

# San Rafael Church – Lector Guidelines

The lector is one who proclaims God’s word to the assembly. To this end, we must be a living word ourselves; we cannot proclaim what we do not live. The word burns within the heart of the lector so that, like Paul, we can say, **“Not I, but Christ in me!”**

With that said, here is a prayer that you can recite before your assignment to help you proclaim God’s word:

***Almighty God, enlighten my heart, with knowledge of you. Open my mind to the understanding of the scriptures, as I proclaim your word to the assembly of your people. This I ask through Christ our Lord. Amen***

<p><b>Announcements:</b> <i>Read by the “Commentator”</i></p>	<p>The ‘Commentator’ (Lector #2) should be ready and waiting at the front pew adjacent to the ambo at least five (5) minutes before Mass starts. There you will receive the signal to proceed to the ambo and read the announcements. <b>Notes:</b> They should be read exactly as written, with no edits. If you believe there are any errors, please bring it to the priest’s, celebrant’s, or deacon’s attention to confirm the need for correction. Also, the <i>Announcements / Prayers of the Faithful</i> folder should be brought back to the pew where you sit so it won’t be confused with the priest’s, celebrant’s, or deacon’s homily folder if left at the ambo.</p>
<p><b>Arrival Time</b></p>	<p>It is generally recognized that you should arrive <b>no-later-than</b> 15 minutes before Mass begins. This will give you plenty of time to familiarize yourself with the contents of the <i>Announcements</i> and <i>Prayers of the Faithful</i>, and to properly coordinate with the priest, celebrant, or deacon and your reading partner.</p>
<p><b>Attendance</b></p>	<p>You should make every effort to fulfill your scheduled assignments, or make arrangements for a substitute lector to take your place. <b>This is your responsibility!</b> Your best bet for finding a substitute lector is to send an ‘email blast’ using the email list from previous ‘blasts.’</p>
<p><b>Attitude</b></p>	<p>We should feel inspired and joyful when we proclaim God’s word. If it becomes ‘routine’ or there is never enough time to prepare before lectoring, then these may be signs that God is calling you in other ways to serve Him. Please recognize that this ministry may not necessarily be a life-long calling.</p>
<p><b>Availability</b></p>	<p>Are you called <b>ONLY</b> to serve at one Mass-time on the weekend? Consider that this is a ministry that serves the larger community of believers, and through your flexibility it will expose you to more parishioners, which then allows you to experience a greater diversity with your calling. It is also easier for scheduling when lectors are flexible in the times they can serve.</p>
<p><b>Eye Contact</b></p>	<p>Too much eye contact can interrupt the flow of the reading. Not enough eye contact fails to engage the congregation. Practice in front of a mirror as this might help when to give eye contact before you proclaim.</p>
<p><b>Microphone</b></p>	<p>The microphone should be pointed directly at your mouth for maximum clarity and hearing. Adjust the microphone as necessary for proper positioning. <b>Note:</b> It is essential that you always strive to <u>project</u> your voice towards the microphone.</p>
<p><b>Pace</b></p>	<p><b>Speed kills!</b> Pace is all-important to gaining insights to the original writer’s intent and understanding by the congregation. Reading too quickly will prevent proper voice inflection and emphasis of words and phrases. <b>PRACTICE!</b> And then <b>PRACTICE</b> some more!!</p>

<p><b>Prayers of the Faithful:</b> <i>Read by the "Lector"</i></p>	<p>The 'Lector' (Lector #1) should begin moving to the ambo as the priest and congregation are finishing the <i>Nicene Creed</i> (usually no-later-than . . . 'I look forward to the resurrection of the dead' . . .) so that you are in position and <b>ready to read</b> as soon as the Presider finishes the prayer introduction. When finished, remain at the ambo until the Presider finishes the prayer closing. <b>Notes:</b> They should be read exactly as written, with no edits. If you believe there are any errors, please bring it to the priest's, celebrant's, or deacon's attention to confirm the need for correction.</p>
<p><b>Preparation</b></p>	<p>It is essential that you work at developing your own method of spiritual preparation, and realize a key element to your effectiveness includes plenty of <i>Practice, Practice, Practice!</i> Utilize the <i>Workbook for Lectors</i> as a tool to familiarize yourself with the pacing, word emphasis, and pronunciations. The Workbook can also aid you in your biblical and liturgical formation which can assist you in understanding the reading in its original context. A good rule of thumb is to start studying the reading on Monday before you're scheduled. Absorb it – Ponder it – Pray about it. And then each day of the week, take the time to practice it again; even take some time to open the Bible to read the full chapter to better understand the context of the passage you are proclaiming. So, when you finally take your turn to share the reading at Mass, it will flow more effortlessly. This also allows the Holy Spirit to work within you as you prepare.</p>
<p><b>Processing with the Book of the Gospels</b></p>	<p>If there is no deacon serving at the Mass, the 'Lector' is responsible for processing with the <i>Book of the Gospels</i> to the altar. <b>Notes:</b> Do not stop when you reach the altar servers, continue moving around the altar and place the Book face down with the ribbon on the left, about 10 inches from the center edge of the altar. This will facilitate the Presider's raising the <i>Book of the Gospels</i> from the altar with the front facing the congregation.</p>
<p><b>Reading Start</b></p>	<p>Use only the introduction that is in the Lectionary beginning with, '<b>A</b> (pronounced 'UH', not 'AY') <b>reading from</b> . . .' and NO additions as this is the one and only introduction. Make eye contact with the congregation. Then there should be a 3-beat pause (one-thousand one, one-thousand two, one-thousand three) between the introduction and the start of the reading so that the congregation can clearly delineate between the two.</p>
<p><b>Reading End</b></p>	<p>There should be a 3-beat pause (one-thousand one, one-thousand two, one-thousand three) between the end of the reading and the proclamation, '<b>The Word of the Lord.</b>' This will allow the congregation to clearly delineate between the two. Again, make eye contact with the congregation AND maintain proclamation volume / intensity. If you're the 'Lector', be sure and turn the page to the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading so the 'Commentator' does not have to do this before they begin reading.</p>
<p><b>Second Reading</b></p>	<p>After the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading is proclaimed by the 'Commentator,' close the Lectionary and place it in one of the large shelves of the ambo. This will allow the <i>Book of the Gospels</i> to be placed on top of the ambo and read by the priest, celebrant, or deacon.</p>
<p><b>Schedule</b></p>	<p>The Lector Schedule is published quarterly (generally 2 – 3 weeks before the end of the current quarter) and will be emailed to you by the Lector Coordinator. An electronic copy will also be posted to the San Rafael Church website with a hard copy posted in the Sacristy. Please notify the Lector Coordinator in the event you do not receive the quarterly schedule.</p>