

*In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.
-John 1:1*

The Liturgy of the Word

Training Documents

The Liturgy of the Word celebrates God speaking directly to our hearts and to our souls. The proclamation of the Word is meant to be an event of great power and effectiveness.

The Liturgy of the Word is not Bible study or adult education. *It is Christ himself embodied in the Word and planted in the hearts of all who hear it.* The Liturgy of the Word celebrates God speaking directly to our hearts and to our souls.

“The main part of the Liturgy of the Word is made up of the readings from Sacred Scripture together with the chants occurring between them. As for the Homily, the Profession of Faith, and the Universal Prayer, they develop and conclude it.” *The General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM) 2010 #55*

Thank you for participating in this ministry. We, the Body of Christ, are greater because of your commitment and dedication to serve in our ministry here at St. Alphonsus Liguori parish.

General Instructions for Readers

- Arrive 15 minutes prior to the beginning of Mass.
- Sign in on the sheet in the Reception Room. Check for any special instructions.
- Dress appropriately for Mass.
Preferably, no tank tops, or t-shirts with writing on them, ripped or torn clothing, shorts, faded or light blue jeans or flip flops. Please cover shoulders.

Preparation:

- Prepare: Read your assigned reading at home-out loud.
- Pray scriptures
 - Read as though God is speaking directly to you and through you.
 - Read the explanations in the Workbook for Lectors.
 - Read the entire chapter(s) in your bible to get a greater sense of the text.
- For clarity & correct pronunciation:
 - ADJUST THE MICROPHONE so that it is level with your mouth, approximately 1-5 inches away.
 - ADJUST the height of the ambo so your face may be seen during the reading.
 - Speak up! Don't mumble.
 - Read at a comfortable pace.
 - ENUNCIATE, especially the word endings and consonants such as -ing, d, t, m & n.
 - Check the pronunciation of any unfamiliar words or names.

Attitude:

- *Breathe:* Take a few slow, deep breaths before you begin.
- *Pray:* Ask God for a little extra help. This is the time and place to do that.
- *Trust:* Trust in the Word that you are proclaiming. Your delivery will appear much more confident than it feels.
- Do not merely read, but instead *proclaim*.
- If you make a mistake, keep going! You're doing fine.

Detailed instructions for Prayer Announcers

These prayer intentions, also called the Universal Prayer, are the way the Church expresses its concerns for the needs of the world. You are representing the entire assembly when you voice the Universal Prayer. It is a very important function in the celebration of the Liturgy.

1. **Please arrive 15 minutes prior to Mass.** If you have a schedule conflict it is your responsibility to find a substitute.
 2. **Sign in with the sacristan in the reception room.** If you are substituting for someone, please write (for <person's name>) after your name.
 3. **On the counter next to / near the sign in sheet you will find a liturgical binder** containing the announcements and the Universal Prayer. **Practice** them before Mass. If there are any specific instructions the Sacristan will tell you or there will be a note in/on the book.
 4. The announcements are read from the lectern or cantor stand in front of the organ.
 5. **Check in with the organist before Mass and let them know you are the PA. Your cue to begin the announcements is when he/she nods in your direction.**
 6. **Adjust the microphone as needed** so that it is level with your mouth and approximately 1-5 inches away.
 7. **Greet the assembly** with “Good Morning” or “Welcome” as is appropriate. (Really make them feel welcome!) For special feast days, announce “Today is the Feast of ...” That information will be in your binder. Announce the presider and begin the announcements.
 8. Return to your seat in the congregation for the beginning of Mass.
 9. **By the middle of the last stanza of the creed** (“We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church...”) **proceed to the ambo in the sanctuary and bow to the altar. Adjust both the ambo and microphone as necessary.** (Your mouth should be level with the microphone and approximately 1-5 inches from your mouth). You must be there and in front of the microphone ready to go when Father begins his opening prayer. **Pause** after each petition. **When you are finished, turn and wait for Father** to pray the concluding prayer (the prayer after the intercessions) before you step down and return to your seat. Remember to bow to the altar once you step off the sanctuary.
- NOTE:** *If a deacon is present, he will read the Universal Prayer intentions.*
10. After Mass return the binder to the counter in the Reception Room.

