

Background on the Ministry of the Lector



SAINT JOHN the EVANGELIST
CATHOLIC CHURCH

- Early Roman Catholic tradition reveals that Catholics were not generally thought of as people of the Word or Scripture.
 - More recently, we have experienced a sea change in Catholic familiarity with the Bible.
 - Scripture is now enshrined in the vernacular throughout Catholic worship.
 - For those in the congregation the Word is experienced and savored through biblical proclamation during the Liturgy of the Word at Mass.
- The current Lectionary for Mass is one of the most remarkably effective achievements in the history of the church.
 - Through it, the Catholic community experiences the incredible breadth and depth of scripture.
 - Over the course of a three-year cycle we proclaim and preach most of the New Testament and plumb the depths of riches of the Old Testament and Psalms.
 - This prayerful communal discipline is a key to our formation and transformation as Catholic Christians.
- The significance of the Lector Ministry is key to the fullness of sacramental Catholic worship
 - All are encouraged to become more deeply immersed in the renewal that comes from hearing and incorporating the Word when we worship.
 - Consider the following statement from the Second Vatican Council's "Constitution of Divine Revelation" (Dei Verbum):

"The Church has always venerated the divine Scriptures just as she venerates the body of the Lord, since from the table of both the Word of God and the Body of Christ she unceasingly receives and offers to the faithful the bread of life, especially in the sacred liturgy"

- There are two tables at Mass, the table of the Word and the table of the Lord's Body and Blood.
 - Together they constitute a place of Worship before God from which we are fed the Bread of Life.
 - At the celebration of the Mass, which perpetuates the sacrifice of the Cross, Christ is truly present in the assembly gathered in His name.
- Considering all of this, we understand the importance of the role of Lector as a part of the entirety of the celebration of the Mass.
- Proclamation of the Word at worship requires appropriate interpretive emphasis
 - Interpretation by the lector is not a choice; it is the outcome of prayerful, intelligent preparation by a unique personality and skill possessed by the Lector.
 - A lector must understand and believe that they are performing a real ministry of collaboration with the presence and communion with the Holy Trinity.
 - A lector must appreciate that the Lord is active and present to the assembly through their proclamation.
 - In the Word all are called to hear and respond today, tomorrow and forever
 - Conclusion of the proclamation with "The Word of the Lord" emphasizes and invites the assembly to acknowledge the real presence of the Lord in these sacred texts.
- Proclaiming and receiving God's Word we become the Lord's own presence, we become Christ by it's transformative power.