

St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic Church

“Reader Ministry 101”

BASICS

Readers should arrive at Church 20 minutes before the beginning of Mass (or more if so inclined). Absolutely must be there no less than 10 minutes prior.

When arriving, first be sure to sign in. There will be a binder on the counter on the right side of the Sacristy (as you’re facing the cabinets). The binder lists all of the lay ministers serving at each Mass on a given day.

Next, check that all materials are where they need to be: Book of the Gospels and Announcements/Prayer of the Faithful binder in the Sacristy, and the Lectionary on the Ambo and opened to the first reading for the day’s Mass. If they are not...ask someone from Parish staff where the binder may be. As you are facing cabinets with the sink on your left, The Book of the Gospels and the Lectionary are kept in the cabinet directly in front of you above the counter. The key is kept in a drawer below the counter next to the sink (usually under the purificators).

If there is a visiting priest, be sure to check with him to see if your role will change. For example, the priest may wish to carry the Book of the Gospels. Be sure to introduce yourself, and get the visiting priest’s name so Reader #2 can announce it before Mass with the regular announcements.

Arrange a “sound check” with one of the ushers in the back of the Church. Look to them when beginning your proclamation to see if you need to raise the projection of your voice.

Occasionally you may be asked to add a name to the Prayer of the Faithful at the last minute. Encourage the person to add the name to the Book of Intentions in the Gathering Space, as all intentions are prayed for during Mass. If they insist, check with the celebrant, and the Reader should add the name, not the parishioner.

Always approach the ambo from the baptismal font side, not between the altar and the ambo – except if there is a Processional at the beginning of Mass.

Remember to bow to the altar when approaching the ambo, and after descending the steps after pronouncing your reading.

ROLES

Reader #1: Does the First Reading. *May* carry the Book of the Gospels in the Processional

Deacon Rich usually carries the Book of the Gospels during the Processional. If he is not serving at your Mass, this is your role. Carry the Book as high as you are comfortable. It is as heavy as it looks... . When approaching the Altar, do not bow or wait – go directly to the Altar and place the Book on the Altar, then join the priest and the servers at the foot of the Altar and all bow together. If they haven’t waited for you – “pretend they did.”

When proclaiming the Word – take your time, remember to make eye contact with the congregation, speak clearly, project your voice as you tell the good news. “Taste the words!” When you have finished, turn the page to the Second Reading and return to your pew (don’t forget to bow).

Reader #2: Does the announcements, the Second Reading; *may* do the Prayer of the Faithful

Review the pulpit announcements and Prayer of the Faithful prior to Mass to be sure you can pronounce the names. Check with the Presider, ushers or other ministers if you’re not sure. Make your way to your seat by about 10 minutes before Mass begins; you should already be seated when Greg begins his Prelude. At the conclusion of the Prelude, approach the altar, bow toward the altar before ascending the steps, and read the announcements. At the conclusion of the announcements, leave the binder in the ambo, descend the steps, bow toward the altar and return to your seat.

At the conclusion of the Psalm, wait for the cantor to return to the choir area or is halfway to the back of the church before rising to approach the ambo for your reading. Remember to bow when approaching the ambo (and when returning to your seat).

Make eye contact with the congregation, speak clearly, project your voice, and proclaim the Word. “Taste the words!” When you finish your passage, place the Lectionary in the cubby so there is room for the Book of the Gospels on the ambo and return to your pew.

Deacon Rich usually does the Prayer of the Faithful, but if he’s not serving at your Mass, this is your responsibility. Arrive at the ambo just prior to the end of the Creed (remember to bow). Face the Presider while he reads the introductory prayer; face the congregation as you read the intercessions, then face the Presider again as he reads the concluding prayer. When he finishes, the binder goes in the cubby.

Exception: During non-covid times, on the first full weekend of each month, a Pastoral Council member is assigned to do the announcements before Mass. You should be prepared to do them anyway “just in case.”

“How do I get here?”

The Parish produces the schedule for Readers (and other liturgical ministries) four times a year in three-month blocks. Readers need to have access to Ministry Scheduler Pro:

<https://www.saintandrew.org/serve/liturgical/liturgical-minister-sign-up-instructions/>

where you can see your schedule, request subs, change your Mass preferences. There is also an app for your phone which you can find in Google Play or the App Store.

The Parish provides a Workbook for Readers as a tool for preparing for your ministry. They are kept at the end of the counter in the Sacristy. This is a very valuable book; it has all of the readings, a (limited) pronunciation guide and some background on each of the readings for the liturgical year.

The Church does NOT schedule Readers for Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Holy Week, Easter, Christmas (and the weekend between Christmas and) New Years, as well as Immaculate Conception and Assumption. Rather, the Church sends out a notice to registered Readers who would like to volunteer to sign up for opportunities during these holy days.