

MINISTER OF THE WORD and COMMENTATOR PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD AT MASS

My commitment to being an effective Minister

- ▶ **Dependability** - I will be present when I am scheduled, or I will arrange for a substitute. I will have an attitude of service, helping St. Wenceslaus Church be a place where people can contact the living God.
- ▶ **Punctuality** - I will be on time, meaning **at least 10 minutes** before the start of Mass.
- ▶ **Competence** - I will be prepared, and I will have practiced the readings aloud in addition to simply studying the text. I will accept in good spirit reasonable and regular evaluation of the effectiveness of my public reading. I will be groomed and dressed appropriately for this ministry.
- ▶ **Initiative** - I will seek out resources to support growth and improvement in my ministry. I will take part in workshops, meetings and other sessions in the areas of scripture and communication skills provided for my growth.
- ▶ **Consistency** - I will strive to be a more caring, generous, sharing person in my daily living, consistent with my awareness of the presence of Jesus Christ in His Word and in His people. I will strive to be a person of faith, a person of prayer, and a person of joy.

(The commentator provides the faithful, when appropriate, with brief explanations and commentaries with the purpose of introducing them to the celebration and preparing them to understand it better. Commentator's remarks must be meticulously prepared and clear though brief.)

Ministers of the Word and Commentator Guidelines

Prepare the reading selections at home:

- † Read the selections silently a few times (borrow a Today's Missal from Church). Get a sense of the flow. Note any particularly difficult to pronounce and/or understand words.
- † To place the readings in context, use your bible to read the entire scripture chapter the selection is taken from. Also, read any introductory notes in your bible.
- † Read the selections out loud. Listen to yourself. Traits to be conscious of and to work on improving:
 - ✓ Voice quality, volume and range
 - ✓ Diction, intonation and rhythm
 - ✓ Pace, pauses, eye contact
- † Practice, practice, practice! As you practice, ask yourself:
 - ✓ Do I know all these words, how to pronounce them, and what they mean?
 - ✓ Does the selection make sense to me?
 - ✓ Am I proclaiming or just reading the text?

Before Mass Responsibilities:

- ▶ Prepare the readings at home. This cannot be emphasized enough!
- ▶ Be groomed and dressed appropriately for this reverent ministry.
- ▶ Arrive at least 10 minutes before Mass to:
 - ✓ Find the readings and mark their place in the lectionary.

- ✓ Adjust the microphone to your height to ensure you will be speaking into it.
- ✓ Check with the cantor/musicians on the responsorial, the gospel acclamation, and the opening song number.
- ✓ Pick up the Commentator Binder from the ambo.
- ✓ On Solemnities and Special Feasts **only**, the red Book of Gospels should be on the altar. Take the Commentator Binder and Book of Gospels (if on the altar) and go the Church vestibule.
- ✓ Review the welcome message, announcements and General Intercessions.

During Mass Responsibilities:

- ▶ You will be going from your place in the assembly to the ambo and back to your place in the assembly between the first and second readings, and for the General Intercessions, so, during Mass, sit in one of the first 3 pews and by the main aisle. When you walk to and from your pew and the ambo, keep your two hands together against your chest pointing upwards (observe how the altar servers do this).
- ▶ After the Presider has signaled the start of Mass, carry the binder with you and reverently walk up to the center of the sanctuary, bow to the altar, and go to the ambo (also called lectern and pulpit).
- ▶ **Read** the welcome message and announcements. Read slowly and loudly, with **faith** and **expression!** Make the words appear to come from the heart rather than just read.
- ▶ After reading the announcements, take the Commentator Binder with you and reverently walk up to the center of the sanctuary, bow to the altar, and return to your seat in the assembly. If you brought the Book of Gospels to the vestibule, place the Commentator Binder in your pew, and return to the vestibule to process in as follows:
 - ✓ Process in, in front of the Presider, holding the Gospel Book above your head. At the altar bow and reverently place the Book in its stand on the altar, then go to your place in the assembly.

Proclaiming God's Word at Mass:

- † After the Presider has concluded the opening prayer, reverently walk up to the center of the sanctuary, bow to the altar, and go to the ambo.
- † Wait until everyone is seated and settled.
- † Announce the **first** reading clearly: "*A reading from the book of...*"
(**Note:** DO NOT say: "*the first reading is...*")
- † Read slowly and loudly, with **faith** and **expression**, ending with: "*the word of the Lord.*"
- † While reading, occasionally make eye contact with the assembly. This is easily done if you have prepared the readings at home.
- † End with: "*the word of the Lord,*" then, after the assembly responds "*thanks be to God,*" reverently walk up to the center of the sanctuary, bow to the altar, and return to your seat in the assembly while the responsorial is sung.

NOTE: If the responsorial is **not** to be sung (find out **before** Mass), stay at the ambo, pause about 15 seconds after the first reading, then start the responsorial.

† After the responsorial has concluded, reverently walk up to the center of the sanctuary, bow to the altar, go to the ambo, and announce the second reading clearly: “*A reading from the letter of...*”
(**Note: DO NOT** say: “*the second reading is...*”)

† Read slowly and loudly, with **faith** and **expression**, ending with: “*the word of the Lord.*”

† After the assembly responds “*thanks be to God,*” reverently walk up to the center of the sanctuary, bow to the altar, and return to your seat in the assembly for the gospel acclamation.

NOTE: If the gospel acclamation is **not** to be sung (find out **before** Mass), it may be read or omitted (ask the Presider his preference **before** Mass). Reverently return to your place in the assembly as previously.

† **Read the General Intercessions** at the appropriate time as follows:

- ✓ Towards the end of the Creed, take the Commentator Binder with you and reverently walk up to the sanctuary, bow, and go to the ambo to read the General Intercessions.
- ✓ The Presider will give an opening prayer.
- ✓ Read each petition, allowing the assembly to respond: “*Lord, hear our prayer.*”
- ✓ The Presider will give a concluding prayer, after which you reverently return to your place in the assembly as previously.

NOTE: You **DO NOT** process out with the Presider and altar servers at the end of Mass.

(Revised 02/2015)