

Saint Philip Parish
Lector Policies and Procedures

Preparation:

- Lectors are asked to visit the Sacristy before Mass to review the Readings and Prayer of the Faithful. Please also note whether the Responsorial Psalm will be sung, or sung/recited. A preparatory prayer for lectors is also provided above the bookstand in the sacristy.
- There is special seating for lectors at the front of the Church, in the first row closest to the pulpit.
- Lectors should be dressed neatly in a way consonant with the dignity of this liturgical role. Proper attire under normal circumstances would be a jacket and tie for a man and modest, appropriate clothing for a woman.
- All lectors should have and use the Lector Workbook provided by the Parish. It provides historical context, explanations of terms and pronunciation of difficult names and words. A dictionary of pronunciation is also available on the lector's bookstand.
- Prepare and practice all the readings for that day and do so well in advance by reading and re-reading the texts. Practice the readings several times so as to become completely comfortable with the reading. Understand the mood of the reading for proper inflection and emphasis. You may have to consult the whole chapter of the Bible to determine the reading's mood/purpose. Know as much as possible of the full context in which the reading exists in order to give proper meaning to the text you read.
- Practice the reading out loud, particularly difficult names and words. Enlist family members to listen and also to give you feedback after you read at Mass. There is always room to improve!
- Please note carefully your scheduled assignments via Ministry Scheduler on <http://www.saintphilip.com> or via your printed copy of the schedule. Substitutions should normally be made via the website. If you have any scheduling questions or concerns, please contact Father Albert at 401-949-1500, ext. 16 or fatheralbert@saintphilip.com.

During the Liturgy:

- When a Deacon is serving at Mass (often the 9:00 AM and 12:00 PM Sunday and 8:00 AM weekday), the Deacon will proclaim the Gospel and read the Prayers of the Faithful.
- Please approach the pulpit from the side closest to the main altar, and depart from the side closest to the servers' bench.
- In proclaiming the Word of God, say (read) only what is in the text of the Lectionary before you. Begin with "A reading from..." The small red text under this sentence should NOT be read.
- Establish eye contact with the congregation briefly before beginning. Reestablish eye contact from time to time throughout the Reading. After concluding the Reading, the lector establishes eye contact, pauses BRIEFLY and says, "The Word of the Lord". This is a moment when you remind the congregation that what was just heard was indeed the Word of God. Say this phrase as strongly as you read the Reading. Do not move until the congregation has said "Thanks be to God."
- Upon arriving and departing the pulpit, walk to the foot of the Sanctuary steps with hands folded in a prayerful, reverent manner. Bow to the Altar and resume your seat.
- When reading the Responsorial Psalm and the refrain is NOT sung, the lector should NOT read the refrain along with the congregation. Similarly, when announcing the Prayer of the Faithful, the lector should not read the response (i.e. "Lord, hear our prayer") along with the congregation.

Helpful Hints for Effective Proclamation of God's Word:

- Project your voice forward and outwards toward the congregation. Read loudly and strongly. This is imperative in order for the congregation to hear you. Read with conviction so that the congregation knows that you truly believe what you are reading is the Word of God.
- Pace the reading in deliberate manner, but not overdramatically. Remember, it is not you, but the Word of God that is center stage.
- How one breathes is important to proper phrasing, volume control and quality of voice. Pay attention to the punctuation in the text to assist you with the phrasing and to allow you to breathe at the right times. If you breathe properly, i.e., from the diaphragm and chest through the lungs and not from the air in the nose, then the volume and pitch of your voice will be more authoritative, lower and stronger. Breathing in this manner allows you to control your voice more effectively and to project it, eliminating the need to raise the voice or shout to be heard.
- Clarity is important to understand the meaning of God's Word. Enunciate clearly by pronouncing the syllables of words.
- Posture at the pulpit should be carefully noted. Stand up straight but in a dignified manner that conveys humility, not arrogance. Keep your arms naturally by your side, resting on the pulpit, or on the Lectionary. If subtly done, your fingers may help keep your place in the text as you make eye contact with the congregation. Hand gestures are never used in the course of your reading.