genesis 37
- Prophecies – 18 Old Testament books are the writing of prophets
- Hymns – especially the Psalms, but also in other books, for example, Philippians 2
- History – most of the Old Testament and much of the New Testament contain historical data
- Memoirs – the gospels are something like memoirs. They are recorded memories of the Jesus event; they tell what Jesus' life, death, resurrection meant to the early church.
- Laws – for instance, Exodus 30-23, Leviticus 19, Deuteronomy 6
- Lists of ancestors – see Matthew 1:1-16, Numbers 1 and 2, Exodus 1
- Wise sayings and proverbs – all of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Wisdom, Sirach
- Campfire stories – Tobit, Judith, Esther and Jonah probably had their origins in oriental folklore
- Prayers – especially Psalms. See also Matthew 6:1, Philemon 1, Philippians 1
- Love songs – especially the Song of Songs
- Personal witness accounts – the epistles and gospels are the personal witness of persons whose lives have been touched by the risen Jesus
- Symbolic stories – much of the truth in both Old and New Testaments is written in the form of stories

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Additional Resource

Nine Steps to Becoming a Better Lector²

Lectors need to be “truly qualified and carefully prepared,” states the General Instruction of the Roman Missal, “so that the faithful may develop a warm and living love for Scripture from listening to the sacred texts” (66).

That is, perhaps, a larger responsibility than you thought when you signed up to be a lector. It means more than getting up on Sunday to do a reading. It means proclaiming God’s word in such a way that those gathered come to a deeper, richer faith. If you follow these nine steps, you will be on track for making that happen in your parish.

1. Read Scripture. You cannot effectively proclaim God’s word without being intimately familiar with Scripture. The Sunday lectionary is organized on a three-year cycle based on the first three Gospels. You will want to read Scripture according to the way it is organized in the lectionary. So, for example, it is helpful to read the entire Gospel every Advent (Matthew in Year A, Mark in Year B, Luke in Year C). Much of John’s Gospel is read in Year B, especially during the summer. That is a good time to read all of the fourth Gospel.

When preparing a reading for Sunday, read the Gospel first. Then read the first and second Readings which are intended to prepare the assembly to hear the Gospel. The second Reading is usually one of the letters from St. Paul, which is read somewhat continuously over a series of Sundays. Part of your preparation can be to read the entire letter before you get down to the work of practicing your reading. Read the letter even if you will be proclaiming the first Reading; doing so is another way to expose yourself to the riches of Scripture.

When you prepare your Reading, read it in context. This is especially important if you have the first reading because some of the selections don’t make sense out of their original context. The first is to read the passages that come before and after your reading in the Bible. The second is to read the lectionary passages that occur the week before and the week after your reading. By doing both, you will get a sense of what the original author intended and what the church intends by selecting this particular passage for this particular Sunday.

2. Practice. To expect a lector to practice seems obvious. However, you’d be surprised at how many lectors leave out this basic step. To practice means to read the reading out loud while standing up. Silent reading at your desk may help you get ready to practice, but it doesn’t substitute for it. Practice out loud at least six times. Practice on at least two different days other than the Sunday you read. Other helpful things you can do are: practice in front of a mirror, practice with a tape recorder, practice with a video camera and practice in front of your children or grandchildren. Children are great critics.
3. Pray. Praying is another basic but often overlooked step. Read the Gospel as a Sunday night prayer the week before you read. Read your Reading as a morning prayer at least twice in the week before you read Pray for the Spirit to open the ears of those who will hear your

²Wagner, Nick, *Modern Liturgy*: Volume 25 Number 9

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reading. Pray for the strength to put aside your own ego and for the Spirit to speak through you.