Detailed Instructions for Readers

*When the Sacred Scriptures are read in the Church, **God himself speaks to his people**, and **Christ, present in his own word**, proclaims the Gospel. Therefore, the readings from the Word of God are to be listened to reverently by everyone, for they are an element of the greatest importance in the Liturgy. GIRM 2010, #29*

You are fulfilling a very important function in the celebration of the Liturgy. The Scriptures should be well-prepared using the Workbook for Lectors and Gospel Readers or the smartphone app resources. The left column in the workbook describes the story and helps with pronunciation.

If you do not have a copy, please notify the ministry leader.

1. **Please arrive at least 15 minutes prior to Mass.** If you have a schedule conflict, it is your responsibility to find a substitute.
2. **Sign in with the sacristan in the reception room.** If you are substituting for someone, please write (for <person's name>) after your name.
3. **Before Mass**, check to make sure the Lectionary is on the ambo and turned to the correct reading.
4. There are two readers scheduled for most Masses. *Please be prepared to do both readings in case the other reader does not arrive.*
5. The ambo itself is adjustable. There is a rocker switch on the base that controls the height of the book shelf. Pressing upward on the switch will raise the stand; pressing downward will lower it. Be sure you can see over the top and the parishioners can see you.

Reader 1

1. The procession to the altar should be reverent and paced. Line up at the Narthex door behind the altar servers and ahead of the priest, holding the Book of the Gospels high. When the servers have processed as far as the back pews, begin your procession, maintaining the same space in front of you until you reach the altar steps.

NOTE: *If a deacon is present to celebrate the Mass, he will carry the Book of the Gospels in the entrance procession. Otherwise, Reader 1 carries the Book of the Gospels in the entrance procession. This book can be found in the sacristy, or the reception room before Mass.*

2. Pause at the bottom of the Nave and then step up to the altar (you do not bow at this point). Place the Book of the Gospels in the center of the altar in its stand and return to your seat (now, you bow to the altar after you have descended the steps).
3. Following the Collect (Opening Prayer of the Mass), as people are being seated, proceed to the ambo – remembering to bow to the altar.

NOTE: On the days, during 10:30 Mass, when the children are dismissed for their separate Liturgy of the Word, process to the ambo and quietly wait for the procession to end and the congregation to quiet before speaking.

4. Wait until the congregation is settled and quiet to begin. Adjust the microphone if needed, approximately 1-5 inches from your mouth. Speak directly into the microphone to be heard. Establish eye contact and then, in your best presenter's voice, announce: "A reading from ..." (Do not say "The first reading is ...") Pause briefly, then begin the reading. Pause again briefly at the end of the reading and establish eye contact before announcing: "The Word of the Lord." If necessary, turn the page for Reader 2.
5. After you are finished, move down the steps to the foot of the altar, waiting for the cantor to join you so you both bow to the altar in unison before returning to your seat.

NOTE: If you are the only reader, after the first reading, go and stand or sit near the credence table behind the ambo while the cantor leads the responsorial psalm. After it is completed, the cantor steps down to the choir area. Pause briefly before stepping up to the ambo again to begin the second reading. Follow the same procedure as before.

Reader 2

1. When the cantor begins to step down you should be prepared to meet him/her at the foot of the steps where you will both bow to the altar in unison. You may then approach the ambo.
2. Adjust the microphone if necessary. Establish eye contact and then announce (at presenter volume): "A reading from ..." (Do not say "The second reading is ...") Pause briefly, then begin the reading. Pause again briefly at the end of the reading and establish eye contact before announcing: "The Word of the Lord."
3. After the reading, close the book, turn and hand it to the altar server who will then put it in the cabinet under the credence table behind the ambo. If for some reason the altar server does not approach you to receive the book, you should go over and put it in the cabinet yourself.

Both Readers:

- Read at a relaxed pace, allowing the Word of God to penetrate. Never rush. Do not, however, linger so long over every word that the smooth flow of the reading is lost. It is critical to rehearse your pace and inflection prior to Mass. Practice your reading out loud to discover the pace that sounds natural. Be confident in your reading, but not theatric.
- Adjust the microphone as needed. This is very important. You should be speaking directly into the mike, as well as within 1-5 inches of the front of the mike.
- At a minimum, establish eye contact at the beginning and the end of your readings.
- At the end of Mass remain in your seat. You will not process out with the priests and servers.