4. Find the emotion. If you want the Scripture you proclaim to speak to people's hearts, you have to find the emotion in the Reading. Read the passage several times and try to discover the primary emotion. Sometimes reading the psalm assigned to the day can help. Once you have the primary emotion identified, recall times when you have felt that emotion. Try to recall the emotion in yourself as you practice the Reading, and let the emotion come through you as you proclaim.
5. Find the most important phrase. Every Reading will have at least one important phrase. Most Readings have several, so you will need to decide which one is most important. If you are having trouble, use a pencil and underline all the powerful, interesting or disturbing ideas in the reading. Then read the Gospel again and discern its main idea. Read your Reading again focusing on the underlined parts. Pray about it, and then decide what the most important phrase is in the Reading. Emphasize that phrase in such a way that its importance is clear to everyone in the assembly.
6. Use eye contact. Always look at the assembly for a long time before you read. Use your finger or an index card to keep your place. Always use eye contact on the opening and closing sentences. Make eye contact on words and phrases that reveal the key emotion. Make eye contact on the most important phrase. The more times you practice the reading out loud, the easier it will be to make eye contact with the assembly.
7. Project. To project does not necessarily mean to speak louder, although that is often the result. Humans are built with two air cavities. If you inhale in such a way that your stomach pushes out, you are filling your lower air cavity. If you try to make your chest bigger, you are filling your upper air cavity. As you read, use the air from the lower cavity first. Keep in mind that you want to use your diaphragm instead of your throat. Try not to rely on the microphone to carry your voice. Control your breathing, and make sure you feel your stomach muscles moving as you read.
8. Vary your pace. Almost every Reading has fast parts and slow parts. Most Readings also have loud parts and quiet parts. Some Readings call for clipped, staccato rhythm; others call for smooth, melodic rhythm. When you practice, try different, even ridiculous paces. Find the pacing that works best for your Reading.
9. Vary your style. Some Readings read like stories, and some are read as fire-and-brimstone prophecies. There are "newsy" readings and poetic readings. Be conscious of the kind of Reading you are assigned and match your proclamation style to the style of the Reading. Also, be aware of the season of the church year you are in. That will also influence your style. And different assemblies require different styles. The 5:00 p.m. Saturday evening assembly may need to hear the Reading presented in a different way than the 11:00 a.m. Sunday crowd.

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These steps will help you become a better lector, but in the end, it is the Holy Spirit that proclaims God's word through you. Your job is to prepare as well as possible and then let the Word move through you to the members of the assembly. When that happens, "the faithful receive the power to respond...actively with full faith, hope and charity through prayer and self-giving, and not only during the Mass but in their entire Christian life." (Lectionary for Mass, Introduction 48).

Additional Resources

Other opportunities to enrich your faith and your ministry include:

- Archdiocese of San Francisco, Office of Worship - <http://sfarchdiocese.org/home/ministries/worship-office> hosts educational sessions at various times throughout the year.
- Mercy Center, Burlingame - <http://www.mercy-center.org/> offering retreats, classes and spiritual direction.
- Santa Sabina Center, San Rafael - <http://santasabinacenter.org/> offering retreats, days of prayers, and other special programs.
- Richard Rohr, Center for Action and Contemplation - <https://cac.org/> offering webcasts and spiritual readings.

COMMUNITY OF ST. PETER GUIDELINES FOR LECTORS and PRAYER READERS

St. Peter's Catholic Church Prayer Reader Guidelines: Ascent to and Descent from the Ambo



Be standing, ready to enter the sanctuary, during the Creed. At the last slide, ascend the stairs on the organ side. **DO NOT BOW.** Have the book open, ready to begin as soon as Father completes the introduction.



Be sure to raise the book when you mention "petitions written in our book..." and also allow adequate time for congregation to offer their intentions silently. Glance over at Father when you are finished, but remain at the Ambo until Father finishes the concluding prayers. Descend on the organ side and return to your seat.

St. Peter's Catholic Church Lector Guidelines: Approach to and Descent from the Ambo



As you approach the sanctuary, stop at the foot of the stairs in front of the Ambo and bow before ascending the stairs.



Approach the Ambo by walking between the altar and the Ambo.



Pause after your Reading before descending on the organ side. If you are the second Reader, place the Lectionary on the Ambo shelf.